

Merion Leads the Way In World of Sports

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Merion played its patriotic part in the World War, sending more than 500 members to serve their country. Chevy Chase is stated to have been the only club to surpass this record. Nineteen Merion men made the supreme sacrifice, and their memory is kept ever alive

now known as the "East Course." This development soon added so many members to Merion's golf players that some immediate action became necessary to add further to the facilities for golf and a second tract of one hundred and twenty additional acres of land was purchased, and a second eighteen-hole course, now known as the "West Course," one of the most beautiful in the country from a scenic standpoint, was created by Hugh I. Wilson and his associates on the Green Committee.

A feature of Merion's golf courses is that they are not immediately adjacent to each other as in the case of many other Clubs having double facilities, but are about a mile apart over an excellent road and served by a Club bus running between the two courses.

In connection with these two courses, both of which are of championship character and have received the most favorable comments in golf circles all over the world, it may be stated that the reason for this successful development is due to the fact that during the period from 1909 to the present day Merion's Green Committee has been kept almost intact from its origin up to today and only five Chairmen of the Green Committee have had charge of the work and development of the courses, thus insuring a consistent, systematic and wise development. These Chairmen were: Hugh I. Wilson, Winthrop Sargent and John R. Maxwell, who are now deceased, and Arnold Gerstell and Philip C. Staples.

The popularity of Merion's golf courses is attested by the fact that four National Tournaments under the auspices of the United States Golf Association—the National Amateur in 1916, and in 1924, the Women's National Championship in 1926 and the Men's Amateur in 1930 have been played, and in 1934 the present Tournament is scheduled. The 1930 Tournament was one of the greatest golf events ever held and successfully run. It was in this event that "Bobby" Jones won his fourth crown to cap his unique career in the world of golf.

While golf was developing, as stated above, tennis was no lagger as a major sport at the Club. For the convenient use of the tennis players thirty grass courts and ten clay

courts have been provided; additional land was bought and every facility given for the development of the game and pleasure of the players. Many tennis tournaments have been played and for a number of years the Women's Pennsylvania and Eastern States Tournament, the Men's Pennsylvania State Tournament and the great National Intercollegiate Tournament have been played on the courts at Merion.

In the boom times of 1926 to 1929 Merion, in view of its great development in sports and in country life, felt the need of a new club house of some kind, somewhere and some time. This led to much discussion and finally the decision was made to stay where the club houses then were located and to spend several hundred thousand dollars in reconstructing, refurbishing and adding new lockers to the house at Haverford, while at the Golf house a complete reconstruction was made including locker rooms, refurbishing, etc.

From its pioneer days Merion has never failed to be a leader in all new sports. From a physical standpoint it has provided its members with two of the best golf courses in the United States, with grass courts and clay courts for tennis, already referred to, a bowling green in front of the club house, seven squash courts, playing fields for soccer and hockey, bowling alleys, card and snuff rooms, billiard rooms and trapshooting field. To illustrate, in one class of sports alone, the games played with the ball at Merion are as follows, and facilities exist for all of them: Cricket, tennis, soccer, squash racquets, bowls, ten pins, billiards, pool, ping pong, badminton, hockey, trapshooting and golf.

However, it is not sports alone that have made Merion. It is recognized almost before everything as a "Neighborhood Club." Situated in the heart of the great Main Line district of Suburban Philadelphia, its wonderful location on the railroad and trolley line within twenty minutes of the center of a city of two million people and five minutes from a station to the club are of great moment. Children and youth, young people of both

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How times have changed! In the late nineties, when Victorian and Quaker influences held sway, separation of the sexes was in order. A brass rail, dividing the porch of Merion's club house, kept the boys and girls in their proper places.