Damage Is Slight After Gym Fire Tuesday Morning

By GARY HANOVICH

Fire damaged the interior of the R.O.T.C. rifle range located in the basement of the Rice gymnasium early Tuesday morning. The fire was discovered about 6:00 a.m. Tuesday by employees going to work at the gym and they quickly turned in the alarm.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT at first had trouble locating the source of trouble because the whole building was filled with smoke. Eventually, they tracked the smoke to the basement rifle range near the rear of the building.

Most of the billowing smoke was smoldering acoustical tile and stacked firing mats which the firemen removed. The Army and Navy R.O.T.C. officials removed the equipment of the range, which they operate jointly.

Little damage occurred to the concrete building itself, and even that was very superficial. Wooden tables and chairs were destroyed, and some wiring may have been affected.

THE CAUSE OF the small blaze will not be definitely known until after a thorough investigation, but according to Captain P. D. Sellers of the Naval R.O.T.C., a burning cigarette was apparently left on one of the firing mats when they were stacked Monday night.