

KNOLLWOOD LIKES SKEET

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and BOB CUNNINGHAM, Jr.

ACTIVE interest in shooting was first displayed at Knollwood in 1927, at a time when other Chicago district clubs were already shooting on a successful basis. Along with the cumulated agitation for winter sports sponsored by the club, our shot gun spirits clamored for proper dispensation on their behalf and a trap layout was installed, which was sparingly patronized for a few seasons only to fail for lack of sustained interest after the general decline in member income.

Revived during 1932, interest again mounted and a committee was formed for the purpose of conducting winter sports on a satisfactory self-supporting basis. Three members of this group agreed to underwrite the off-season program and thus their full support was assured and the co-operation of all interested members practically guaranteed. Since the original trap equipment had been purchased several mechanical improvements had rendered the investment almost obsolete and the declining interest in straight trap-shooting dictated purchase of a skeet outfit. The modern layout, including an electric trap release and permanent wooden walks, was installed for less than \$500 and the old equipment sold at a heavy discount.

Sold Special Gun Membership

Other clubs supported by a membership with financial strength on a par with ours had established a satisfactory rate of \$1.50 per round of skeet, and we followed their example, with the additional feature of a \$25 gun membership which was available to all golf members and their properly introduced associates. This membership, which entitled the patron to certain preferential privileges in reserving shooting time and a charge of only \$1.00 a round, was purchased by 18 men. An equal number elected to shoot at the single \$1.50 rate and arrange their appointments upon arrival.

It is noteworthy that, considering the number of rounds shot under each plan, the profit from the membership outshone the single rate shooting. With the greater

income from the bar and other club facilities due to more frequent shooting by members, the necessity of pushing this plan in the future was demonstrated.

For those who desired to shoot but did not own guns we worked out a system for supplying them with equipment. We found a sporting goods dealer who let us take two very good guns worth over \$100 apiece, with the agreement that he would be paid for them by spring. He was glad to make the arrangement for he might well have had to carry them in his stock for some months and close them out finally without his usual profit. We rented those guns for 25c a round and also rented guns of members who agreed to the proposal, with the result that more people learned to like skeet, more people shot with us and a fine impetus was built up for the next year's shooting. Then we sold the guns to two of the members for considerably less than the dealer's sales price and showed a profit on the rentals. Also those who did not even come out because they did not have guns, learned of the 'shoot it yourself' plan from the dealer and our patrons, and added to our "gate". Our range was located 200 yards from the regular clubhouse, which was closed during the winter months. For shelter, we improved the caddy house by adding a log fireplace, several lounge chairs, a few card tables and a make-shift bar, which was operated during prohibition times on a private stock, pro-rate cost plan. The popularity of our venture was a pleasant surprise and we even went so far as to charge the ever increasing audience a small fee for the bridge use of our 'clubhouse.' Operating expenses—excluding light and porter service which were allocated to winter maintenance for the general house—plus the original investment for equipment were covered by our income and a substantial sum was set aside for the installation of additional equipment.

We accordingly purchased another skeet

layout with the latest practical features and installed it at some distance from the first range with an overall expense of again less than \$500. With the more ample accommodations our next season's membership, occasional shooters and the steady run of \$1.50 rounds stepped up considerably. With the single range we had been forced to limit the women shooters to Sunday afternoons or week days and, as we tried to avoid the extra overhead of opening during the week, the ladies usually held sway on Sunday afternoons when many men would like to have shot in a so-called stag atmosphere. Under the new set up we could permit womens' use of one range only and satisfy both groups.

It goes without saying that our second year of operation was a more hearty financial success than the first and "a good time was had by all."

To answer some questions which are common to most clubs inspecting our layout, let me resort to testimonial procedure. Q. How do you get the original impetus? A. That depends on the membership, but when the proponents of shooting get to talking the board of directors should listen. Q. Under what division of

club operation is trapshooting set up? A. We find it most convenient to include shooting under Winter Sports as an individual account. Liquor and bar-supplies are purchased from the house bar at cost and our three employees, formerly caddies, are paid out of our income. Q. How do you promote interest in the sport? A. We sponsor weekly shoots, intra-club tournaments under the handicap system and regular matches with other clubs who have established a league of competition.

We find that all young shooters prefer skeet to straight traps; only those oldsters who are especially skilled at the "drop-bang" game hold out for the old style. After some inquiry among members of other clubs we decided interest in skeet far outweighed that in traps and that general club income profited more from the relatively slow-moving skeet than from "shoot and go home" traps. A round of skeet takes from 10 to 30 minutes while 25 trap-pigeons can be pulverized in 4 to 12 minutes. With 20 or more skeet shooters, the wait between rounds lasts from 20 to 50 minutes and this time is usually devoted to conversation and to purchasing the club's supplies.



Greensmen from Minnesota and adjoining states were shown the Toro line during their recent meeting.

Minnesota Greensmen Hosts to Tri-State Meeting

MINNESOTA greenkeepers' association was host to a group of greenkeepers and park superintendents from Iowa, Wisconsin and North Dakota in Minneapolis on Sept. 3 and 4. Close to forty were in attendance.

The group met at the Nicollet hotel on arrival and were taken in cars to the new University golf course, then to Midland Hills and Keller in St. Paul. After lunch they drove to Minikahda, and that evening a banquet was held, with Professor Stoutmeyer of Iowa State college as principal speaker. Motion pictures showing the

growth of fungus and spores were shown.

On Wednesday the group went through the Toro plant, and from there to Interlachen, Minneapolis, Westwood Hills, Superior, and Woodhill county clubs. Leonard Bloomquist, genial manager of Superior, put on an excellent lunch, and the meeting wound up with a dinner at the Nicollet hotel, put on by the Toro company, with Ken Goit acting as toastmaster. A number of outstanding speeches were made.

Most of the credit for the success of his tri-state meet goes to Ort Anderson, president of the Minnesota association, who saw to it that every minute of the meeting was used to advantage.