

Minnesota Boys Take Joy Ride

By L. J. FESER, Vice-president

Minnesota Greenkeepers' Association

ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA, is the medical center of the western hemisphere, and the way that the M. D.'s in that town operate has brought fame to the city. These medical men get pretty tired of cutting and sawing the human frames, and they hit upon the ideal relaxation of slicing and smashing rubber golf balls. This practice calls for a bit wider range than an operating room, so the boys got together quite a few years ago and formed the Rochester Country Club. They picked up a piece of land that required a few greens and tees and sand-traps placed here and there to make it one of the finest 18-hole layouts on this side of the Gulf of Mexico.

Minneapolis and St. Paul are the centers of the Minnesota golfing world, and most of the boys in the Minnesota association are drawing their pay checks from the clubs in this locality. Once every year our boys get tired of looking over such ordinary clubs as Minikahda, Keller, Town & Country, Interlachen, Golden Valley or Glenwood, and they get the itch to move on into the wide-open spaces. This year most of the boys were troubled with headaches trying to figure out a dollar stretching machine, so it was unanimously decided that we ought to consult the Rochester clinic.

Twenty of the boys signed up to take the treatment, but our good old secretary, Harold Stodola, got caught in a pre-tournament jam and was held fast. Harold is far more capable of telling you about that trip than I am, because he is our scribe, and I am



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just one of those pinch hitters that relies on Lady Luck. However, as Harold couldn't make the trip, I hope that you will accept this report as being a more or less true account of our journey.

Ed Swanlund is the man who takes the blame for poor lies at Rochester C. C., but Ed sails around the course in the neighborhood of 80, so you can figure that the poor lies are not always found in the fairways. Matter of fact, after going around the course in 132 the boys considered that a poor lie on my part. Rochester is a real layout, and a mighty well maintained

course in any man's country.

Bear in mind that the Drs. in that town are used to cutting and the way that they practiced on Eddie's budget last spring has worried me so much that I am going to stay well at least eighty more years. They cut everything off of the budget but the ears, and trimmed them. But Ed has given them a course that looks like the height of prosperity. Plenty long, very good greens, damn sand traps and there will be a lot of golf ball trees in the outlying sections if those balls planted by our gang ever sprout and grow.

That is slightly ahead of my story, but I wanted to be honest about that part, and now we will go

back to Minikahda club, where on the morning of July 19, nineteen greenkeepers climbed into a chartered bus and sailed southward over 80 miles of fine paved roads not including detours that were not paved. Among the crowd that waved farewell to



MINNESOTA BOYS AT ROCHESTER, MINN.

Daddy Erickson's tool house was that more or less well-known character, Scotty McLaren. True to his race, he rode the middle of the bus to save all of the bumps possible.

The boys were very polite to each other as usual. Very few arguments that lasted over an hour, and very few men who did not have a part in the discussions. No black eyes were in evidence when we climbed off at Rochester, but Frank Anderson lost his set of clubs en route, and Emil Picha ate a very light dinner, so there must be some cause and effect in this old world.

Swanlund has the inside track with the chef at the club, and we certainly did take advantage of this opportunity. Everyone felt the Rochester C. C. excursion was one of the best. We didn't get into a formal discussion of greenkeeping problems, but

we all learned a few things that will be of some benefit to us in future years. Swanlund can show a lot of the boys a course that is enviable from the maintenance point of view, and he was very much pleased to do so.

A few light songs led by our vocal geniuses, Vic Larson and Leonard Bloomquist, shortened our ride back to Minikahda. Other events of this homeward trip are not for publication, but to our brother greenkeepers let me suggest that you grab some Minnesota boy at the Chicago convention next winter, and get the story straight.

This man was too busy to note all that happened on the homeward journey. I do remember that Rochester didn't get any operating practice on any of us, and for a severe headache I can think of no better remedy than a session with Dr. (?) Ed Swanlund, G. K., Rochester, Minn.

Comments from An Old-Timer

By JAMES O'NEILL, *Pro-greenkeeper, Cleveland*

WELL do I remember when I first reported for duty as a golf professional and greenkeeper at the Portsmouth Golf Club, Portsmouth, Ohio, in the year 1899. There were not many greenkeepers in those days. The professional had to take charge of everything pertaining to golf. In truth the farmer was the greenkeeper. I, for one, depended a great deal on his judgment as to raising grass and course maintenance. You gave him an idea, of course, of what you wanted and made him your foreman.

I remember at Portsmouth we had to build a hole through an apple orchard and still save some of the orchard. As I look back the entire orchard would not make one standard fairway of today. In fact, the whole golf course was laid out in a ball diamond and fruit farm combined and would not make the good golf holes of the present day. (No reflections.)

Because officers and members of the club worked just as hard those days for the good of the club, if not harder than they do today. The golf club was one happy family. No worries about bridge parties, dinner parties and teas. At Portsmouth we had two sand greens because we thought turf was too expensive at that time.

F MY FIRST BAPTISM IN GREENKEEPING
FROM Portsmouth I went to the Avondale Athletic club, Cincinnati, Ohio, and it was here I got my first baptism in greenkeeping. The course was

very much run down, but thanks to Mars Black and A. W. Shell, who were on the Green committee at that time, they worked with me in every way possible. In fact I have been in their homes until very late hours at night trying to figure how to bring our course back into shape with what money we had to spend at that time.

You may be sure we lost many members as Grandon Road Country Club, where the MacCormick Brothers were, was right up to snuff in every way; also the Clifton Club, these being the only other golf clubs in Cincinnati at that time. I went to Cincinnati on September 1, 1900.

Getting back to greenkeeping. We raked, cross-raked and then raked some more. And, brother greenkeepers, imagine the howl from the members when they saw how my greens were torn up. In fact I did not know whether or not I was going to get a contract for the following year or not.

I TOPDRESSING AND SEEDING DID THE TRICK
I HUNTED around and finally found some old rotten manure that I mixed with some good top soil and covered my greens about one and one-half inches with this mixture, sowing my greens with two-thirds of A grade redtop and one-third of Kentucky blue grass. Sowing heavy in the fall and a light topdressing with light seeding in the spring. That surely did the trick. High-powered fertilizers in those days were unknown.