

POST-WAR REVIVAL IN JAPANESE GOLF

*Golfers
Number
300,000*

GOLFERS are too apt to think of the United States and Britain as the sole trustees of the game of golf, that other nations merely dabble in the game. But they get a pleasant shock when they take their clubs to the Continent and sample the several first class courses in the Paris area, Royal Antwerp or Le Zoute in Belgium, Eindhoven in Holland or Villa D'Este, Italy.

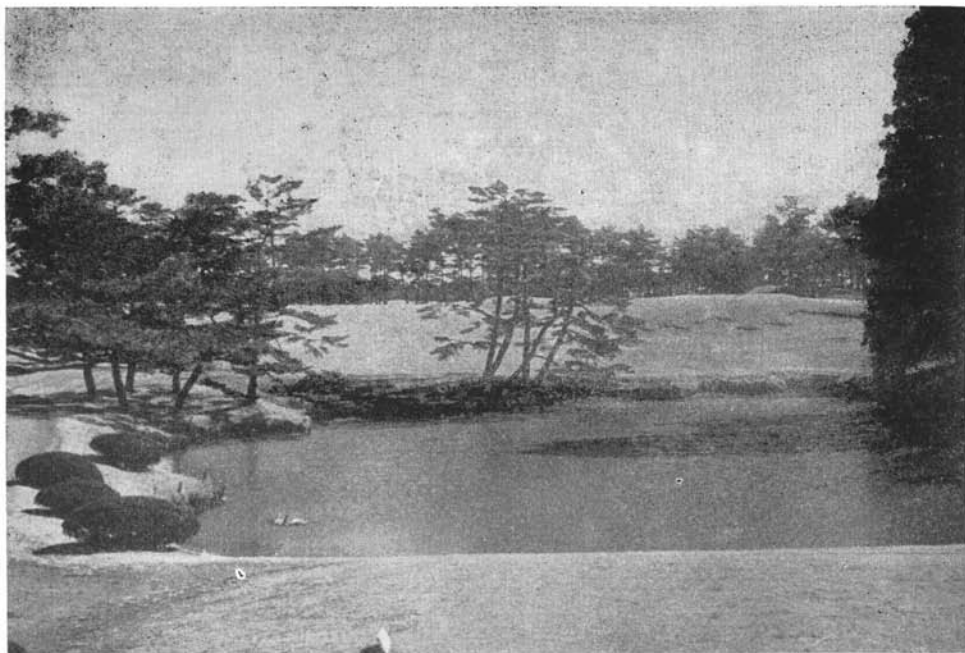
If business takes them out to Australia they can play the dozen or more excellent courses on the sand belt outside Melbourne and realize where the Peter

Thomsons come from. The Union of South Africa has produced Bobby Locke and the promising young Gary Player.

Now the spotlight is swinging right around to the Far East and focusing on the land of the Rising Sun.

Japanese professionals have occasionally visited the United States, many servicemen have played in Japan, but apart from fragments of information the average golfer is hardly aware that golf is popular in the Orient.

Yet golf was introduced to Japan about fifty years ago when British settlers in



Many good courses are remembered for their water holes. The Kasumigaseki Country Club, Tokyo, where the Canada Cup will be held in October, is justly proud of its tenth hole. Here you see it viewed from the tee; the green is in the distance.

Yokohama and Kobe each laid out nine hole courses. It caught on and the first all-Japanese Club, the Tokyo Golf Club, was formed in 1913.

In the 'twenties and 'thirties the game gained in popularity to such an extent that it rivalled baseball as the premier sport. Prior to the war there were 62 courses throughout the country, but by the time that some had been given over to agriculture and others to military needs, only 18 survived the war.

The intervening decade has been one of tremendous golfing revival. Helped in several instances by the United States occupational forces, Japan now boasts 59 private clubs and 16 public courses for its upwards of 300,000 enthusiasts.

If golfers in this country feel that they have a course shortage problem, their worries are slight in comparison. Nearly every club in Japan has a membership of over 1,000, and in some instances as many as 2,000.

Golfers who cannot join a club are flocking as guests of members, and most clubs have reluctantly had to bar visitors at week-ends.

New courses are constantly being designed, twelve are at present under construction, but that is chicken feed compared with the estimated 5,000 new golfers who are taking up the sport each month. Driving ranges have sprung up around all the big cities and professionals are teaching from early morning to late at night.

Shun Normura, Vice-President of the Japan Golf Association and President of the Tokyo Golf Club, to whom we are indebted for this information, foresees Japan as one of the great golfing nations of the future. It has a nucleus of first class courses, its scenic splendor can hold its own with courses throughout the world, and its enthusiasm has probably never been equalled.

What matters more in the immediate future is that as host to this year's Canada Cup in October it should be absorbed into the great fellowship of golfing nations which have done so much to foster good-will among the world's citizens.

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