

MINNESOTA'S GOLFING HERITAGE



NORTHLAND COUNTRY CLUB

FIRST IN A SERIES Part 3

by W. K. Montague
President 1936-37

As early as 1917 there was discussion of the possibility of buy land on top of the hill so as to have all eighteen holes on the upper side of Superior Street. In October of 1921, the Club purchased 160 acres of the necessary land from T. F. Cole for \$84,000. A month later there was submitted to the Directors a proposed plan for the new course, prepared by Mr. William Watson, a golf architect who had been recommended by Donald Ross to the Club. However, the members wanted Donald Ross himself to lay out the course, and in the fall of 1922, he undertook the job of course architect and supervised its construction.

The President's report for that year states that: "The committee feels he has laid out what would make one of the finest 18 hole courses in the United States. ***In addition he has left sufficient amount of the less desirable part of the property, from the golf course standpoint, that will be available in making an additional nine hole course, if the Club's needs should ever require it."

During the planning there was so much controversy over the fact that the ninth green was not at the Club House that Ross was called back to reconsider the plan of layout, but the final decision was that it was not practicable.

The new course was put into play in 1927

and, except for the usual filling up of old bunkers and putting in of new ones, is the course we play today.

In the annual financial report of March 1903, there is an item "Board and Room for Watson, Instructor, \$61." This is the only appearance in the Club records of J. Martin Watson, our first golfing teaching professional. He later lived in Boise, Idaho, and wrote golfing articles for a Pacific Coast golfing magazine. He has been quoted as saying: "It may be of interest to you to know I was the first teacher in Duluth—the old Northland Golf Club. It was a short, but happy outing. I think the President was a banker by the name of Cutler. I also visited Superior—then returned to my club—the Minikahda Club of Minneapolis."

The first formal professional was J. Moffett, who was succeeded by M. W. Lawrence. Then came Willie Leith, who was a crack golfer.

For about twenty years the members took their lessons from, and tried vainly to match their skill against Dick Clarkson, who later lived in retirement near Carnoustie, his birthplace. In Clarkson's shop worked another Carnoustie product—Kenneth Smith—whose fame as a clubmaker is now nationwide. In recent years he has been an occasional visitor of our Club. Clarkson was followed by George Carney, who later was one of the professionals at Pinehurst, and a contributor of articles to THE GOLF WORLD.

Then came Harold Clasen, friend of every member, who met a tragic death by drowning in 1953. The present very popular professional, Everett Stuart, came to Northland from the Sankuty Head Club on Nantucket Island.

The Club has had its ups and downs; it went into the depression of the 1930's heavily loaded with a \$250,000 mortgage given to fund the indebtedness for the new Club House and to pay for the new course. It was saved only by a court reorganization and the tolerance of the bondholders and banks.

The rights of women members and wives of members of the Club have been pretty well established and defined in recent years. They now have a women's committee and

specific provisions relative to their use of the Club House and golf facilities.

This is the Club which in 1946 was host to the Western Amateur Championship, and in 1956 to the U.S.G.A. Women's Open Championship. It has been the scene of Minnesota State Amateur Championships, as well as the State Women's Championships on quite a few occasions.

KAYE CORPORATION OPENS IN EDEN PRAIRIE

Kaye Corporation, Mankato based distributor for Ransomes and Ransomes Bob-Cat Commercial Grass Machinery has announced the opening of a full branch facility in Eden Prairie, MN. The announcement was made by Marlin Lloyd, president of Kaye Corporation, and is effective immediately. Lloyd commented, "This new facility will enhance our positioning in the commercial grass

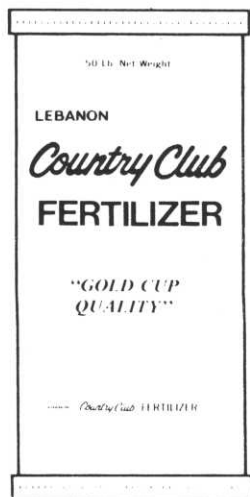
machinery market and will better enable us to serve the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro markets."

Prior to the opening of the branch, Kaye had used various warehousing space in the Metro Area. The new branch will be staffed with only Kaye Corporation employees and will also house full parts stock as well as a Commercial Division Service facility.

Kaye Corporation, founded in 1944, is also the Distributor for Snapper Mowers, Green Machine high performance yard care products, Amerind-McKissic, and Jari Sickie bar mowers. Kaye Corporation entered the Commercial Grass Machinery product line four years ago and now covers all of Minnesota, Western Wisconsin, as well as North and South Dakota. Their new address in Eden Prairie is 8000 Wallace Road and the phone is 612/934-8448.

Kaye Corporation will continue to have its Corporate Headquarters in Mankato and an "open house" at the new facility is planned for early spring. Look for the announcements.

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