

# Park Golf Popular and Profitable for Cities

EVIDENCE of the continued increase of the use of public park golf courses by city golfers is disclosed interestingly by reports recently received from the Department of Parks and Boulevards of the City of Detroit, and from the Brooklyn Department of Parks.

The Detroit report, for the year ending December 31, 1928, was furnished GOLFDOM by George T. Lynch, secretary of the Detroit Dept. of Parks and Boulevards and reads:

Following are the golf figures on the municipal courses, four in number, at present operated in Detroit. The total number of rounds played on the four courses in

operation last year was the largest in their history, and I believe the figures will prove of interest to your readers, and encourage the construction of golf courses by the various municipalities. All these courses were constructed by the department's engineers, under supervision of Mr. Henry W. Busch, Commissioner of Parks and Boulevards. We have found that the average cost per hole is around \$2,000.

*Belle Isle Course:* This course opened on April 13 and closed December 2. The number of days operated were 234, and the number of players was 73,906, with the average players per day amounting to 315.8.

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*Palmer Golf Course:* The first 9 holes opened January 1 and closed December 31. Number of players on the first 9 holes were 93,645, or an average per day of 256.6. The second 9 holes opened on August 3 and closed October 31. Number of days operated were 90, and players numbered 21,892, or an average per day of 242.2. The total number of players on these courses was 115,537, and the average players per day for the combined courses was 316.5.

*Rackham Golf Course:* This course opened on April 18 and closed December 2. Number of days operated was 229, and number of players 56,767, with the average per day of 248.

*Rouge Golf Course (9 holes):* This course opened on May 24 and closed December 2, with 193 operating days. Players numbered 41,740, or an average per day of 216.3.

The department is constructing an additional 9 holes at the River Rouge Park, and 9 holes have been finished at Chandler Park. This course will be ready for play about July 15. An additional 9 holes at Chandler is under construction and will be ready for play a year hence.

Profits from these four golf courses for

the year ending December 31, 1928, were \$25,550. Profits from the refectories operated in conjunction with these courses were \$5,146, making a total net of \$30,696. These were distributed as follows:

#### Belle Isle—

Profits from fees.....\$8,439.00  
Refectory ..... 2,119.00

#### Palmer—

Profits from fees..... 3,021.00  
Refectory ..... 1,081.00

#### Rackham—

Profits from fees..... 8,882.00  
Refectory ..... 1,698.00

#### River Rouge—

Profits from fees..... 5,267.00  
Refectory ..... 245.00

The total number of rounds played on these four courses during the season were 287,950.

The season at the Belle Isle course showed a marked increase in attendance. The Palmer course had a higher maintenance cost on account of getting the second 9 holes ready and developing it. Opening this addition increased operating costs. Receipts increased \$4,600 and expenses \$7,200, cutting the profit \$2,600 as compared with the 1927 record. Rackham had about

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2,000 less players in 1928. A factor contributing to lower receipts was the reduction in the all day rate from \$1.50 to \$1.00. Receipts for 1928 were lower by \$7,000 as compared with 1927. Extensive building repairs contributed to the reduction of profit.

The Brooklyn report deals with only one course, the Dyker Beach municipal layout, but it is striking proof of the valuable niche in city recreational facilities a public course can fill. The report, furnished GOLFDOM by John J. Downing, supervisor of recreation, is as follows:

"During the first year of operation of the Dyker Beach course by the Park Department, 64,744 rounds of golf were played. The receipts for the period for season permits, daily permits, concession fees, and caddy permits were \$47,253. The cost of operation was approximately \$20,000, leaving a net profit to the city of over \$27,000. During the 1928 season 1260 season permits were issued at \$10.00 each. The popularity of the course is shown somewhat by the fact that 1450 permits for the season of 1929 had been issued by June 15.

"It is interesting to note that the 1260 players with season permits played 32,549 rounds of golf, averaging about eighteen rounds to each permit. Players who preferred to pay one dollar at the course each time they played were responsible for 32,195 rounds. Another interesting feature of the study shows that while most individuals were toasting their toes during the months of December, January and February, over three thousand rounds of golf were played on the course. The following is a list of the play month by month:

|                 |        |
|-----------------|--------|
| 1928—           |        |
| June .....      | 8,826  |
| July .....      | 9,257  |
| August .....    | 6,807  |
| September ..... | 7,731  |
| October .....   | 7,359  |
| November .....  | 4,186  |
| December .....  | 1,996  |
| 1929—           |        |
| January .....   | 461    |
| February .....  | 675    |
| March .....     | 2,604  |
| April .....     | 4,974  |
| May .....       | 9,868  |
| Total .....     |        |
|                 | 64,744 |

"In addition to the 18-hole course in Dyker Beach Park the Park Department operates a miniature course consisting of nine putting greens and two nets.

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