



Ohio's "Queen City" treats her public golfers royally. Her city council has ensured them years of golfing pleasure, guaranteed by an innovative law

by DOUGLAS LUTZ

CINCINNATI: GOLF'S MODEL CITY

Last month, GOLFDOM reported extensively on the results of a study made by the National Golf Foundation (see p. 21, May issue). The study revealed that the public course player was receiving short shrift. Although he makes up 84 per cent of this nation's 11 million golfers, only 56 per cent of the total number of courses in the United States cater to him. The study further suggested that improvements in the facilities of existing municipal and public courses might increase their capacity to handle his growing numbers.

This growth was recognized as significant five years ago by Cincinnati's recreation commission and an enlightened city council. The plan under which Cincinnati now operates its municipal courses is innovative and worthy of imitation by other municipalities. Certainly, it is a testimony to the growing importance of the public course golfer.

Five years ago this month, in a unique approach worthy of consideration and

imitation by other municipal systems, Cincinnati instituted a special Municipal Golf Activities Fund. City of Cincinnati Ordinance No. 156 was passed by the council on April 23, 1969, and became operational two months later on June 1. This basically simple document climaxed a 20-year struggle by the recreation commission on behalf of the measure.

Procedures for the effective operation of the ordinance are complex and involve many more details than those outlined in this single, historic document. Its essence, its outstanding feature, is simplicity itself. The percentage of available funds that can accrue directly to the benefit of the golfing community is the key to the success of Cincinnati's plan. Unlike other municipalities, where all revenues from golf go into a general recreation or park fund to be used by all departments to the everlasting neglect of the courses, Cincinnati's fund gives up only 15 per cent of its revenues to the general fund. All other receipts accrued from golf activities go toward improving

course conditions and, more importantly, toward defraying expansion costs.

The incredibly ambitious Ten Year Golf Development Program that triggered the final decision to create the special fund reads like a municipal operator's fondest dream. Robert Strauss, supervisor of golf and play fields for Cincinnati's Public Recreation Commission, assembled a proposal encompassing long-range expansion and immediate improvement.

In addition to the far reaching intentions stated in the second "whereas" paragraph of the ordinance, each of the four regulation layouts in existence at the time were singled out for specific alterations and improvements. Routine maintenance and repair programs would, of course, continue as scheduled. Under no circumstances, however, could existing budgets have supported the new expansion programs.

Avon Fields, a par 66, 5,031-yard layout that compensates for its short length by having exceptionally hilly terrain, came in for some serious face lifting. Five tees were to be enlarged, the parking lot resurfaced with blacktop, the fairway watering system replaced, ski and sled slopes installed and some of the more severe ravines subjected to near leveling. Two fairways were slated for regrading as well. Prior to the submission of these major upgrading plans, Avon Fields had undergone some renovation through the civic-minded contribution of fill, top soil and seeding by a local company, Richter Equipment. At that rate, the Queen City's golfing subjects could become spoiled! Doubtless, even these improvements would not have taken place if the city had been the check-writer.

Another of Cincinnati's fine courses, the Hilmer J. Neumann Memorial 18, more like a plush country club than a city facility, was slated for rebuilding of its 15th green and tee. Originally installed for \$922,000, Neumann's beautifully rolling 6,210 yards of watered fairways and new modern clubhouse were to be paid for by the golfers themselves.

The unique Will R. Reeves Memorial course, ranging 6,395 yards over flat terrain at the end of Lunken Airport, the city's old municipal field, was also in for some revamping. Installation of a new fairway watering system was envisioned. Golf driving

Parking lot space was to be enlarged. Road repairs and lighting of the entire sporting complex was discussed.

Perhaps the most ambitious undertakings were planned for the California course. Here, where splendid hills surround a city reservoir, no less than 10 tees needed enlargement, the number four green was due for rebuilding, the clubhouse was slated to receive air conditioning and renovations and the maintenance barn would get its share of help, too. Toilets, showers and heat, sorely in demand, were soon to be a reality.

In mid-1968, the recreation commission took advantage of a generous offer by Hillcrest Square, Ltd., to utilize the old Crest Hills CC as a fifth municipal layout. Hillcrest Square, Ltd., was planning to abandon Crest Hills in favor of a high-rise office and apartment complex. In the interim the city took over. More than 15,000 rounds were played in the four-month season remaining, and in spite of stiff operating costs a profit of \$11,380 was realized. Specific plans for Crest Hills would have to await the outcome of the builder's plans.

Maintenance programs at all facilities were to be stepped up as well. This included plans for the installation of Astro Turf on all par three tees, landscaping, tree care and planting, soil

erosion projects and capital repairs at all courses.

The recreation commission had not been idle prior to approval of its proposals. Always in the forefront of catering to Cincinnati golfers, its record of achievement in the year before the special fund was voted into law bears examining.

Capital improvements included a new clubhouse, rehabilitation of 10 acres of flood-damaged fairway and plantings of 120 Norway spruce and white pine at Reeves. California had 14 tees resodded, one green rebuilt and 180 spruce and dogwood planted. Penncross bentgrass was planted at 14 of Neumann's tees and 52 spruce and pine added. Over 50 spruce and pine helped shape Avon Fields in addition to ravine filling. Crest Hills saw the relocation of three greens at a cost of \$3,500.

Curiously, golf income combined with revenues from the Airport Playfield, a sports complex adjacent to Reeves Memorial, was the only financial category in the system that showed more receipts than expenditures. The margin of "profit" was just over \$60,000.

It would appear the commission was looking to the future. Envisioning the tremendous upsurge in public golf, it must have been apparent that the gen-

eral fund, where all golf receipts were deposited at the time, could not support any expansion program.

Part of the 10-year master plan naturally included revenue-producing devices, such as golf car fleets, night play, where practical, and a substantial increase in green fees, common devices utilized by many municipalities, but seldom, if ever, related directly to the improvement of facilities. In that regard, Cincinnati's city fathers may be rightfully labeled unique.

Cincinnati's recognition of the advice of the recreation commission relative to "increasing interest exhibited in such recreation," as stated in the ordinance, was borne out by an ever growing golf population. From 1965, when the total number of rounds played increased by 22,525 over 1964, there were steady increases: 1966, up 35,645; 1967, up 49,878; 1968, up 5,679. Total receipts on five courses in 1968 reached an unparalleled \$574,080 in spite of a much lower upsurge in attendance than the preceding four years. Rainy weather and excessive heat throughout the spring and summer of 1968 kept down the number of players.

Cincinnati's lead in catering to the needs of her public golfers was applauded one year after the inception of the plan by the National Golf Founda-

continued on page 23

Highlights of the Cincinnati Ordinance

WHEREAS, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission has advised of the need to improve existing golf facilities and provide additional golf facilities to meet the increasing interest exhibited in such recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission proposes a 10-year golf development program which would include three new golf courses, a lighted nine-hole executive golf course, rehabilitation of existing courses, and the introduction of new revenue producing facilities, including electric golf cars, driving ranges, par three and miniature golf courses; and **WHEREAS**, the Cincinnati

Recreation Commission has concluded a research study, indicating that the 10-year plan is feasible and self-supporting; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable to create a new, single fund into which all golf revenue can be placed and all disbursements made; now, therefore, **BE IT ORDAINED**:

Section 1. That the Director of Finance is hereby authorized and directed to establish a fund to be known as "Municipal Golf Activities Fund" to be numbered No. 105.

Section 2. There shall be deposited in said Fund monies received from all golf activities, including miniature golf courses, golf driving ranges,

golf cars and other related activities.

Section 3. Expenditures may be made from the Fund to defray the cost of operations of the activities, capital improvements, and debt services, except that not less than 15 per cent annually of the gross revenues credited to the Fund pursuant to Section 2 hereof shall be paid to the General Fund upon vouchers approved by the Superintendent of Recreation or his designee.

Section 4. The provisions of Sections 1, 2 and 3 hereof shall become operative June 1, 1969.

Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

CINCINNATI from page 21

tion. They stated, the city has "formulated long range and continuous plans to provide both new facilities and to increase and improve their present courses. As a result, the facilities now available have in the last eight years doubled the number of rounds played, and future plans will ensure that facilities are available for the city's steadily increasing number of golfers."

Recently, Fred Stewart from Lafayette, Ind., a facility development consultant of the NGF, whose territory includes Cincinnati, said, "Cincinnati's plan is a great concept and has apparently worked very well. One thing, it has kept politics out of it. That's important and should be considered by communities where recreation is handled politically. In my travels I have suggested that other cities should look into the Cincinnati plan."

Have the first five years of the Golf Development Program fulfilled the needs of Cincinnati's public golfers? Have the goals been achieved? Is the over-all plan on schedule? Have accomplishments been financially sound? Key questions to which answers should confirm or deny the wisdom of the City Council in passing Cincinnati's bold ordinance, the creation of the "Municipal Golf Activities Fund."

To answer the aforementioned and other questions, GOLFDOM talked recently with Robert "Red" Strauss, the author of the Ten Year Golf Development Program. He said, "The over-all plan is on schedule. We've been able to benefit from being slow and we're willing to take the full 10 years to achieve our goals." Alongside the accomplishments of the recreation commission and its ongoing plans, these are indeed modest words.

Before going into specifics, Strauss explained one of the key factors in the plan. "Looking at the balance sheet, at the end of 1973 we had a surplus of \$143,000 in our golf fund, which means that, even with some of our new activities not even bringing in money, we're able to pay the debt service on them. We feel we'll definitely be able to generate enough income over and above operating expenses to pay off our debt services."

The debt service payment offsets revenue bond issues, which are allocated by the city council upon request from the recreation commission. Pres-

ently, there is a \$1.1 million program, which is funded by revenue bonds, and that money has already been spent. In Strauss' budget for the current year, a \$74,000 debt service payment is earmarked to offset part of the outstanding balance.

The largest single project at this time is the first stage of a master plan for the Glenview School grounds. "Glenview was city owned property," Strauss explained, "which had been leased to the county for many years as a school for wayward children. We asked that the city transfer the property to recreation for golf, and after much haggling they agreed. We now have 300 acres of the most beautiful land in Hamilton County. We hired Arthur Hills to design a master plan for the entire area and we're now building nine holes of a 27-hole layout. Depending on weather, we expect to open this nine by July 1st of this year in addition to a driving range." The remaining 18 holes are to be installed as soon as the nine holer pays for itself and has some surplus. "That's the key to all our new endeavors," Strauss said. "We are expanding with the \$1 million, and most projects are geared to revenue producing. When we know the nine holes are financially sound we'll go right back to the council and ask that they issue more revenue bond to develop the other 18."

Part of the \$1.1 million is being utilized at Neumann where the envisioned additional nine holes are currently taking shape. According to Strauss, five holes are pretty well along. The promised par three at Reeves Memorial has already been completed. It opened last year and is already producing profits. Strauss' casual reference to these two new facilities, which were both part of his Ten Year Plan, was rather disarming. We can only assume success in planning and execution has become a common occurrence in the Cincinnati public golf scene. These singular accomplishments were to be anticipated, one supposes, once the Golf Activities Fund had been passed into law. At least that's the impression Strauss leaves.

At Avon Fields, as promised, the driving range was completed last year, and it did rather well, Strauss reports. This year the deluxe miniature course was opened in May. "It's under lights and beautifully landscaped," says Strauss. "The Park Board came in and

did the architectural landscaping and actually furnished us all the materials free."

Strauss' story about the acquisition of a nine holer that was saved from real estate development typifies the kind of creative thinking municipalities would do well to emulate.

"Last spring," Strauss began his story, "there was a little old nine hole course that was going to be sold for real estate development. In fact the owners didn't want it to remain a golf course, and it had been there for 40 years. When it became available for developers to buy, my boss and I got interested as well as our golf advisory council. The city council heard about it, too, and asked for a report on the feasibility of buying the course for the city. We supplied our analysis and immediately contacted the state bureau of outdoor recreation to ask if they would give us a matching grant, if we were able to make the purchase. They agreed, and last year we leased the property. The agreed-on price was \$220,000 for this going golf course with a nice clubhouse built into a very heavily-populated area, which made it ideal for city recreation. It's a most beautiful piece of land, and every time I went out there, I just drooled over it because I felt it should not go for housing. Originally the owners wanted \$300,000, but when the contract was finally drawn, the city got it for \$220,000. We also threw in \$25,000 for equipment we needed to take it over. The course had been stripped by the previous owner in anticipation of selling it for development. Even four of the greens had been sold off. At any rate we operated that course last year in the black. It cleared \$4,000 above expenses. Now the city has another golf course forevermore. The city is only paying \$110,000 and the state bureau of outdoor recreation the other \$110,000. It will remain a nine holer, since it's boxed in pretty well. There is about 25 acres that might be available that we could use to improve it, but I don't think we could get any more than that. As it is now, it's almost an executive size course."

This year-old acquisition supports 700 golfers in some 30 leagues, which are big golf business in Cincinnati. There are women's leagues, senior leagues, company and organization leagues of all kinds. No less than 100

continued on page 26

leagues play at the city's five courses, and the demand for space is tremendous. Local companies, such as Proctor and Gamble, which has three golf leagues, demand space for their golfers just as they do for their baseball leagues. "League play really depends on whether you have maximum play at your course," Strauss said. "It certainly should be considered if you have time available."

Added revenues from league play can be calculated at the beginning of the season. Budget planners at public courses might do well to follow Cincinnati's lead and do a little selling of their own facilities. Projections of income could certainly use a firm dollar figure rather than the usual guessing of anticipated rounds and green fees.

Innovation in operations is also part of Cincinnati's success story. As an example, green fees are the same seven days a week! That's unusual. As Strauss explains it, it makes a lot of sense. "Since our play tends to be as heavy on weekdays as on weekends, we decided one price, \$3.75 for 18 holes, should prevail seven days a week. We feel the fella who can only play on weekends shouldn't be penalized. It's unfair if someone else is off weekdays and gets a price break too. And, of course, we needed the extra revenues as well." Green fees in Cincinnati have not risen as sharply as elsewhere in the country. There are few public courses where you can still play 18 holes for under \$4. Five years ago 18 holes cost \$2.60 on weekdays and \$3.30 on weekends and holidays. Junior and senior rates have, of necessity, been raised slightly, too. Juniors used to tee off for \$1 and now must double that for a round. Seniors, 65 and over, get to play weekday mornings at \$1.75 for nine holes and \$2.50 for 18.

Potential income from green fees for the Queen City system runs to over a million dollars a year from the approximately 300,000 rounds at their five courses. Additional refectory income accrues directly to the city. Food concessions are not leased out. "We serve the best kind of food from an excellent short order menu. We've never had concessionaires. Usually, in a municipality you run into the low bidders who underestimate their operating costs. Then the quality falls off," Strauss feels. All golf-oriented activi-

continued on page 47

What's Happening in other Cities

The National Golf Foundation reports an estimated 11 million golfers played 15 or more rounds on United States facilities in 1973: 1,755,000 players were accommodated at 4,472 private clubs; 4,303,000 teed off at 3,870 daily fee facilities, but 4,942,000 golfers had to squeeze into waiting lines at 1,336 municipal layouts! (Totals include regulation 18s and nines.) Three hundred twenty-eight executive and 890 par threes, the bulk of them daily fee spreads, brought the total number of United States facilities to 10,896 for 1973.

To compound the irony of the statistics, the NGF further estimates an additional 2,550,000 golfers played less than 15 rounds, mostly on municipal or daily fee layouts.

Clearly the major plight of the municipal golfer is directly related to the number of courses available to him.

Uncreative city recreation managements who cannot recognize, as Cincinnati has done, that revenues from golf belong in large measure to the golfers, will forever short-change the unaffiliated player.

By volume alone municipal golf can be self supporting. While supporting other, less financially productive sports, golf could still earmark enough funds for much needed course improvements. Green fees and other golf-related activities now produce the most revenue of any recreational program operated by a municipality of any reasonable size.

An examination of cities other than Cincinnati indicates that for the most part, not much is being done to provide the municipal course faithful with even adequate facilities, even though revenues obviously far exceed the funds required for creative, active programs geared to improvement and renovation, as well as expansion.

NEW YORK CITY

In New York City, where the parks department operates 13 courses, four year-around and nine from April 1 to November 30, as many as 688,000 rounds or more may be played in a

given year. Striking averages within the various price structures: 39 per cent weekend and holiday play at \$4; 36 per cent weekday play at \$2.50; 23.5 per cent seniors play at \$1, and 1.5 per cent junior play at \$.75, the potential yearly income from green fees alone is \$1,641,900.

One quarter of those volume receipts or \$420,475 each year for five years could buy two complete 18-hole courses!

Any new golf course, while paying off its own financial obligation, could easily produce enough revenue to help support other parks department activities, such as tennis, which currently reaps a mere \$300,000 a year for city permits.

It is a popular misconception among New Yorkers that there is no room for expansion. An examination of park lands and open acreage, however, can easily put that myth to rest. An executive course or a sporty nine holer could be built into a little-used section of Central Park, right in the middle of Manhattan. What a boon to the city that would be, not to mention the convenience for the city's "subway" golfers. Long reaches of meadowland in Staten Island could be reclaimed. La Tourette, in the same borough, could be lengthened and nine holes added on vacant land the parks department now owns. Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx, now the home of Split Rock and Pelham, has room for another 27 holes. The existing clubhouse with some revamping and expansion, could handle all the traffic. Many ideas have been advanced through the years about rebuilding another Bronx eyesore, Van Cortlandt Park. America's oldest municipal golf course, (it opened in 1889) because of its geographic slicing by the Major Deegan Expressway in 1938, is virtually divided into two layouts as it is. Fourteen holes are on one side of the expressway and four on the other. Simple alterations utilizing almost all existing tees, greens and fairways could transform Van Cortlandt into a regulation 18 and nine, rather than the chopped up 18 of the

continued on page 29

OTHER CITIES from page 26

present layout.

In New York City the possibilities are limitless. All those who suffer together the endless waits, dream that some day creative planning may emerge as a vital force from the Arsenal, headquarters of the parks department.

For years concerned, dedicated city golfers have urged the department to revise the rate structure for green fees. Every community surrounding New York City charges non-residents stiff green fees; in some cases almost double those paid by residents. Because the city's comparatively low fees, many New Jersey and Westchester County residents flock to Staten Island's two courses and to the four layouts in the Bronx. Nassau County golfers frequently play Douglaston Park, Clearview, Kissena and Forest Park in Queens. There are no preferential rates for the city's residents. The potential additional income from higher rates for non-residents has been totally ignored by the parks department. The obvious result is overcrowding and extensive wear and tear on the city's already overtaxed golfing facilities.

The deplorable conditions of New York City's courses are legendary. Exceptional layouts approaching championship caliber, such as La Tourette and Split Rock, are grim, barren reminders of their former plush conditions. The city's golfers are largely ignored, even though their green fees produce the largest chunk of parks department income. Surely they deserve better. They certainly have the right to expect that a fairer share of their contributions to the recreation coffers might be returned in the form of improvements if expansion is beyond the comprehension of the parks department.

MIAMI

The city of Miami has only two municipal golf courses; however, in the Greater Miami area, roughly the size of Rhode Island, there are 33 courses, nine of which are open to the public.

Playing conditions are superb, generally speaking, but overcrowding is a problem, particularly "in season," December to March, when the estimated 100,000 local golfers are

joined by the vacation-hungry hordes escaping wintry blasts.

Le Jeune GC, near Miami International Airport, is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful public courses in the country. Its challenging par 72, 6,800 yards of gently rolling land are interspersed by 3½ miles of lakes that come into play at 12 holes. Eighty thousand rounds a year are not uncommon at Le Jeune. By contrast, the 6,665 yard, par 71 Miami Springs course, also near the airport, has old trees and gentle hills with wide open fairways and tough bermudagrass greens.

In a real sense, there is no room for expansion within the city of Miami, but the city spares no expense in maintaining superb playing conditions.

Miami Beach, across the causeway over Biscayne Bay, boasts two fine courses, Bayshore and Normandy Shores, as well as a neat par three. Five years ago, Bob Van Hagge and Bruce Devlin redesigned Bayshore into a championship layout. Lakes and water holes were added. Superb landscaping, including extensive flower bed work has made a showplace of this well-run city course. Obviously golf revenues are being allocated where they belong, judging by the playing conditions.

Dade County's Palmetto course, just south of Miami, was originally a private club designed by Dick Wilson. It opened in 1960. Seven years later the county purchased it for \$1,288,500. The purchase was financed by revenue certificates repayable by income from the course itself. Three years later Dade County Park System was on the move again. This time it was the construction of a superior course on Key Biscayne.

Local official attitudes in the Greater Miami area have shown great concern for the needs of Florida's public golfers and for their Northern brethren who crowd their lives during "the season."

PHILADELPHIA

Although the City of Brotherly Love has no special golf fund, Philadelphia's recreation administration returns a fair share of revenues to the courses. Nearly 275,000 rounds are played annually at six municipal courses. The Fairmount Park Com-

mission operates five of them, and the sixth is run by the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation.

Improvements in the past few years have included fairway watering, rebuilding the parking lot and bridge construction at Cobbs Creek, drainage projects at Karakung, a tree planting campaign at Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the addition of a restaurant at Juanita. The courses are generally considered to be in good condition. Management seems concerned with the plight of its golfers, but funds for major undertakings are limited.

It was rumored about four years ago that the city was considering the acquisition of Poquessing Valley Creek prison farmlands for development as park land, to include a new municipal golf course. Apparently this will not be a reality and expansion is not in the cards for Philadelphia. A continual program of improvement will have to suffice. A spokesman said recently, "Money in Philadelphia is tight. We'll continue trying to provide our golfers with the best conditions possible but chances for any new courses seem remote at this time. Sure, we've heard of the Cincinnati golf plan, but I can't imagine us undertaking such an elaborate scheme."

CLEVELAND

Cleveland's position in Ohio's densely populated Northeastern section might seem to preclude good news for public course golfers. The contrary is more to the truth. The Cleveland area is loaded with private courses, and during the past five years there has been a boom in privately-owned public courses.

Cleveland's Department of Parks and the Metropolitan System operate some of the finest public golf courses in the country. Superb conditions are commonplace at Seneca and Highland Park, both 36 hole city run courses. Highland Park hosted Cleveland Opens in 1964 and 1965. Seneca is home for the Sixth City Golf Club tournament as well as being used as a National Publinx qualifying location. The Metropolitan System operates six courses, all of which are kept in top condition. New courses may not be necessary within the city systems. The area is blessed with available facilities. In the meantime, dedicated superintendents Howard Simmons, who has

continued on page 47

OTHER CITIES from page 29

been with the Department of Parks since 1945, and Harold Burkhardt, who handles the Metropolitan System, continue to provide the best of all possible facilities for Cleveland's municipal golfers.

ST. LOUIS

Dwight Davis envisioned finer things than now exist in St. Louis, when he first suggested municipal golf for the city in 1918. At that time he was the city's recreation director. He's the same Davis for whom the tennis cup matches were named. Today the city operates three courses that range from bad to worse, according to local complainants.

Foresight may not have been the city government's forte when it came to golf, but they did manage to create one of the world's better known zoos. Ironically, Forest Park, home of renowned St. Louis Zoo, also houses the City of St. Louis Municipal Golf Course. One nine and an 18, both of dubious quality, comprise this layout.

"They're almost unplayable," be-moaned an embattled local golfer recently.

The third course operated by the city is called Triple A after an organization that donated the property to the city in 1904. By comparison with Forest Park, it might be called a showplace.

Attempts to upgrade conditions at these inadequate facilities have been made from time to time, but they have usually run aground. A loosely knit group of wealthy public course players tried to form a golf advisory council around 10 years ago, but momentum lagged and it floundered.

Like other cities, St. Louis has run out of space even if expansion were economically feasible. The County of St. Louis, however, has an excellent plan on the drawing boards for the development of three large tracts, each to contain a public golf course. A bond issue to finance the project was passed, but most local golfers feel it could easily develop into a 10 year plan even before any serious action is taken.

vaged it and we knew that. They just let us use it without cost until they had all their plans made." Strauss added the realistic note when he said, "Of course, we made money with Hillcrest."

Making money, while providing Cincinnati with the finest public golf facilities available in a financially sound way, is in the forefront of Strauss' thinking. There are times, however, when one gets the feeling there is more to it than that.

When Strauss talks about Blue Ash, for instance, you begin to understand the depth of thinking that must be part of a city recreation movement. Particularly in terms of golf.

"The city owns 273 acres of property adjoining an airport, and we've asked that they transfer it over to us for our future development as a 27 hole layout," he said. When it was suggested it might be a simple matter since the big stumbling block, finances, would forestall such a move in most cities, which under Cincinnati's plan, apparently was not so, Strauss responded, "The financing, yes, but it's surprising how much city-owned land is wasting in every community. Maybe it adjoins the water works, an airport or another public facility that is unused. Some city department may be jealously holding onto it. You always run into that sort of thing. Another department not wanting to turn it loose. We have managed to get land turned over to us, but it hasn't been easy. You need the support of a body like our golf advisory council, and sometimes the newspapers, behind you. The need has to be brought forth. You have to do a little maneuvering."

Robert "Red" Strauss and company forged ahead boldly five years ago with their unique "Municipal Golf Activities Fund." An enlightened city council gave them full support and has continued to provide additional funding based on the knowledge that golf revenues properly handled could fully support the activities of the recreation commission.

The Ten Year Development Plan is vital, alive and, at the halfway mark, right on schedule. Creative plans continue to put Cincinnati among the leaders of this country's municipalities that care about their public course golfers.

Truly, Ohio's Queen City has shown the way. It only remains for others to follow. □

CINCINNATI: GOLF'S MODEL CITY

CINCINNATI from page 26

ty: ranges, miniature courses, car rentals and certain retail golf supplies, produce extra income for Cincinnati's Golf Fund.

The golf school program that has been a feature in Cincinnati for many years, while helping youngsters get a good start in the game, is a good thing financially as well, according to Strauss. Each May a series of lessons are given by professionals at three "schools" for groups that sometimes number as many as 60 hopefuls. Ten dollars buys a series of six lessons, which are not limited to juniors. Strauss once said of the classes, "The

school wraps up in a nutshell all the basic techniques and information needed for a good start in the game."

Total realism is a necessity in dealing with the financial and logistical problems of running a municipal golf program. That's the impression one gets when talking with Bob Strauss. Earlier we mentioned the acquisition of Hillcrest from potential builders. Its ultimate loss to the city, which is probably the only setback of any consequence the entire program has had, was taken in stride by Strauss. "We ran Hillcrest for two years and then the commercial developers took over. There was no way we could have sal-