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Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

Fred Wiseman Scrapbook

Extracted on Apr-18-2024 11:36:18

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[[newspaper clipping]]
52-A Oakland Tribune, Sunday, Oct. 16, 1955

ATHLETIC EDUCATOR
Retired U.C. Professor Champ Golfer at 87
By MIKE ABRAMSON

Dr. Leon J. Richardson, University of California professor of Latin, emeritus, is a rare man on the golf links — his score is lower than his age.

Now nearing his 88th birthday on Feb. 22, the educator, a member of the Berkeley faculty for 64 years, regularly covers the 18 holes of San Francisco's Lincoln and the Eastbay Regional Park's Tilden golf courses in the low 80s.

And although he occasionally shoots as high as the 88 he is approaching in years, Dr. Richardson finds that he is still improving.

"I have found out through experience that persistent endeavor enables one to improve. One must have the activities of both playing games and practicing. Games alone are not enough," he says.

[[image - photograph of man]]
[[caption]] DR. LEON J. RICHARDSON
Octogenarian Golfer [[/caption]]

Dr. Richardson plays golf nearly every day. And his "persistent endeavor" has paid off when the going gets tough.

REPEAT WINNER

He is an active member of the California Seniors Golf Association and last September won the organization's Pebble Beach tournament for the eighth time in 12 years.

The trophy won there he displays proudly along with symbols of other victories in a 47 year golfing career — including Dr. Richardson's most prized memento, a silver cup awarded as runner-up in the 1912 California state tournament.

The wiry, gray-haired professor took up golf in 1908 as a member of the Claremont Country Club. Since then he has lived and played golf "all over the world."

One of the toughest courses he ever encountered was in Vienna where the course ran around the flank of a steep mountain, requiring the golfer to stand three to six inches above his ball. "There was a 625-yard hole on that course which was a par six," he recalls incredulously.

In 1920 Dr. Richardson visited the shrine of golfdom at St. Andrews. There are several courses at St. Andrews and a player is assigned according to his skill. The professor, then shooting from 75 to 83, was permitted to play the Royal and Ancient Course, the most difficult of all, upon his word but the officials stood by to see if he were really qualified.



"When I hit my first ball, which was a good one, my caddie remarked, 'it's a great relief, sir,'" Dr. Richardson says laughing.

Dr. Richardson holds that golf "contributes to one's health provided that one doesn't have a jerky swing" and describes his effort as a "plain even swing."

His doctor, he says, "thinks golf is good for my health and is prolonging my life because my game is free of any strain."

In addition to his golf, Dr. Richardson is busy in several other fields.

Although he retired from classroom teaching in 1939, he is still active in teaching correspondence courses for the university's extension division which he founded in 1919.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITY

From his home at 2335 Pacific Avenue, San Francisco, he conducts language courses for students throughout the world. He also presents two courses which have grown from his own full and rich life, "Retirement and How to Take Advantage of It" and "How to Keep Intellectually Alive If You Find Yourself in a Hum-Drum Occupation."

He is also a poet, having published numerous books including "Old Cronies" which took the Commonwealth Club's 1955 prize as the best work by a Californian author and "Singing in Sunshine" which will be in another month.
[[/newspaper clipping]]

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