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Minnehaha's Pool Adjusts Club to Changed Conditions

FROM VARIOUS articles appearing in the golf publications and other periodicals devoted to sports it would appear that golf clubs, especially the private clubs that make some claims to pretentious clubhouses, well maintained greens and fairways and all that go with them, are having a struggle to maintain membership with dues of a reasonable amount. It is not so difficult to determine why this is so.

Twenty-five, even 20 years ago, golf clubs were devoted to golf. They were organized and supported by men, the majority of whom had reached middle age and in the majority of cases, men who were established in business and who could afford the expense connected therewith.

Women were hardly tolerated on the course, but women insisted on being recognized, which in turn led to the expenditure of large sums on clubhouses, the embellishment of grounds and the injection of social features; all of which added very materially to the expense but added no revenue. Hence, year by year dues were increased and supplemented in many cases by special assessments, the bane of all club members.

Transportation was not such a difficult problem either. In the case of these earlier organized clubs, it was found necessary to abandon grounds on which a lot of money had been spent and locate further away because of the encroachment of the cities.

Men continued to grow older and these elders cared less about playing, or played

SOME DATA ON MINNEHAHA C. C. POOL AND ITS OPERATION

Size: 100 feet long, 40 feet wide.

Cost (including landscaping): \$11,000.

Pool is free to members and their families.

Junior members (over 12 years) pay junior dues. Guest fees: 50c. Guest must be introduced by member.

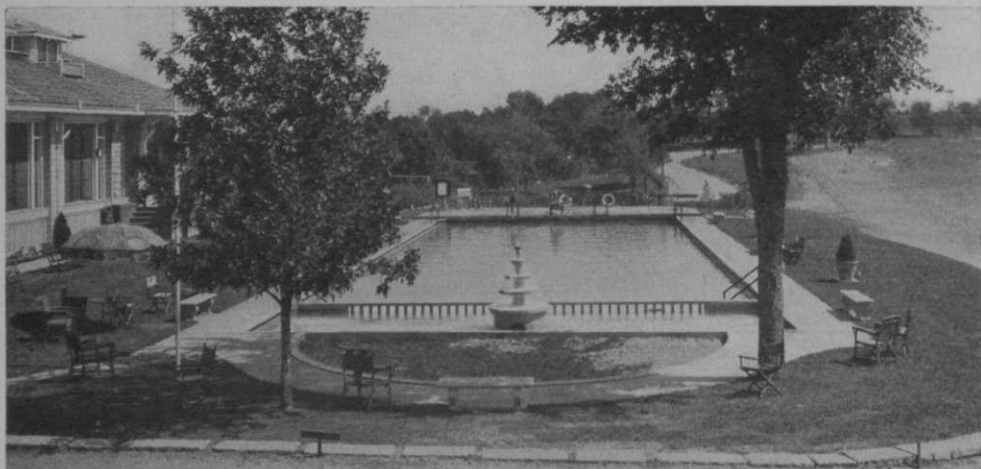
Space at one end of pool 12 feet wide and 40 feet long reserved for small children and separated from main pool by balustrade that permits free circulation of water to and from filtration equipment. Water in children's section 10 inches to 18 inches deep. Main pool depth varies from 3 feet to 10 feet.

Fountain in the children's section returns 50 gallons of water a minute to the pool when filtration system is in operation, balance of purified supply is put into main pool direct.

Small semi-circular sand beach adjoins the children's section.

less often. The advent of paved roads, multiplication of autos, necessity of taking half a day away from business every time they did play, the slow, crawling home through congested traffic to a late dinner, all took toll of the older members. Younger men, just getting established, could neither take the time nor afford the expense of these so-called better clubs.

Public fee and municipal courses multiplied. In the case of the municipal courses, the majority were located in city parks, closely adjacent to the city, with transportation facilities and plenty of parking space for those who used their own cars, and where players *paid as they played*.



Note children's wading pool and play beach separated from main pool at Minnehaha.

Women, especially the younger class, were no longer content to sit idly at home but insisted upon the consideration that was their due as partners in family affairs. There arose the question of long, pleasant drives of an evening, or the neighborhood picture show which "Nellie and the children could enjoy."

This Club Is Good Example

Perhaps, individually, these were of small moment, but taken collectively they certainly have had their effect on country club affairs the past 15 years as the records of many clubs will show. The Minnehaha C. C. of Sioux Falls, S. D., has gone through all this.

More than 30 years ago a few business men at Sioux Falls organized a little golf club; only nine holes with sand greens and on leased ground. A flock of sheep did most of the fairway mowing. Today, that tract is completely covered with residences.

Twenty years ago a tract of ground was purchased. It was located about 2 miles from the business section, adjacent to one of the city parks, but quite out in the country at that time. Nine holes with sand greens and a clubhouse were constructed. This, in turn, meant a campaign for more members and an increase in dues.

Growing Pains Start

In 1918 an additional 90 acres of ground was secured; an 18 hole course was constructed with undulating bent greens, a pumping plant was installed to supply water to all the greens, the clubhouse was remodeled, another campaign for new

members was put on, the membership fee raised, dues increased and the social functions elaborated at club expense.

Throughout all this the club was a golf club. Not to exceed 25 women played golf at all. The junior membership was practically nil. There was really nothing to interest the older members, if they did not play golf, save an occasional bridge party. On dance nights a few of the younger crowd would come along any time from 10:30 to 11:30 o'clock, look the field over; dance one or two numbers and then go away. There have been times when the orchestra cost \$10.00 per couple for all who attended. A gradual shrinkage in membership resulted.

A year ago it was decided by the directors that something had to be done and at once.

The question even came up of making it a quasi-public fee course. Then some good soul proposed a swimming pool. There was no place to swim except in the river, open to all comers. Numerous special meetings were held during the winter and early spring; plans were secured, considered, and at a special meeting attended by 60% of the membership, a motion authorizing and instructing the directors to go ahead and construct the pool was made, and to provide ways and means to finance same.

The pool was designed by a firm of specialists in swimming pool construction; and was installed. It has a complete filtration system. Tests are made daily and once a week a sample of the water is sent to the



Pool placed in front of clubhouse porch provides entertainment for "sitters" and is attractive entrance to club grounds.

engineers for microscopical and bacteriological analysis. Weekly bulletins posted show that at all times the water was absolutely pure.

The grounds are beautifully landscaped; lighted with flood lights at night and life guards are in attendance at all times.

What Pool Did

What did all this accomplish? From the day the pool was opened the club took on new life. Men who had surrendered their memberships, in many instances had them reinstated. New memberships were acquired, so that by the end of August, instead of having a number of vacancies in the membership list, it was filled completely with a good sized waiting list.

Junior memberships more than quadrupled. Many families that formerly spent the summer at some lake stayed at home largely because the children preferred to stay here among their friends and enjoy the pool rather than lead an isolated existence at some lake.

In the old days by 7 o'clock the club was deserted. Since the pool was installed, families have come out to dinner and stayed afterwards to let the young folks swim. Even at 9, 10 or 11 o'clock, on pleasant summer evenings, many were still seated about the pool—or were swimming in it.

Best of all it has served to break up the little cliques that seem to be part of the average club. Men discovered others than their regular foursomes, with whom it was a pleasure to play. Women were not so particular as to their partners at bridge. Dinner dances were held at which as high as 200 reservations were made and the members stayed and danced until the lights were put out. Afternoon bridge

parties for ladies became popular with as many as 150 present. Old time friendships that had been put away in moth-balls for 10 or 15 years were renewed.

The Minnehaha C. C. is not exclusively a golf club any longer; it is a family club, with something to interest and entertain all.

Giddings Successor to Hines as Mid-Atlantic Chief

REGINALD D. GIDDINGS, supt., Gibson Island G. C., Pasadena, Md., succeeded R. P. Hines, Manor C. C., as president of the Mid-Atlantic Assn. of Greenkeepers at the organization's annual election, held Jan. 4, at New Howard Hotel, Baltimore.

Tom Fischer, Burning Tree G. C., was elected v.-pres., Wm. E. Dunt, Sherwood Forest G. C. re-elected sec., and Richard Scott, Rolling Roads G. C., re-elected treas.

An interesting and timely feature of the annual meeting was the naming of a publicity committee consisting of Mr. Hines, to handle Washington section publicity and Mr. Giddings to see that the association got a publicity break in the Baltimore district.

Members reported much play this winter due to mild weather. In some cases exceptional growth of grass has necessitated cutting greens during December.

RHODE ISLAND has four greenkeepers with over thirty years of experience at greenkeeping: John Yule, Newport and Wanumetonomy, 33 years; Hugh Colgan, Point Judith, 32 years; Lawrence Hay, Agawam Hunt, 32 years, and James DiLucio, Agawam, Metacommet and Massasoit, 31 years.