

Oil Boom Brings Golf to Bristow

BRISTOW — Back in 1920 when the bloom was on the Bristow boom there were some grand ideas for a country club that blossomed with all the financial fragrance of the oil that made both possible.

There was money in every pocket and golf was becoming socially important to this teeming town of newly-rich oilmen, wealthy merchants and prosperous people. A country club was a must.

Only two or three people who had a part in the forming of the club are still alive and their memory is hazy on dates and details.



FRANK LEWIS
... Pro at Bristow

This much is sure.

A Tulsa golfer—it may have been Jack Holloway who recently retired as shop assistant at Southern Hills—was called upon to layout a nine-hole sand greens course on a 373-acre tract that had been purchased on the hills immediately west of Bristow.

In nothing flat \$25,000 was raised with members plunking down \$2,000 each for a share of stock. Dues were to be \$25 per month. The golf course and a splendid clubhouse were built in big time; so was a swimming pool.

But trouble was just around the corner. No restriction on spending was written into the charter, there was the 1922 recession coming up and the oil boom was to fade from flowing gushers to pumping production.

In two year's time the original \$25,000 was gone and the club found itself about \$30,000 in debt. Any member of the club who saw something that was needed when on a trip east or north promptly bought it and charged it to the club.

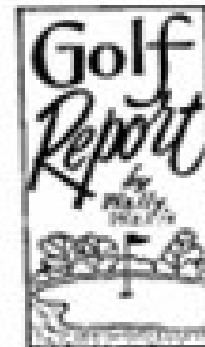
The situation got out of hand in 1923 but the oil play continued as the rich Slick field flew in more money and the debt was eventually cut down to about \$15,000. But the wealthy oilmen moved on about that time leaving the club to the merchants and citizens who were now beginning to look at their financial hole cards. The bank that held the mortgage was insisting upon payment.

Bristow voted a bond issue and purchased the entire 373 acres. Included was the golf course and clubhouse plus a large lake. It became a city park but under a lease arrangement the club continued to function in an half-hearted manner.

The golf course, the 75 or 80 acres upon which it is located, the clubhouse, the tennis courts and the pro shop now must have a value of more than \$100,000. But that is water under the bridge. The city has enlarged the lake and on the property now are located a city building, national guard armory, an airport, city hospital, new and modern swimming pool and many other improvements. That \$15,000 bond issue resulted in a \$1 million wind-fall for the city of Bristow.

Sixty-eight year old Frank Lewis, an Englishman who started his apprenticeship at Royal North Devon near Westward Ho, Eng., in 1902, and came to the United States in 1913, is the present pro first coming to the club in the trying days of the depression.

Using NYA labor he converted the course to Bermuda greens in about 1931 for less than \$1,000.



These greens are still in use and play well considering the small budget for maintenance.

In 1943 the Bristow chapter of the VFW leased the club and spent about \$10,000 en-

larging and improving the clubhouse. This service organization operated the property as a glorified nightclub until 1952 when the golfers regained the lease.

Officers of the club currently are E. C. Robinson, president; Clayton Dial, vice-president, and Dick Vining, secretary-treasurer. Directors, in addition to that threesome, are Montford McGee, Bill Boerstor, C. L. McClane and Charles Fawcett.

The women's organization of 35 members, which plays each Monday, is headed by Mrs. Clyde LaForce Jr. and Mrs. Eddie Krumme. Mrs. Krumme is women's club champion while the course record for women is a 41 set by Mrs. Fred Anderson in Tulsa.

MEN'S champion is high-schooler Jerry Schmidt while Don Lewis, son of the pro, holds the men's mark with a 63. The course measure's only 2,900 yards and calls for par 36.

Last year the pro shop was enlarged and this year new mowing equipment has been purchased. Only routine care is being applied to the course which is in excellent playing condition and will be expanded in the coming season expands.

Presently there is no regularly scheduled activity at the clubhouse, but plans are being made to provide it this year.

Bethany Flips Choctaw, 3-2

By BOB DELLINGER

Punching across two runs in the last of the sixth, unbeaten Bethany outlasted Choctaw, 3-2, Tuesday afternoon at Bethany to run the Broncho winning streak to seven.

Left-hander Charles Kimbrough chunked a four-bitter as Bethany notched its second Central conference win. Kimbrough struck out 12 and walked only one.

The Bronchos collected only four safeties off Lee Gibson and Jackie Beardslee, but hooked up two infield singles with a pair of walks to break a 1-1 tie with the deciding runs in the sixth.