

# Public Links '32 Report Permits Interesting Analyses

By JACK FULTON, JR.

**A**NNUALLY the Public Links Section of the U. S. G. A. issues its municipal golf course booklet. Analysis of the 1932 report containing detailed statistical information on municipal links in 210 cities, discloses some interesting figures. There are 323 courses included in the book, of which 173 are 18-hole layouts, 134 9-hole layouts, 10 27-hole layouts, 5 36-hole layouts and one 6-hole layout.

Average operating costs on these courses are as follows:

9-hole courses .....	\$ 7,166
18-hole courses .....	18,290
27-hole courses .....	31,235
36-hole courses .....	36,450

For purposes of arriving at an average operating cost, the figures given for 18-hole courses were divided by two by the writer in order to find the cost of maintaining 9-holes of each layout. The 27-hole and 36-hole link's costs were similarly divided by three and four. A total of 531 9-hole units are thus arrived at and the average cost of operating these units figures \$8,786 per year or approximately \$1,000 per hole.

A number of the 9-hole courses are apparently very unpretentious affairs, since the average cost of maintaining 9-hole courses runs under \$800 per hole. The 18-hole layouts are on the average more elaborate, hence more expensive to maintain, running approximately \$1,100 a hole, while the 27 and 36-hole links average around this same figure.

Among other information given by the Public Links book is the year in which each of the courses reported was opened. The diagram accompanying this article presents this information in graphic form and offers an interesting picture of the tremendous development in municipal golf course construction which has taken place in the past ten years.

From 1895, when the first municipal golf course was built, until 1914—a span of 20 years only 37 municipal golf layouts had been constructed; the next six years alone showed 39 new courses. Beginning with

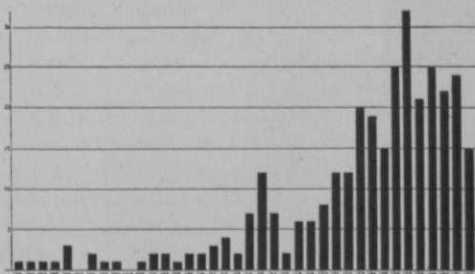


Chart showing increase in municipal golf course construction from 1895 to 1932. See text

1921, the major development in municipal golf began; there were twelve new courses opened that year and the same number in 1922. 1923 saw twenty new municipal links; in 1924 there were nineteen. In 1925, construction dropped to fifteen courses, but 1926 more than made up for this by the opening of twenty-five new links and 1927 became the year of greatest municipal golf course construction with thirty-two links officially opened that season. No year since has equalled 1927's record, although each of the years that followed brought the opening of not less than twenty-one new layouts. There are fifteen courses opening or scheduled to be opened in 1932, according to the information available to the Public Links Section at the time its book was brought out.

In addition to the tremendous volume of municipal construction occurring in the United States since 1921, at least half a hundred of the golf courses which had opened for play previously have since that time radically remodeled and lengthened their links so that the construction picture during the years 1921 to 1931 is not complete unless the remodeling activities are also kept in mind.

Professionals are reported at 201 or 62 per cent of the 323 courses. Seven out of ten of the 18-hole courses have a pro on the job while only five out of ten of the 9-hole layouts have a man hired in that capacity.

Statistics are given on the number of rounds of golf played in 1931. In many cases it is apparent that no accurate record is kept of the number of rounds of golf and accordingly some of the returns are obviously estimates and possibly sufficiently incorrect to throw off the averages. The actual figures, however, result as follows:

	Number of courses reporting	Average number rounds
9-hole courses	94	35,690
18-hole courses	141	51,920
27-hole courses	9	100,400
36-hole courses	5	109,300

Multiplying the above average number of rounds by the full number of courses given in the Public Links report the following total number of rounds played in 1931 in these 323 courses gives these totals:

9-hole courses	4,782,460
18-hole courses	8,982,160
27-hole courses	1,004,000
36-hole courses	546,600

Reducing these figures to 9-hole rounds, there were apparently 26,195,980 of them on the 323 courses. This figure is indicative of the tremendous volume of play municipal golf courses experience.

The Public Links Section of the U. S. G. A. doesn't claim that its list of municipal golf courses is complete and according to GOLFDOM's course records this is true, as GOLFDOM lists 543 public layouts in the United States as against the 323 included in the U. S. G. A. Public Links booklet.

## Boasts Portland (Ore.) Is World's Greatest Golfing City

**C**OLUMBIA C. C. (Portland, Ore.) presents the first issue of a handsome house organ, *The Columbian*. The magazine, in explaining why the club "believes that Portland is the greatest golfing city in the world," says that membership of the city's eight private clubs at the end of 1931 was 2,460, and 302,763 rounds were played on Portland's three municipal courses during the year. There are nine daily-fee courses in Portland, on which play statistics are not given.

Portland's population, according to 1930 census, is 301,815. With suburbs included, the figure is 378,728.

## California Pro Writes Golf Teaching Primer

**H**AROLD SAMPSON, pro at Burlingame (Calif.) C. C., has written a golf instruction book that he frankly calls a primer. It's a book for the pro rather than for the pupil, but this will foster rather than limit a good public sale at its price of \$2.50.

Sampson's book undoubtedly will arouse much healthy debate among the pros as it is concerned with the methods a pro should employ for effective teaching. The fellows will argue plenty about a number of recommendations made by the Burlingame blond, but all of them must admit that he has done pro golf a lot of good by pioneering in an instruction method book. The idea behind the book fits in exactly with the pros' school plan sponsored by Pres. Charles Hall of the PGA. When the public learns from such evidence as the Sampson book how much attention pros are giving to bettering the effectiveness of golf instruction there will be more lessons sold.

Sampson's *Primer of Golf Instruction* will prove a valuable aid to the younger pro who frequently finds himself bewildered on the lesson tee and needs exactly the sort of dope Sampson has handed out from his experience. Older professionals who have read the book rate it highly as something that reminds the pros that instruction service means not only knowing how the shots are to be made but how to get this knowledge adopted as part of the pupil's regular performance.

With instruction again taking prominence in the pros' scheme of things entire and in his economic plan, Harold Sampson's book is most timely and valuable propaganda for the pro.

Even if the author were not a pal of ours, which he is, we'd say Sampson's *Primer of Golf Instruction* was a book worth the money of the other pros.

**P**ROFESSIONALS can often arrange to run a window display in the bank where they keep their shop account. A judiciously selected assortment of clubs, bags, balls and accessories has considerable attention value when tastefully arranged in a window and the publicity to the pro and the shop and lesson business which results will more than pay the pro for any effort necessary to get the display installed.