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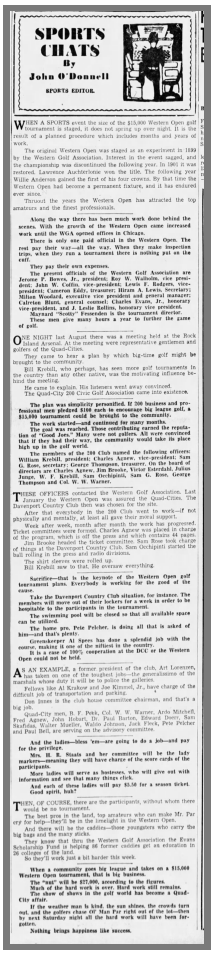

SPORTS CHATS

By John O'Donnell

SPORTS EDITOR

WHEN A SPORTS event the size of the $15,000 Western Open golf tournament is staged, it does not spring up over night. It is the result of a planned promotion which includes months and years of work.

The original Western Open was staged as an experiment in 1899 by the Western Golf Association. Interest in the event sagged, and the championship was discontinued the following year. In 1901 it was restored. Lawrence Auchterlonie won the title. The following year Willie Anderson gained the first of his four crowns. By that time the Western Open had become a permanent fixture, and it has endured ever since.

Through the years the Western Open has attracted the top amateurs and the finest professionals.

Along the way there has been much work done behind the scenes. With the growth of the Western Open came increased work until the WGA opened offices in Chicago.

There is only one paid official in the Western Open. The rest pay their way—all the way. When they make inspection trips, when they run a tournament there is nothing put on the cuff.

They pay their own expenses.

The present officials of the Western Golf Association are Jerome P. Bowes, Jr., president; Ray O. Wallace, vice president; Ed Dutton, vice president; Ben Hogan, vice president; Cameron Eddy, treasurer; Hiram A. Lewis, secretary; Milan Woodard, executive vice president and general manager; Caitrian Blair, general counsel; Charles Evans, Jr., honorary vice-president, and J. Leslie Bellins, honorary vice president.

Maynard "Sonny" Fessenden is the tournament director.

These men give many hours a year to further the game of golf.

ONE NIGHT last August there was a meeting held at the Rock Island Arsenal. At the meeting were representative gentlemen and golfers of the Quad-Cities.

They came to hear a plan by which big-time golf might be brought to the community.

The plan, which, perhaps, has seen more golf tournaments in the country than any other native, was the motivating influence behind the meeting.

He came to explain. His listeners went away convinced.

The Quad-City 200 Civic Golf Association came into existence.

The plan was simple: permanent, $2,200 business and professional men would raise $100 each to encourage big league golf, a $15,000 tournament could be brought to the community.

The work started—and continued for many months.

The goal was reached. Those contributing earned the reputation of "Good Joes." Many were not golfers. All were convinced that if they had their way, the community would take its place high up in the golf world.

The Civic Golf Association 200 Club named the following officers: William Krehill, president; Charles Agnew, vice-president; Sam G. Rose, secretary; George Thompson, treasurer, (in the board of directors are Charles Agnew, Jim Brooks, Virlar Esterdahl, Julius Junge, W. F. Krehill, Sam Occhipinti, Sam G. Rose, George Thompson and Col. W. W. Warner.

THESE OFFICERS contacted the Western Golf Association. Last January the Western Open was assured the Quad-Cities. The Davenport Country Club then was chosen for the site.

After that everybody in the 200 Club went to work—if not physically and mentally, at least all gave their moral support.

Week after week, month after month the work has progressed. Ticket committees were formed. Charles Agnew was named in charge of them. Jim Brooks is in charge of parking. The plans fill 44 pages. Jim Brooks headed the ticket committee. Sam Rose took charge of things at the Davenport Country Club. Sam Occhipinti started the ball rolling in the press and radio divisions.

The shirt sleeves were rolled up.

Bill Krehill now to that. He oversaw everything.

Sacrifice—that is the keynote of the Western Open golf tournament plans. Everybody is working for the good of the cause.

Take the Davenport Country Club situation, for instance. The members will move out of their lockers for a week in order to be hospitable to the participants in the tournament.

The swimming pool will be closed so that all available space can be utilized.

The home pro, Pete Pritcher, is doing all that is asked of him—and more.

Greenkeeper Al Speer has done a splendid job with the course, making it one of the silkiest in the country.

It is a case of 100% cooperation at the DCC or the Western Open could not be held.

AS AN EXAMPLE, a former president of the club, Art Lowessen, has taken on one of the toughest jobs—the generalissimo of the marshals whose duty it will be to police the galleries.

Fellows like Al Krukow and Joe Kimmel, Jr., have charge of the difficult job of transportation and parking.

Don Jones is the club house committee chairman, and that's a big job.

Quad-City men, B. F. Pohl, Col. W. W. Warner, Artie Mitchell, Fred Agnew, Jim Brooks, Virlar Esterdahl, Sherrill Sherr, Sam Steffens, Walter Stoeffler, Walter Johnson, Jack Finck, Pete Pritcher and Paul Bell, are serving on the advisory committee.

And the ladies—bless 'em—are going to do a job—and pay for the privilege.

Mrs. H. R. Staats and her committee will be the lady managers assisting they will have charge of the score cards of the participants.

Many ladies will serve as hostesses, who will give out with information and see that many things click.

And each of these ladies will pay $3.50 for a season ticket. Good spirit, huh?

THEN, OF COURSE, there are the participants, without whom there would be no tournament.

The best guns in the land, top amateurs who can make Mr. Par cry for help—they'll be in the limelight in the Western Open.

And there will be the caddies—those youngsters who carry the big bags and the many sticks.

They know that thru the Western Golf Association the Evans Scholarship Fund is helping 46 former caddies get an education in 26 colleges of the land.

So they'll work just a bit harder this week.

When a community goes big league and takes on a $15,000 Western Open tournament, that is big business.

The "nut" will be $27,000, according to the figures.

Much of the hard work is over. Much will remain.

The value of shares in the golf world has become a Quad-City affair.

If the weather man is kind, the sun shines, the rounds turn out, and the golfers chase Ol' Man Par right out of the lot—then by next Saturday night all the hard work will have been forgotten.

Nothing brings happiness like success.

Civic 200

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