

SNOW AND SLEET CAN'T STOP THE "ICEBREAKERS"

D. C. Club
Holds Novel
Winter Event

For the past three years, the golfers at Columbia Country Club in Washington, D. C., have not only refused to rack up their clubs for the winter but have definitely staged a Midwinter Member-Guest Tournament known appropriately as "The Icebreakers."

This title for the event has a pleasant double meaning. Not only must the players face the likelihood of ice on the course but their day begins with a congenial icebreaking ritual in the clubhouse.

Each table at a pre-tournament breakfast boasts a unique centerpiece decoration—a bowl of eight golf balls frozen under ice with the table number on a small flag imbedded in the ice. To obtain their favors the players must crack the ice.

Starting Tees Assigned

Members and their guests are urged to register with the starter in the club grill room before 8:30 a. m., dressed and ready to play. Each team has already been assigned a starting time, seats at breakfast tables, and most important, a starting tee.

When the players check in they are also provided with identification tags, copies of the pairings and starting times and copies of the special rules of play for the event.

At 9:00, a whistle sounds as the signal for everyone to be seated at pre-assigned breakfast tables. The tables proceed in numerical order through a buffet line that includes the staples of a large country-style breakfast—kidney stew, scrambled eggs, chicken livers, waffles, sausages, etc. During the grapefruit course, the players are instructed as to special procedures and rules by the tournament chairman.

Promptly at 10:00, the entire field sets out in cars onto the course to their respective starting tees. Eight pairs in four four-balls are sent off simultaneously from six different tees located three holes

apart. Precise organization and control is required in starting play because the overall course pattern can be upset by one four-ball starting either too early or too late.

This maneuver enables the entire field to start within a space of twenty minutes and also assures that the field will return to the clubhouse at approximately the same time. The thawing-out process can then proceed under the most friendly of circumstances in the grill room.

The tournament itself is a handicap four-ball competition with full handicap allowed to each player. No player is allowed a handicap of more than 18 strokes. Only low net prizes are given.

Prizes Awarded Promptly

Because the entire field finishes at approximately the same time, it is possible to compute the winning scores quickly. Prizes are awarded during the post-play defrost period within an hour after play is completed.

The mechanics of simultaneous starting limit the number that can be accommodated to 48 teams, or 96 players. The founders of "Icebreakers" never imagined that this limit might present a problem. The demand for entries, however, has been such that there is some talk now of extending the tournament over two days in the future.

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Ill.	Waterloo Country Club
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ASSOCIATE

Calif.	Pauma Inn and Golf Course
Ga.	O. B. Keeler Golf Course
N. H.	Waterville Valley Golf Course
N. J.	Tara Greens
Ohio	Pleasant Valley Golf Course