



A No. 7 iron shot to the 10th green with beautiful Pleasant Lake in the background. Seeding complete, Matt Thompson, construction superintendent and brother of Stanley Thompson, designing architect, checks on the seedling growth. The 11th tee (par 3) is shown at the left of the picture.

## Deluxe Course First Step in Suburban Planning

By GORDON BRINKWORTH

North Oaks in suburban St. Paul is an old name to a few but it is fast becoming a new and noted one to a great many.

It is a community development following the same trend as Pebble Beach, California and Tuxedo Park, New York. This project, conceived and directed by Louis W. Hill, Courtland J. and their sister Maude (Mrs. Hannes Schroll), the family of the late L. W. Hill, Sr., is under development at the North Oaks Farm Estate of their grandparents the former J. J. Hill, "Empire Builder."

Mr. John E. P. Morgan, who incidentally had a great deal to do with the planning and development of the famous ski resort at Sun Valley, is the chief planning consultant of the North Oaks development.

Mr. Morgan is a former resident of Greenwich, Conn., and is now residing at the quaint but beautiful chalet on the North Oaks property.

To plan and construct what is hoped to be one of the outstanding golf courses in the country, Stanley Thompson, the noted

Golf Architect, was engaged, and work on this project began last June, with Mr. Thompson's brother, Matt, supervising the actual construction.

The location for the golf course had to be chosen with foresight, imagination and a thought toward practical adaptation to the entire recreational theme in mind. This was not easy when the area to choose from covers over 4000 acres (7 square miles) of almost ideal terrain, wooded hills and valleys, lakes and ponds, all of which still retains its natural state of beauty.

The hub of a golf course is where the activity originates, therefore a prominent and commanding site for the club house was chosen and subsequently the playing layout followed. The site of the North Oaks club house was located on rather high ground easily accessible to all and permits a view of almost thirteen of the eighteen holes, a desirable point in planning any course to accommodate competitive play with spectators and galleries to think about.

The first hole gets away to a beautiful start, which would seem obvious from the elevated position of the club house and adjacent areas, it then elbows slightly right through a wide valley and rises gradually to a rolling green. The yardage of 465 yards from the regular tee allows a fairly easy par and at the same time gives players a chance for a good "get away" thus preventing congestion on the following tee.

The next eight holes extend in a variety of directions that follow natural topographical features and gradually work counter-clockwise from the first hole through to number nine which returns to the club house—a par 4 played up over a low hill and down to a beautifully constructed green flanked with knolls and sand flashes to enhance the beauty but discipline the skill of the golfer.

Number 10, par 4, the start of the second half of the course, is one of the most picturesque holes of the layout, with a beautiful lake for a background. There is a trap placed to the right about 200 yards from the tee, to prevent "billiard golf" from a hill flanking the right side of the fairway and a large saucer shaped green surrounded on three sides with traps, making it a sound test of golf, as well as being beautiful.

#### Lakes and Ponds Created

Water in the form of hazards always add to the score of a straying golfer and North Oaks course is no exception. Several little lakes and ponds have been created to add beauty as well as providing a good test for the average golfer.

The 18th hole, a par 5, spelling "finis" to a round of golf, naturally heads back to the club house and plays up hill very gradually to a green nestling in the hillside which provides ample room for spectators to stand or sit around and watch matches finish. The yardage will be a little over 6700 yards and will play as par 37 out and 36 in for a total 73.

The layout of most of the fairways favors low lying ground complying with the theory that a minimum amount of water will be necessary in maintaining good turf.

The tees are immense with three to most of the holes, a championship, regular and short course tee, to facilitate all types of players. They are designed and constructed to be maintained with a minimum of expense. The cost of maintaining this course was a paramount consideration throughout the entire planning and construction period, therefore large gang mowers will be able to operate right into the collar of the greens and loop them without fear of a mower section tipping into a sand trap or scalping the crown of a knoll or shoulder, thus elim-

inating possible damage to either machine or landscape.

The greens range in size from approximately 5000 to 10,000 square feet of putting area, with moderately contoured lines and favoring a seeded strain of bent for a turf surface.

The course is so routed and greens so designed that it will be especially appreciated by large galleries. Elevated areas have been blended into the contours adjacent to the greens, to provide complete visibility for everyone wishing to observe play. At the same time it prevents the spectators from crowding too close to the putting area and therefore preserves the turf on the greens for the competitor's enjoyment.

Another feature favorable to the spectator and also a money saver in maintenance, is the routing or placement and sequence of the holes. An interested fan can stand in one particular spot and view matches playing up to four different greens. Obviously this prevents to some extent, indiscriminate wandering over the course, which usually results in turf compaction plus a thoughtless discard of waste paper, such as cigarette butts and empty packages, candy bar wrappers, etc., to say nothing of bottles and other items necessitating costly labor to clean up.

Modern golf course construction is carried out with much more expediency than it used to be when horses, shovels and the old type fresno scraper were used. Today



Matt Thompson and Geo. Hawkinson direct removal of a stump by one of the many "cats" which moved the landscape around during the construction of North Oaks Golf Course.

the type of machines utilized for construction are big, heavy and expensive but they all accentuate speed. The bulldozer with a ten foot blade mounted in front is quite capable of pushing over a tree four or five feet in diameter, and the carry-all scraper pulled by a number 8 caterpillar tractor can move 15 to 20 cubic yards of

dirt in one operation. All this machinery can accomplish tasks in days that would take men and beasts months to do a few years ago. There are also small types of industrial equipment used, necessary to refine the soil and finally mould the contours to the desired specifications before the job is completed and sowing in the seed necessary to produce that green carpet that you find on most well groomed courses today.

North Oaks golf course with the advantage of the aforementioned modern equipment and methods of construction,



Preparatory to seeding the 4th green at North Oaks workmen rake stones and spread topsoil under the watchful eyes of Bill Fellows, agricultural engineer for Stanley Thompson and Associates, and George Hawkinson, foreman of the construction crew building the course.

plan to complete their enormous undertaking as much as possible this fall, and hope to open their course for play early in the summer of 1951, less than a year after construction started.

The irrigation system was planned and installed during the early stages of construction, here again utilizing modern equipment to dig all the trenches required for the pipes. As a source of supply for water one of the numerous lakes was used and electric motor pumps were installed to pump the water through the lines that supply all greens and tees. Nelson type valves and sprinklers were chosen as the sprinkling equipment for this irrigation system.

Interspersed around the golf course perimeter are homesites averaging from one to three acres in size, typified according to their location, such as Lake Frontage — Golf Course — Ridge — Lagoon Area. The residential potential offers a great deal. Although mentioned before as simulating to some extent Tuxedo Park, New York and Pebble Beach, California, it has more to offer by way of year around living and the variety of

recreation surpasses either of the aforementioned property developments.

While the golf course along with all the other recreational facilities are intended primarily for the residents of the property development, the North Oaks Outing Association provides a medium for use of the various facilities by members and their guests. Everything will be found readily accessible to all from either of the Twin Cities — twenty minutes from St. Paul — thirty minutes from Minneapolis.

When the owners of North Oaks open their golf club early in 1951, they plan to operate it as an invitational pay-as-you-play course and will provide an invitation card as the privilege to pay a green fee and play. This method of operation is contemplated for use until such time as the North Oaks property and residential owners can organize their own club and run it themselves if they so choose.

The golf club house will be for golfers only and might possibly be used as a winter facility to accommodate those participating in any winter sports. In addition to the golf club house, a social or country club house is planned separately, which would in turn accommodate those interested in activities aside from golf, such as tennis, boating, swimming and horseback riding and indoor social activities and entertainment.

In this modern machine age of speed and progress, a development such as North Oaks "can't miss," and it will offer a recluse for the busy people wishing to withdraw from the hustle and bustle of this problematic work-a-day world and allow quiet recreation, rest and a chance to commune with nature in summer and winter alike.

## Minnesota Superintendents Hold Fall Roundup and Tournament

Members of the Minnesota Association of Golf Course Supts. had a full two days in the twin cities, Sept. 25 and 26. Schedule included a tour of Minnesota CC, Edina CC and Interlachen CC, Monday morning with luncheon at the Town and Country Club were Dr. Fred Grau, Dir., USGA Green Section was the featured speaker. In the afternoon the tour continued with visits to the University GC, Midland Hills GC and dinner at the Curtis Hotel followed by a Round Table discussion.

Tuesday morning the schedule called for stops at Golden Valley CC, Superior CC, with an early luncheon at Oak Ridge CC. A Greenkeeper-Green Chairman Tournament and dinner at the Woodhill CC, Wayzata, Tuesday afternoon and evening wound up the two-day event for the superintendent and club officials.