

GOLFERS GO SHY ON CHAMPIONSHIPS

Metropolitan Association Sets the Pace by Not Declaring in Favor of Usual Fixed Features on the Links

BY VERDANT GREENE

WHILE reasonable prospect is held out of the Tri-State matches for the Lesley Cup being put through next season, also the junior title struggle of the New York district, there isn't a glimmer of any of the other metropolitan championships being revived during the war, and that means not before 1920 at the earliest. Because of the promised restoration of tennis next year, players all over the country have been waiting to see which way the Metropolitan Association (the largest of the sectional organizations and always the first to hold its annual meeting) would jump. Well, it didn't jump at all. The talk was fifteen-sixteenth war, golf scarcely being mentioned. However, I was able to gage sentiment somewhat by the small talk of delegates before and after the gathering. The youngsters' championship last season fell by the wayside, merely because the others did. The junior affair did not come in for consideration at all. Also it had gone by default simply because it was a block in a collapsible row, everybody realized a mistake had been made. The Eastern Interscholastic was held, with more significant results than usual; also the junior event in nearly all the big city districts. After the seniors' festival had been put through, as usual, it was only natural that players generally should hark back to the other extreme of age, equally immune from draft.

As a matter of fact, there is more need than ever, with many of the youthful stars in danger of service, over and behind, if not actually on the firing line, to encourage budding talent. One has only to take a lesson from the experience of Great Britain, now absolutely without coming players of note, a condition of affairs certain to bring a blank following the war. The Lesley Cup, which involves a relatively small field and calls merely for the best players readily obtainable, as stated by President Tappen, was not definitely abandoned until August, and then merely on general principles. If necessary, the various veteran teams, so strongly in evidence at Brookline last year, and Merion the season before, would be called upon to carry through the matter creditably. Many of those who played for Red Cross benefits this year will be caught in the second draft, but nevertheless next season will bring more exhibition contests for gate receipts. Paste that prediction in your hat. The tournament situation, however, is still as hazy as the milky way.

Although it would seem unnecessary to warn clubs and players against profiteering promoters in charities after several of the recent revelations regarding war bazaars in New York, it may be well to remark that the Metropolitan Association came close to dropping \$30,000 through such agents. Two-thirds of the Metropolitan meeting was devoted to an explanation of the circumstances by which the funds' destination had been three times altered. As open request was made that newspapers should not mention names, confidences must be kept, but the information is gradually cropping out through the District Attorney's investigation. How reputable citizens can be induced to sign war relief contracts on a fifty-fifty basis with sharks whose reputation is enough to give any project a black eye was what astounded the delegates present. Yet it was done in the cases of the Italian and Russian ambulances. Fortunately, it is understood every cent the New York players contributed was saved for war sufferers, but it is significant that the national golf secretary's name has appeared in print as a party who is attempting to straighten out the finances of certain relief organizations.

Whatever next season may have in store, the Lakewood and Atlantic City Clubs intend to hold their spring tournaments as usual. They argue with force (especially Lakewood) that early spring and late fall are the only seasons they can do much toward spiking Hun guns, while all the Northern Red Cross benefits fall between those periods. Even should there be a big reverse to allied arms within two or three months, with the attendant gloom entailed, there would be all the more need of financial aid.

Lakewood's Thanksgiving week fixture proved like the early winter affairs at Pinehurst, that many golfers, hungry as they are for play, positively will not enter competitions, even if they are on the spot visiting the resort where they are in progress. Some of them carry their retiring notions so far that they will not even join the gallery, although oftentimes contributing to the war fund benefiting thereby. Just why such pre-

judice should obtain among men, say of 35 year or more, who are too old to fight or build ships, is impossible to understand—yet it is largely among the oldsters that the feeling is found. Many of them boast of years, every fall in the seniors handicap, where their length of days is emulated to the world. Some of the veterans, even if they engage in play only for exercise, must do it only under the friendly cover of darkness, for they have not been seen making a round for months. I know a wealthy Englishman who recently paid for a city hospital and equipped it, besides scattering Red Cross contributions, yet he has kept out of contests (the seniors excepted) since the United States entered war. He, however, has not yet drawn the line against stretching his neck at exhibition matches.

The New Jersey State Golf Association will hold its annual meeting at New York on the evening of January 22. Nathan S. Schroeder, the president, hopes to attend the session. The delegates will thresh out the question whether their championship should be held next year. The 1917 meet scheduled for Deal was postponed, but there is growing sentiment across the river to have a championship played in 1918 under modified conditions.

Some of the less prominent of the Metropolitan clubs have put the larger ones to shame when it came to result in the Ambulance tournament. Out of a membership of 84 clubs, eighteen held no contests for the cause. Here are a few of the contributions: Century Club, \$3450; Fairview Club, \$1643; Holliswood Club, \$1630; Inwood, \$1600; North Shore, \$1600; Woodmere, \$1600; Ocean, \$500; Sunningdale, \$331. Sleepy Hollow, which led the list with \$7633, and Nassau, second, at \$4809, were the only clubs ahead of the Century. By way of contrast, the wealthy membership of the National Links managed to raise just \$60.



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