

MEET THE MAN WHO GAMBLLED ON GOLF
FOR BROOKDALE; THE RESULT WAS...

The Club Jack built



MR Brookdale . . . that's what they call Jack Holmes, the sprightly 56-years-old who has been the driving force behind one of Manchester's least known sporting achievements.

For it was a £100 gamble by the former Failsworth Borough Engineer that turned a struggling golf club into a prosperous organisation with assets of over £60,000.

It was only this week-end, when Jack was presented with a W.D. & H.O. Wills trophy, for service to the Brookdale Park Club, that the amazing success story came to light.

Back in 1959, Brookdale was a struggling club. The course was hemmed in by new housing developments, and the club-house was little more than a wooden shack. They were unable to attract new members. Then Jack - a member of the club since 1940 - heard of two brothers who were emigrating from a farm in the Medlock valley at Woodhouses.

He went to see them the same night, took a gamble and offered to buy the land. He left £100 deposit . . . then he went to see his committee.

The committee - "a great bunch of un-stick-in-the-muds", Jack calls them - were all in favour and Brookdale had started on the road to success.

Actual work on the new course started in 1960 after a design from Birmingham professional Charlie Ward had been accepted.

The old course was sold at immense profit for building land and the members chipped in on the construction of the Ashbridge course.

Behind it all were Jack Holmes and the other seven members of the new course development committee, A. Brember, H.G. Chadwick, E Chesworth, K. Crutchley,

R. B. Fitzgerald, A. F. Swindell and J. Stevenson. It was very much a rush job towards the end as the new owners of the old course started moving in to build new property. Committee men and members drove bulldozers and tractors to help speed-up the operation.

One of the major problems facing the committee was maintaining continuity for the playing members. When the move to the new 12-hole course was finally made in 1962, parts of the old course had already been built on . . . but the Club had increased its assets by 20 times and had money to spare in the bank. Now membership is becoming, with 180 playing members.

The presentation of the Castella award to Jack Holmes came as a fitting climax to the end of the first phase of Brookdale Park Golf Club's new lease of life . . . but as far as Jack is concerned it's not the end of the story.

He sees the Club having a much bigger future.

"I want to see 18 holes at Brookdale," he says. "I also want to see the club house extended and a top class event brought here, and with one of the most attractive little courses in the area . . . it's all quite feasible."

CYCLING

Official