

HISTORY OF GOLF IN MINNESOTA

STILLWATER COUNTRY CLUB

by Kevin Clunis
Stillwater Country Club

In 1924 a group of Stillwater golfers decided it would be better to build their own course than to wait the two hours in line at St Paul Phalen Park's 9-hole course. That winter they formed a group to explore possible building sites. They hired Tom Vardon, the pro at White Bear Yacht club, and brother of famous English golfer, Harry Vardon, to design the course. They bought 80 acres of pastureland on our present location for \$8,000.

In April 1925 Tom Vardon laid out 9- temporary greens to be used while the permanent greens were built. In 1926 the permanent greens were built and a water system installed at each one. They opened for play the following season. The original 9-holes are today's holes, Nos. 10, 11, 17, 18, 1, 7, and 9. Tom Vardon's fee was \$100.00. Stillwater's first groundskeeper was Anger Swanson from the White Bear Yacht Club. He was followed by Earl Sturgeon who lasted until WWII.

The Stillwater Country Club had some lean years during

the war, but soon a post war resurgence brought in many new members. They hired a local man, Lyle Cran, to run the golf course in 1947. By the fifties, discussion of expanding to 18-holes was becoming more real. A committee was set up to investigate the matter. They purchased 68 acres of land to the west of the 9-hole golf course in 1954 for \$20,000. They hired Paul Coates, a retired Ramsey County Highway Engineer and nationally known golf course architect to design the new layout. They purchased another 4 acres of land to complete the golf course. Construction began in the fall of 1957 and was ready for play the spring of 1959. Cost for the new nine was \$43,676.36. Fairway irrigation was installed in 1973 by P & H Warehouse and a 775' deep well was dug in 1975 by Keyes Well Drilling.

Lyle Cran remained as superintendent until his death in the spring of 1985. He was replaced by the present superintendent, Kevin Clunis. This is only the fourth superintendent in the 63 years of the Stillwater Country Club.

TURF TOURNEY UPDATE

by Fred Anderson, CGCS
MGCSA Secretary

The second annual Turfgrass Research benefit Golf Tournament, better known as the "Turf Tourney", will again be held on approximately 18 of the finest country clubs in the metro Minneapolis and St. Paul areas as well as surrounding suburbs. The moneys generated from this event are placed in our Foundation Trust Fund. Once our goal of \$100,000 has been reached, we will be able to help fund additional research projects designated by the Research Committee.

The tournament will be held on Friday, June 17, 1988. The tourney is set up as a "4-Man Team Event", will cost \$75.00 per person and includes golf, cart, dinner and prizes (if you play well enough). This event will be open to the public. You, as the superintendent, could get a group, your pro could get a group or anybody at your club could form a group. We have 4 tee times per club starting at 11:00 a.m. Your club choice is on a first come, first serve basis so the earlier you could get your group together, the better chance you have.

The committee would hope you, as superintendent, would make sure that the informational poster for this event would be placed in the pro shop (a copy of the application is in your HOLE NOTES) and talk up this event to your pro and club members. We would also like to thank all the clubs that are participating in this year's annual event.



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