

GOLFING AROUND

LOCAL golfers' center of attraction last week was the new Walnut Hill course on Lemmon avenue and Northwest Highway, a layout that was opened only the previous Saturday and enjoyed splendid play in its first few days. Nearly 500 players were registered the first week.

This early patronage was highly encouraging to Bill MacKenzie, pro, formerly at Dallas Country Club.

Incidentally, the links laid out by Perry Maxwell, nationally known golf architect, was a pleasant surprise to all of the first-time visitors. It is entirely different from anything hereabouts, the secret of its attractiveness being the immensity and contour of its greens. Designed after the Pacific Coast's best courses, these carpets and also the tees are the largest in the State, but don't get the idea that the putting surfaces are easily reached. They aren't, because they are heavily trapped on nearly all sides, and what traps! Although gradual, they are huge, yawning gaps but they're well loaded with an excellent grade of sand from which explosion shots can be played.

Naturally, Walnut Hill's greens and fairways are not yet in first-class shape but their condition is amazingly good considering the short time that has elapsed since work first got laid on the course. By the middle of next summer, the fairways should be first rate and a few weeks of sunshine and a few showers will work wonders on the greens. Rye has been planted with Bermuda and the course should be verdant through the winter months.

Within two or three years' time, Walnut Hill should be one of the finest golf layouts in this sector. Most of the long holes are dog-legs and can be changed surprisingly merely by moving the markers on the large tees. The size of the latter assures players a good driving surface at all times, for there is plenty of room to hit turf "rounds" to "heel" without overworking small areas.

The links is designed as a true test of golf. It takes two corking shots to get home on the par fours and three on the fives. Bad direction is penalized by side traps that leave little opening for pitch and run shots unless one is down the middle. Almost every approach from the side calls for a pitch, but the size of the greens leaves ample room for a stop. The same goes for the par threes. In short, the course is so laid out as to reward distance and direction and penalize the player who gets off the straight and narrow, which is quite narrow as far as some of the fairways are concerned.

Already something like \$70,000 has been spent on Walnut Hill's first eighteen holes and considerable more will be expended in completing the second eighteen in the spring. The rough work already has been laid and about all that remains is the planting of grass.

Walnut Hill will be operated strictly as a fee course under present plans.

Bill MacKenzie was heartened a bit the first week when a number of his former members at Dallas Country Club paid him a visit and were lavish in their praise after testing the course.

C. M. Retzel, D. C. C. manager; Jim Hawkins, greens keeper, and Charlie Dexter, the well-known golf star and officer at Brook Hollow, were among the early visitors who were impressed.

It looks like another victory for the medium class in Dallas as far as golf is concerned. Since Cedar Crest no longer is operated as a country club but as a fee course, those who do not care for the social side of club life but only want golf without the other expenses attached, have at least two splendid courses at their disposal, not including the many links.

Bill McConnell, the popular Golliath of Cedar Crest, reports his course has been getting a big play since the switch. Probably the most attractive natural layout in the city, this course, with very little working over, can be put back into its former place among the ranking leaders and the word has gone out that money for these changes will be spent.

George Anlbach, the little pro at Dallas Country Club, proves himself an ambitious if not versatile fellow by enrolling in Thurman Randle's free rifle school, which held its first class Thursday night.

Getting set for the deer season, eh, George!