



GOLF OUTLOOK

By HARRY C. ECKHOFF

WITH 393 new golf courses or additions to existing facilities in some stage of construction at year's end, 1971 should be an excellent year for golf course development. NGF records reveal that 352 of the above mentioned courses are regulation length facilities; 41 are par-3 or executive type.

New regulation length courses in the under-construction category total 252; additions to regulation courses account for 100. For par-3s the figures are 28 and 13, respectively.

Leading states with new golf courses under construction are California, 23; Ohio, 22; Florida, 19; Michigan, 18; New York and Pennsylvania, 16; North Carolina and Texas, 15; Georgia, Tennessee and Washington, 14 each.

Despite the prolonged tight money situation, NGF reports that 314 regulation length facilities (213 new ones and 101 additions to existing courses) opened in 1970. About 42% of these new facilities were private operations, 46% semi-private or daily fee and 12% municipal.

Thirty-eight new par-3 operations (29 new courses and 9 additions) also were reported in play in 1970. Their breakdown by type was 21% private, 71% semi-private and 8% municipal. About one third of the new courses were associated with real estate developments. The total golf course openings of 352 for 1970 were about 9% less than in 1969 when 397 new facilities opened for play.

The leading states with new golf course openings in 1970 were Florida, 26; Texas, 24; California, 21; New York, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, each 18; Michigan,

16; Georgia, 14; Washington and Wisconsin, 13; Illinois, 12; Iowa and Virginia, 11; and Minnesota 10.

NGF records reveal there were 10,188 golf courses in play in the nation at the end of fiscal year 1970. Of these, 4619 were private operations; 4248 were semi-private or daily-fee types and 1321 were municipal. 5343 were 9-hole layouts; 4845 were 18 holes or more. Regulation length courses totaled 9083; the remaining 1105 were par-3 layouts.

NGF estimates there are now 9,700,000 golfers in the United States who play more than 15 rounds annually. Another 2,200,000 play fewer than 15 rounds — making a total of 11,900,000 golfers.

Trends indicate that golf facility development will continue at a fast pace. Great strides are expected in housing development throughout the nation in 1971 due to somewhat lower interest rates and more money being made available for mortgages. Housing developments frequently include golf courses, swimming pools and other recreation facilities. Builders are selling environment as well as houses — thus providing a place for one to live and play. Probably a third of the new golf courses built in 1971 will be associated with housing developments including new planned communities, high rise apartment and condominium complexes and vacation or resort homes.

ing such facilities. The greater Cleveland area has 162 holes of municipal golf—72 holes operated by the Cleveland City Department of Parks and Recreation and 90 holes operated by the Cleveland Metropolitan Park System.

The Cleveland City operation includes two excellent 36-hole facilities — Highland Park and Seneca. Both have complete irrigation systems. The first two Cleveland Opens were played at Highland Park in 1964 and 1965.

Green fees for 18 holes at the Cleveland courses are \$3 any day. Also available is a season rate good for unlimited golf play—cost: \$115 for residents; \$190 for non-residents. Senior citizens age 65 and over may play golf on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday until 3 p.m. at the special rate of \$1 for 9 holes; \$1.75 for 18.

The six municipal courses (90 holes) operated by the Metropolitan Park System are under the general supervision of Harry Burkhardt, Superintendent of Golf for Cleveland Metropolitan Parks. Like the Cleveland city facilities, they are excellent golf courses. Green fees on the metropolitan courses vary from \$3 for 18 holes and \$1.50 for 9 to \$4 for 18 and \$2.25 for 9, depending on the course played. Many of the area industrial leagues use these courses and the play all week is reported as heavy.

Cincinnati, Ohio, has for years enjoyed a popular and successful municipal golf operation. The four courses operated by the City Public Recreation Commission are under the direct supervision of Robert J. Strauss, Supervisor of Golf.

A reservation system is in effect—a fee of 10¢ per person is charged for a reserved starting time. Green fees for 18 holes are \$2.60 weekdays; \$3.30 weekends and holidays. No season rates are available. Golfers may rent a set of clubs at any of the courses for 50¢—a major inducement for a beginner to try the game. Last year rentals totaled 15,736 sets.

Robert Strauss reports that 14 powered cars were made available at each of the four courses in 1970. They were an immediate success and the number per course will be increased to 20 in 1971. Rental fees for 18 holes are \$6 weekdays; \$7 weekends and holidays.

Says Strauss, "Perhaps the most meaningful municipal golf programs we have initiated have been the Men's Senior Golfers Organizations and the Women's Golfers groups formed at each of the four courses. These groups are granted weekday morning starting time reservations