

## THE WAY IT WAS

by Bill Stuppel, Retired Golf Course Supt.  
Exmoor Country Club

Much has been said about how it was on golf courses years ago, but there was also an important activity at many clubs beside golf and tennis, which of course, are spring, summer and fall activities, although I can say that some golfers played during the winter months, even carrying a broom in their bags to sweep the snow away from their line of putt. What I am referring to is winter sports. If a greenkeeper thinks he has it tough he should have the winter program which I had to contend with at Exmoor. This program reached it's ultimate in the winter of 1939-40, which if I remember correctly was a very severe winter. Here is what we had. Toboggan slide, ski slide, skating rink, hockey rink, curling rink, trap shooting, skeet shooting. Besides, the 1/2 mile plus of road and parking lots had to be kept open at all times with our one snow plow mounted on the front of a 1932 International truck. The toboggan slide had to be iced for a length for 175 yards. For water supply there was an outlet 200 yards from the far end of the slide and with a 3/4 inch hose, you can imagine how much pressure there was at the end. If there was not enough snow to pack the slide, we had to gather snow that had drifted into sand traps and hollows.

As to ice for the rinks, three kinds were required. A good hard ice for the hockey players, pool table level pebbled ice for curling and two different kinds for the skaters. For the skaters during the day, regular ice sufficed. At 5 p.m. the skating rink was closed for two hours in order to allow my crew to prepare it for the figure skaters in the evening. The ice was cleaned off and given a shot of very hot water. This gave the surface a velvety finish which made it wonderful for figure skating. We really did have some fine ice and our rink became famous in the district. The hot water came from a steam line we ran from the boiler in the club house.

Needless to say, this work required a crew of five or six men. It was a good thing in one way because it enabled me to keep my best men year round. In their spare time these men overhauled and painted all machinery and other equipment, trimmed trees and did any other work possible to do in the winter.

These winter sports went all the way back to 1915, except for curling which started in 1936. The tobogganning was discontinued in 1941 and skating and hockey a few years ago. Trap shooting and skeet shooting were discontinued years ago. Paddle tennis has been added and proves to be very popular. People play the game in the coldest weather.

I hope this article is not too boring to you, but that's the way it was.

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