

## Cocoa Finds Hundreds of Balls

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The Oyster Harbors Club course, on Cape Cod, is trodden by many golf fanatics, but the most fanatic of them all is not a man or a woman but a 9-year-old registered, liver-and-white Dalmatian named Roadcoach Cocoa, U. D., owned by Mrs. Herman Prescott, of West Chester, Pa. Cocoa is as zealous about finding lost golf balls as the members are about playing, and she is more successful at her avocation than many of the members are at theirs. It is not at all unusual for Cocoa to find a dozen or two dozen balls in the course of a single stroll around the links with her mistress or her mistress' father, Harold T. Lindsay, after dinner of an evening. As a finder of literally hundreds of lost balls, Cocoa probably is without a peer, either quadruped or biped.

Yet Cocoa is considerably more than a divining rod mounted on four legs. It is quite apparent that she understands

not only the principles but also the etiquette of golf. She never breaks and runs until all the players have completed their strokes. She has supreme respect for a putting green and seldom crosses one. She never picks up a ball lying in the fairway or one which she knows has just been hit. She never leaves a toothmark on a ball. She proudly returns all her finds to her mistress. And she clearly loves to "play golf."

One evening Mrs. Prescott took Cocoa out for the usual evening stroll, which was concluded according to custom by Cocoa being tossed a ball to play with and chew to bits. They started up the tenth fairway, toward home. There was a crack as club met ball somewhere in the background, and another ball plopped down close to Cocoa. Cocoa stepped over, sniffed it casually and rejoined her mistress. Although she had been gathering balls all evening, she knew this was a ball



Cocoa, a 9-year-old liver and white Dalmatian, poses with a sample of his loot at the Concord Country Club, in Concordville, Pa.

in play, lying in the fairway, not a lost ball. She didn't touch it.

When on the trail of a lost ball, Cocoa travels rapidly through the rough. Suddenly her tail stiffens and quivers like a hunting dog's, and in a jiffy she is trotting out into the fairway with a ball which she drops at her mistress' feet. Then she gallops gleefully back to the rough to seek another.

#### Scent through Water

Cocoa's most phenomenal trick is performed in water hazards. She loves to work around the edges of the water until she can pick up the scent. Then her nose larts into the water and, using her teeth and fore feet, she pulls out a ball, usually faded and water-logged. When it lies deep or under a stump and her teeth and fore feet are of no avail, she becomes frantic and someone has to extract the ball for her. There is always a ball there.

Cocoa holds all three obedience degrees, is the first liver-and-white Dalmatian in this country to win an obedience degree and may be the only one of her color to hold a Utility Dog rating, the highest given by the American Kennel Club. She retired from the obedience ing four years ago.

Finding lost balls is a trait she developed naturally and without special training. She learned by following Mrs. Prescott around the Oyster Harbors course, and the first trick she developed was to run to Mrs. Prescott's ball and stand guard over it until her mistress arrived.

Mrs. Prescott breeds Dalmatians and out of curiosity once tried to develop a young dog as another lost-ball retriever. He had Cocoa's ability to find a ball and learned many tricks from Cocoa, but he wouldn't give up the balls he found.

One of the amusing sights at Oyster Harbors is a late match, unaware of Cocoa and his ways, hunting for a ball when Cocoa passes on an evening stroll. Mrs. Prescott usually offers Cocoa's services. While the strangers are politely pointing out to the girl that golf is a serious game, Cocoa is running to the ball and standing over it until the incredulous owner arrives to identify it.

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