

Dome tops off winter of golf

By SUZIE ROLLINS SINGER

Winter golfers are usually depicted as fair weather fools bundled in layers of clothing, hitting red-colored balls across desolate courses.

Now golfers can swing at that elusive ball inside Michigan's first six-story air-supported bubble at the Red Oaks Driving Range on John R north of 12 Mile in Madison Heights.

Throughout the winter, city parks and recreation departments are offering golf lessons by Class A professionals, with a maximum of six pupils to an instructor. Students must be at least 16 years old to enroll. Registration is being conducted by individual parks and recreation departments throughout Oakland County.

The bubble idea was conceived after a representative of the Oakland Golf Domes Association approached Roger Kowalski, director of the Troy Parks and Recreation Department, about Troy's tennis bubble.

"Mike Thompson (of the Oakland Golf Domes Association) saw our tennis bubble and asked us if we would pursue the golf bubble venture," Kowalski said. "He suggested we put a bubble over the proposed outdoor shooting range. At that time I didn't know what would happen with the shooting range so I told him to approach the county."

Kowalski said Thompson won approval from the



Avid golfers can now practice indoors for the winter with construction of a golf bubble in Madison Heights. Because the bubble was erected over a snow-covered course, workers

Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department to erect a bubble over Red Oaks.

"We have a lease agreement with Oakland Golf Domes that they will pay us a percentage of their growth," said Jan Pung, public relations director for the county. "They erected the bubble at their cost."

are spreading the snow around inside so it will melt before lessons begin Jan. 19. (Staff photo by John Stano)

Tennis bubbles in Troy and other cities are usually erected only during the winter months. In most cases, private companies pay for construction of the tennis bubbles on public land. They turn the facilities into private clubs during the winter months. But when the bubbles are removed in the summer, the facilities return to public operations.

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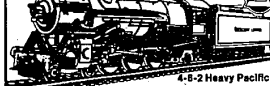
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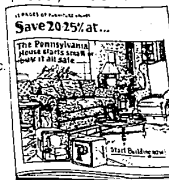
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