

Sports of the Times

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

By JOHN KIERAN.

Striking Oil.

ONE man was going down to Miami and he insisted that the others should go along because the \$10,000 Miami open tournament would start in a few days and—

"Oh, sure," interrupted a bystander, "with Jimmy Thomson, Ky Laffoon, Paul Runyan and some of the other pros in Australia, this would be our chance to win that Miami Open. When did you last break 100, if the question doesn't embarrass you?"

"Well, we could watch them at Miami, anyway," said the party of the first part weakly. "And we could play after they finished. Or we could go swimming. Our golf may be terrible, but nobody would notice it while we were in swimming."

The only trouble with the conversation was that golf had been mentioned. The party of the first part should have gone off quietly to Miami without mentioning this subject for fluent discourse. In two minutes flat there were five men giving details on how and why and when they used No. 6 irons. Five minutes later the man from Oklahoma was in the driver's seat and had them all gagged.

Black Gold.

He was Mr. Perry Maxwell from out in the oil fields. He was once a banker in Oklahoma, but some years ago he noticed oil stains on the floor of his bank. They ripped up the floor and a gusher hit the ceiling and after that he had what he wanted, which was plenty of time for golf. He spoke rapidly and perhaps the details recorded here are a trifle inaccurate, but the general tenor is correct. Incidentally, coming from Oklahoma, did he know Lou Wentz, the oil man, who had been trying to buy the St. Louis Cardinals from Singing Sam Breadon?

"Lou Wentz? I should say I do," answered Mr. Maxwell. "So I traveled over the country—let's see—I've played golf in forty States here and all the famous courses abroad and"—

Would he mind giving a little information on Lou Wentz, such as height, weight, chest expansion, political affiliation and previous condition of servitude? The fans would like to know.

"Why, Lou Wentz is about medium size and weight—and age," said Mr. Maxwell. "I guess there's luck in striking oil, but Lou had a good background. He came from the oil regions of Pennsylvania and had a pretty good idea of where to look for it in Oklahoma. Anyhow, he hit it right."

Apparently he did, if he was offering a cool million—the rumored sum—for the Cardinals.

Hence Wentz.

"Well, all I know is what I read about his offer for a ball club," continued the man from Oklahoma, "but I do know that when he sold out some years ago he had about \$25,000,000 cash. Like everybody else, I suppose his investments slumped, but I know he likes baseball and he can afford it as a hobby if he wants it."

Has he any other million-dollar hobbies?

"Yes, he has," continued Mr. Maxwell. "He's a bachelor and he seems to have adopted all the crippled kids in Oklahoma City. At least, he built a big hospital there for crippled children and he maintains it. Funny thing, his big rival in the oil business

was E. W. Marland. Well, Marland's a Democrat, and we're pretty solidly Democratic out there. Wentz is a Republican, but he was so popular and so prominent that they made him head of the Highway Commission, and he did a lot for Oklahoma in the way of building fine roads."

Now he wanted to branch out and do something for Missouri by improving a world's championship ball club?

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Maxwell from Oklahoma. "There were a lot of Democrats who wanted Lou Wentz to run for Governor. He was one Republican who stood a real chance of winning. Everybody liked him, even if he was a Republican. But he didn't run and who was elected—on the Democratic ticket, of course—but his old rival in the oil business, E. W. Marland."

Back on the Links.

With that, the man from Oklahoma dropped Lou Wentz back into the oil well and took to the links again.

"I received a letter from Fielding Yost," he said. "You see, after playing all these golf courses, none of them seemed to be just what I thought a golf course should be, so I took to designing courses myself. Well, I laid out one for the Penn. A. C.—the Melrose course in Philadelphia—and Yost wanted a course for the University of Michigan. Somebody took him over the Melrose course and after that he asked me to build the University of Michigan course at Ann Arbor, which I did. That's where Johnny Fischer played his golf when he was at school."

So he didn't like the golf courses he had seen? Well, a lot of golfers are like that when they are up to their necks in the rough or ankle-deep in sand. Didn't he like Pine Valley?

"Best course in the country," said Mr. Maxwell in a tone approaching awe, "Marvelous—for the shots you have to play, I mean. But just a mite hilly, you know, in some places. I mean that golf was originally a seaside game. But I wouldn't say a word against Pine Valley. Great course, wonderful scenery—and a clubhouse that makes everybody feel at home."

Passing in Review.

After Pine Valley, what would be his choice in American courses?

"The National Links by Peconic Bay," he answered promptly. "Yes, sir, that's a great course. Charles B. Macdonald certainly built a beauty there. It's natural. It belongs. You know, Plato said"—

What! Was Plato a golfer, too?

"Plato said that the finest things are done by Nature," continued Mr. Maxwell. "That's why those famous British courses are what they are. They weren't built, constructed, the way our courses are. They seem to have been found. They grew there. Take St. Andrews. Everything is natural about it, greens, fairways and bunkers. The heather is grand. Then take that course at Rye, one of the old Cinque Ports towns. You know, Johann Sebastian Bach, when he wrote his B minor mass"—

When a man was dragging Plato and Bach around the golf courses, the wise thing for a bystander to do was to get up and move away quietly before the speaker became violent.