



Big greens and interesting use of the knobby terrain make the Buena Vista course one that tests golf.

## Donated Labor and Materials Bring Fine Golf to Public

By VERNE WICKHAM

**P**ROVING again that any community that wants a golf course bad enough can get it, Kern County (Cal.) in mid-March opened the second nine of the Buena Vista public course, built—as was the first nine—in a large degree by contributed labor, funds and material.

A bulldozer here, a few hundred feet of pipe there and many hours of hard work and the Buena Vista back nine grew green and took shape and is now hearing the tread of the spikes of many of the golfers who helped build it. The Buena Vista and Kern County golf courses only became realities after the golfers themselves rolled up their collective sleeves and went to work.

As a nine-hole course, The Buena Vista course had been in operation for three years as a part of the Parks and Recreation system of sprawling Kern County (Pop. 270,000). The second nine was opened exactly three years to the day that the original nine was opened to play.

Posted in the clubhouse, which has served the original nine after being moved into the property by equipment and manpower of one of the oil companies, are two historic plaques.

One, in a large frame, lists in bold English type the names of more than 40

companies and organizations that contributed material, supplies and labor toward the building of the golf course.

The other bears the personal signature of more than 250 people, known as the Grass Root members of the Buena Vista Golfers' Association. These are the men, women and children who rolled up their sleeves to form the work parties to smooth fairways, shape and rake greens and build the course with their own hands. The wording above the signature reads:

**"Be it known that the undersigned have wielded pick and shovel, rake and hoe in the building of the Buena Vista Park golf course, contributing at least one day labor, or a reasonable facsimile thereof, and by the sweat of their brow they have earned the right to be known henceforth as the Grass Root members of the Buena Vista Golfers Association."**

With the opening of the back nine at Buena Vista, the Kern County Parks and Recreation Department now operates two 18-hole courses, the Buena Vista, near Taft, and the Kern County public golf course, 12 miles out of Bakersfield. The Buena Vista, as a nine-hole course, has been playing about 25,000 rounds per year and the Kern County course over 50,000 annually.

According to Herbert J. Evans, Director



Clubhouse and starter's pavilion at Buena Vista, shortly after construction was completed. Landscaping, in a few years, will make this a garden spot.

of the Parks and Recreation Department, contributed labor and materials are largely responsible for the fact that Kern County golfers now have two golf courses in operation. This opinion is shared by Herman W. Riece, superintendent of recreation and Harold H. Martin, superintendent of parks, two men who along with Evans tied the work together.

#### **Donated Manpower, Materials**

In explaining the combined effort of the golfers and the public agency, Evans says, "At the Kern County golf course we find there was approximately 1000 man hours donated to the development of the additional nine holes which were opened in January 1953. This course is now a full 18-hole course and a large part of its fine success belongs to donated labor and materials.

"In addition to the 1000 man hours, three trucks were donated to transport pipe from one course to the other, an approximate distance of 90 miles. Also welding machines and welders' time were donated by the various companies. Although this course has not received as much donated time and materials as the Buena Vista, located between Bakersfield and Taft, we find that it has been very helpful from the standpoint of public interest and financial help, and a great deal of credit goes to the public and the corporations for their assistance.

"At the Buena Vista course, the story is even more gratifying because we find there has been donated approximately 3500 hours of manpower and several thousand dollars worth of pipe, fertilizer seed and other materials.

"A fine example of community spirit

was shown on the workday when people of all classes and professions joined in shaping greens and approaches. On this one day alone the count shows that 250 men and women donated a full day of work on the course. The local merchants contributed refreshments for a buffet lunch served at the noon hour.

"In addition to this labor and material, the farmers of Buttonwillow contributed their land levelers, bulldozers and other equipment to work on the fairways. Also the association contributed some \$4000 in advance memberships which helped defray some actual out-of-pocket expenses. The association also raised approximately \$1100 to pay for additional sprinkler heads for the second nine, just opened.

#### **Work to Make Play**

"It is very hard to describe the interest and cooperation which has been shown at these two courses and it is my contention that if given a chance to do so and the work can be coordinated in the proper manner, it is a very healthy condition to allow anyone, both from the individual standpoint and from groups or organizations, to participate in the development of any project of this type."

While the golfers themselves pitched in to get the job done, the Kern County Board of Supervisors had and is giving golf its support. The county brought the water from the Buena Vista course in from a distance of more than three miles to make possible the grassed fairways and greens, which now sit like emeralds against the sage brush and desert sands as a tribute to the will and the determination of golfers who wanted a golf course bad enough that they got one.