

LOCHMOOR CLUB'S NEW GOLF COURSE CLOSE APPROACH TO IDEAL IN LINKS

By E. A. BATCHELOR

AT LAST there is something new under the golfing sun! You will find it at the Lochmoor Club, GrossePointe, in the form of a course that has been constructed upon lines that mark a radical and, in the opinions of many expert judges, a very desirable departure from recent orthodox practice.

The foundation principle employed by John S. Sweeney, who had charge of this work, and Walter J. Travis, who acted in the capacity of consulting architect, was flexibility. The Lochmoor Club wanted a course that could be adapted to all sorts and conditions of golfers; a course that could be made difficult enough for a national championship or easy enough for the 100 player, as existing needs might dictate.

Offhand, this sounds like a very large order to fill, but Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Travis have filled it to perfection. It is generally agreed that on all save the short one-shot holes a golf course for a fairly accurate player is hard or easy according to its distances. This statement admits of qualifications, but in the long run the player that gets distance, providing he combines this with a fair measure of good direction, will beat the shorter player, who is no more accurate or very little more so.

Careful of Penalties

The men entrusted with laying out the Lochmoor course do not believe that it is necessary to sow the fair-

way with bunkers and traps. They do not believe that a straight shot down the course should be penalized. They contend that the short player will be sufficiently penalized in his lack of distance without an additional handicap of trouble spots to catch his best shots. So the hazards on the Lochmoor course are placed where nobody has any reason to be bothered by them so long as he keeps straight and hits true. They are at the sides of the fairway or guarding the greens, the latter type to be carried by a well-played shot but sure to catch a poor one.

Flexibility is secured by the employment of several tees for each hole, always at least three and sometimes four. From the short tees, the course measures 6,317 yards and from the long ones 7,057 yards. The middle tees give a length of 6,647 yards. Even greater variations may be secured by setting the flags back on the far sides of the greens. Using the long tees and with the cups placed well back, the course is hard enough to test the mettle of a champion. Using the front ones, the element of strength is reduced, but the premium remains on accuracy.

Golf Made Pleasant

It is the sort of a course that will appeal to the poor player, the average player and the good player alike. It makes golf a pleasant game and not

a constant source of irritation for the 'duffer'. But the par man need not think that he can loaf around in 'fours.' On the contrary, he finds that if he wants to turn in a good card, he must play golf all the time.

There is a very pleasant variety to the course. Every green has a different contour and each putt must be studied. There is little of the 'tricky' about either the fairways or the greens but one must mix intelligence with his mechanical skill. One of the new and very good ideas employed is that of having the 18 holes increasingly difficult. Starting out, the player has a chance to 'get going' on several easy holes but by the time he has reached the turn, he is supposed to be at the top of his game and he finds few 'soft spots' in the last nine.

Spectators Like It

Spectators as well as players find many pleasing things about the Lochmoor course. The 9th and 18th greens are 'twins' right in front of the club-house, making it possible for the play to be seen by persons sitting on the porches and terrace. One also gets a very good general view of almost the entire course from the club-house and from several of the greens as well.

Someone has said that the real test of a golf course is in its one-shot holes. Lochmoor stands this test admirably. It has four short holes, each a very good one. The 4th is the first of these encountered. Here one must carry a brook to reach the green and must hold his ball or be in trouble. The 8th calls for a carry of a wide

ditch to a raised green that is small enough to furnish a test of accuracy from the tee.

The 11th is about as good a one-shotter as there is around Detroit. One plays parallel with the creek and a hooked ball means all kinds of trouble. This hole is very similar to that one at the Country Club so much admired by all true golfers. No. 16 is the last of the short holes and, like the others, it requires control and ability to hold the ball.

Other New Features

Although this is only the second season for the course, the turf is in excellent condition. Naturally it will continue to improve. The club has invited the United States Golf Association to hold its national amateur tournament here in 1921. By that time, it is believed, Lochmoor will be in every respect a championship plant.

In the club-house and locker room, as on the course, Lochmoor has many new features. The club-house is a large farmhouse moved intact to its present site and improved by the addition of porches and a pretty ball room. Instead of resembling a cell block as do so many other locker rooms, this one is a cheerful, sociable place. The lockers are only 5 feet high, making up in width and depth what they lack in height. One is able to see all parts of the locker room from any point in it. A card and lounging room is under the same roof as the lockers, a feature that appeals to players that want to rest or have a rubber or two of bridge between rounds, without the necessity for dressing.