

### MACKAY NATIVE'S SUCCESS.

Members of the family of Bob Ditton, country golf champion of Queensland, and the many schoolmates and friends who grew up with Ditton—who is a native of Mackay—rejoiced when the blue ribbon of the country title came his way.

The following is from Brisbane Telegram:

Golf is the least exciting of the sporting interests that have been packed into the life of Bob Ditton, new holder of the country golf championship of Queensland. Until a few years ago he made a hobby of taming snakes—real reptiles, not the variety that are sparring partners to pink elephants, and "hicups."

In the last few years Ditton has been domiciled at Laidley, where he has found golf more compatible with his billet of health inspector than cavorting with carpet snakes. Golf is a comparatively new pastime to him. When in Mackay he attained fame as a middleweight boxer, and he fought some memorable ring battles in the north with well known men.

In his development as a boxer he had to overcome the handicap of his left arm being three inches shorter than the right, the result of having his hand drilled with a bullet when on a shooting expedition as a youngster. The bullet severed a tendon in the hand and has rendered a couple of his fingers practically useless, so that his golf success also is something to remark upon.

When still in his very immature youth, Bob Ditton showed his liking for going after big game. With a brother—the elder was aged 12 years—he set out in a leaky dinghy to fish for crocodiles in a creek near Mackay. They tied a length of stout rope to the dinghy, attached a huge hook, and belted it with a bullock's heart. There were no crocodiles about, but that didn't stop them from wanting to catch one.

#### Some Fish!

Great was their astonishment when they felt something take the bait. The two lads had visions of being towed out to sea when the dinghy started to move. It was no ordinary fish, this, and by the time they were able to attract someone's attention to give them assistance they had been towed about the creek for an hour or more. Eventually the catch was landed, a 460lb. gape!

Little wonder, is it, that a lad who can tell a truthful fish story like that, has also been able to do other things well in the realm of sport. Snake yarns and fish stories are closely related in the realm of sporting romance. Dit. can certainly spin a few about snakes: he has succeeded in taming.

Some years ago in the north, a neighbor of his was in a state of nerves about a venomous snake that had taken up abode in a well on his property. He didn't know how to get rid of the reptile, but Bob Ditton came to his aid. He descended the well, and, to the neighbor's astonishment, brought the

He descended the well, and, to the neighbor's astonishment, brought the snake up—alive!

#### Walk in the Gardens.

On another occasion he had a snake he valued highly. It had been thoroughly tamed, but when he decided to have a holiday in Brisbane, he couldn't find anyone who would look after it during his absence. So he had no option but to bring it with him. Naturally he had to keep the wriggler well under cover, as he couldn't give a snake the freedom of a city boarding establishment, or he would have found his ports and himself dumped on the pavement.

But even snakes need an airing when they are kept as pets, so Dit. used to take it for a stroll in the Botanic Gardens during the morning. He would carry it in his shirt until he reached the gardens, and the youngsters playing in the gardens must have thought on more than one occasion that a madman had been let loose when they saw the way he fondled and played with such a venomous looking reptile.

If you are a hardened disbeliever in snake yarns and fish stories, just have a talk to R. A. Ditton, country golf champion of Queensland for 1935.