



A typical turnout at Hardt's range along about dusk. Glare of floodlights can be seen in background.

'Country Club Atmosphere' Makes Hardt's Range Big Money-maker

By MEL LARSON

WHEN you drive into Otto Hardt's 40-tee range located just on the outskirts of Minneapolis you think you're arriving at a country club. The range is set a bit back from the main highway, and on the roof of a cozy-looking club-and-shack house is a big, soft-looking neon sign, "GOLF." Each letter is 44 inches high.

There are 40 tees, all with automatic teeing devices. Which means that all you need do when you buy your pail of balls is pour all of them into a long, funnel-like container, adjust the tee to the height you want, and go to it.

Off to one side of the tees Hardt has erected a huge air-conditioning device. He got a propellor from an airplane and attached it to a high-powered motor. Now golfers are never bothered with mosquitoes, and when the Minnesota sultry heat waves hit in the summer, the big propellor "keeps them cool while they drive."

When the driving tee bug first bit, most of the fields on which they were erected were just what the word implies—fields. But taking a look at the grass in front of the tees at Hardt's place of business makes you want to take it home for your front yard.

There are 15 acres of Kentucky bluegrass in front of the tees, and, as Hardt

admitted, "not a single dandelion in all 15." They cover four city blocks, and an underground watering system keeps it green all of the time. A five-unit mower is used to keep grass short.

Over near the clubhouse is his latest addition. It's a regulation 9-hole putting course, and after being put in last summer was found to be almost as popular as the tees.

Trees are planted all over the place, and regular patrons at the tee last spring became more interested in a family of robins which had made their home in a newly-planted Colorado blue spruce just four feet off the ground, than their golf games. The password then was not "How ya hittin' 'em." It became, "How are the robins doing?"

No overhead wires bother the golfers as all lighting connections are underground. The 24 lights burn 24,000 watts an hour, and golfers sometimes stay there until 1 a.m. straightening out faults.

The clubhouse has two spacious rest rooms, a screened-in terrace which will seat up to 30 people plus a well-equipped kitchen to serve any need expressed. There are plenty of lounging chairs, and behind each tee there is an umbrella-chair-and-table combination.

The middle of the summer finds the tee

in constant use. The record for one day is 468 pails of balls used, with 36 balls in each pail.

Hardt believes in promoting golf at all times. A professional himself, he arranges for Twin City pros such as Gunard Johnson and Joe Coria to give free lesson tips, various nights of the week. And a highlight of the entire season's golf program in the Twin Cities last year was a

Hardt-sponsored demonstration given by Johnny Bulla and attended by close to 2,000 fans.

One of the equipment items at the place is the ball-picking machine. Complete with motor inside of it, it allows an attendant to ride around in the middle of the field and pick up balls without danger of being hurt. It is built like a turtle, and a heavy mesh wire over the contraption protects the driver (of the turtle).



From Chaos To "In The Black"

That's what happened to the Stanislaus Club after Gordon Brunton took over just a year ago.

By D. SCOTT CHISHOLM

THE name of Gordon Brunton has been well and favorably known in California for quite a number of years. A while back he left his comfortable pro job at the Victoria GC, Riverside, Calif., to take over a similar position at the Stanislaus G&CC in central California.

I haven't heard much about this club since back in 1926 when I took Abe Mitchell and George Duncan up there to play an 18-hole exhibition match. When I ran into Brunton during the California Open at Fresno I fired a few questions at him and what he told me opened my optics not a little. Uppermost was what he had to say about his bringing the condition of his club from that of chaos and despondency to one of vigor and power.

Stanislaus Club was organized in 1920 and did O. K. during the boom of the twenties. Came the depression. Mem-

bers resigned right and left. For several years the club tottered on the brink of failure. The wolves of bankruptcy were howling at its doors. The bank sold the mortgage and it changed hands more than once. The club lost money in hunks for each owner. Brunton heard about all this and began to figure what could be done about it. He had friends at St. Stanislaus and he was given a hearing by the powers that were. They offered the Victoria lad a lease with option to purchase. He couldn't afford to buy so he leased it and before he did very much about his bargain he studied conditions in and around and about the club property for months, showing the lad has a good head on his shoulders.

He exercised his option after he thoroughly satisfied himself that there were fine possibilities ahead if the job was gone about in a business-like manner. That's just what he did.

Fifteen years of pro experience at several high-class clubs in California had given him a solid understanding of what was what so he took on the double job of pro-greenkeeper. He had fine experience in turf culture. He started out on his new job by carefully studying operating costs to fit income without sacrificing the standard of upkeep of the course itself and clubhouse.

He went over the records of the club for over three years and obtained the



Gordon Brunton