

FIRST YEAR OF RETIREMENT

Stan Morton has now enjoyed his first year of retirement after fifty-five years of greenkeeping. He started as a boy at Camberley Heath in 1915, but the urge to join the forces took him into the Royal Marine Artillery, known as the Blue Marines. Between duties on convoys from Scapa Flow the skipper from H.M.S. Collingwood used to get him to go ashore to look for their nine-hole course. Back at Camberley Heath in 1919 women were still mowing greens. His first chance came in 1925, when his greenkeeper introduced him to A. G. Barry, Amateur Champion in 1905. He wanted the last nine holes constructed at Tidworth, a tall order for a young man of 26 years, but he made a very good course and then moved to the Biddenham course at Bedford, with his wife as stewardess. At Bedford he met Henry Longhurst, at that time only a schoolboy. They became great friends—Stan had got down to a handicap of 1—and they played a lot together. The Golf Greenkeepers Association had a very good team in those days, fielding a side of twelve at 5 handicap and below. Henry Longhurst arranged a fixture for the Greenkeepers' side against Cambridge and got Oxford to do the same. These were always very close matches, Stan's partner in all foursomes was the late Bert Berry, the best golfer the Greenkeepers' Association ever had. The match which stands out in his mind, apart from beating Henry Longhurst and his partner, was against Robert and Charles Sweeney of Oxford at Beaconsfield, never more than one hole in it and finished a halved match. One well remembered experience with Henry Longhurst was on an outing to Letch-

worth—not a very hard course for a scratch and a 1 handicap. Henry started with two threes, holed a full brassie at the long sixth for a 2, goes to the seventh tee and holed his tee shot at the short seventh—out in 29. Not surprisingly Stan was six down at the turn.

Stan was appointed to Formby Golf Club in 1934, just two years before the death of his old head greenkeeper at Camberley. After fourteen happy years at Formby, on to Royal Portrush in 1948. Portrush was looking for an English greenkeeper as there was some talk about the "Open" going to Ireland for the first time. This came about in 1951 and until 1969 was the last time an Englishman won it. The Ladies' "Open" followed in 1955. He finished his fifty-five years on golf courses and links at Old Ford Manor, near London. Since joining the Association in 1915, he has been chairman of the North-West Section, which he helped to form, also chairman of the Northern Irish Section, which he helped to get started.

He thinks it has been a grand life, rough winters at times but good summers make you forget them. He thinks the game of golf is about the best in the world to play, meeting, as he has, all sorts of people, professionals and amateurs from all over the world.

A presentation was made to him at the Old Ford Golf Club on Thursday, 5th February before the largest gathering of members seen at the Club.

"Stan is sitting one from the right in the front row of our picture, on opposite page, of the Professionals versus Greenkeepers team at Bedford in 1932.