

# Mostly about People

By Wally Traling



## Craziest Golf Course I Know (Of)

Wednesday afternoon I went nine on the zaniest golf course in the world.

No holes!

Well, there are actually holes, all right, but you don't use them.

I shot six over par and never sank a putt!

And if that doesn't cauterize your cuticles, let me tell you that the only club employed was a nine iron.

It was the swingiestest swat-fest this side of St. Andrews and I get all sweaty just thinkin' about how to explain it.

This is a private golf course. John A. Cruze of 1155 17th avenue, is club president, mainly on the strength of his laying it out and thinking up the rules. It is so private, in fact, that he is the only one who has ever played it, except for me, who am privileged.

Cruze, solid in his 70s and a retired oil company man, is very rich. No, not in green stuff, but in the art of living.

His links were lovingly laid out on a rolling vacant lot next door, bordered by a warehouse, 17th avenue, and a tomato patch.

One would naturally ask, naturally, why does one build his own golf course?

"Well," said the forthright, slightly built, strong minded, freckled faced duffer, "I was standing around the kitchen crabbing about something recently and my wife said: 'Go on out and build a golf course!' So I did!"

He showed 'er!

Made his own rules, too.

Actually, there are only five greens—and I use the word greens, strainedly. They are circular areas from which the weeds have been cleared, and in the center of which are coffee cans and flags.

It's a par four course, and I imagine the reason he decided to make the nine iron his official club is that the whole ruddy course is a trap—a sea of powermowed weeds—daisyheads and burrs to be exact.

One of his most delightfully screwy rules is that when you arrive within a club length of the coffee can (hole) the ball is automatically considered sunk and you just add a stroke. I nearly dropped an oar when he told me that.

His second most delightfully screwy rule is that after you've hit the ball and it comes to stop in an area not to your liking you

can lay your lie where you like. On top a daisyhead, for example.

It's sort of like playing on tundra. My first drive (Ha!) took four 45 degree angle turns before arresting. I mean I thought it was doing the Bossa Nova.

I beat Cruze on the first hole and he complained he had buck fever.

When alone he plays a very complicated game with three balls. He tried to explain how it worked but failed. It's sort of a combination of Russian Roulette and Mother May I, based on the Split-T.

Well, we had a ball that day, duffing away, occasionally whooping and laughing and flinging about snappy golf lingo like "I hooker 'er," and "Damn!"

★ ★ ★

In the end Cruze whopped me good. He shot a 35, one under par, and this was with buck fever, too.

Where I went wrong was on the 228-foot hole. There's a huge plate glass window in a building not far beyond the green which he ve-ry craftily planned for visiting players like me.

It created a case of nerves that went right down through the club shaft and I sliced the drive into Mrs. Cruze's tomato patch.

Those big trucks rumbling along 17th avenue were another reason I lost.

And besides, it was snowing!

## Win At

## How A Bad Play

After four days of part scores we can stand a little excitement in the column. Here is a hand that decided the 1950 Vanderbilt Cup.

At one table South stopped at a nice safe six club contract; at the other table South arrived at seven clubs and received a queen of diamonds opening. He thought for a while, put up dummy's ace of diamonds and discarded his jack of spades.

The heart jack was guarded against him and he was down one trick. Furthermore, it turned out that East had started with queen and one spade so that if South had discarded a heart at

MONTH END