No, it's not a "Dodgem" track at some amusement park but a traffic education course for children staged in Bremen and financed by HICOG grant-in-aid. Week-long program resulted from increasing accidents among children. (Kuhl photos)

Eleven-year-old boy in traffic cop's white cap and gloves (above) directs "Sunday drivers" at main cross-roads. Below, camera startles motorists and cyclists. (Schmidt photo)

Wooden Road to Safety

By HARALD GUENTHIER
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There are traffic snarls in Bremen and traffic cops are shouting themselves hoarse — but it's part of an educational safety campaign for the city's youngsters. It all began last January when Bremen police authorities conducted a week-long traffic education game in the city's sports hall.

Bremen police officials had become seriously worried over the rising traffic accident rate during 1950 — 12 children killed, 228 injured. Moreover, children had caused 216 accidents.

US officials also viewed the statistics with alarm. At the beginning of the year, C. Perry Oakes, chief, Political Affairs Division, OLC Bremen, presented to the Bremen police chief a DM 2,500 ($350) check, as first installment of a DM 5,000 ($1,190) grant-in-aid for traffic education.

Bremen police immediately went to work. They purchased educational facilities and equipment to help popularize the idea of traffic safety, individual responsibility and regard for the welfare of others in Bremen's crowded streets.

The first installment of the grant financed a daily performance of a traffic education game in the sports hall which was hailed with enthusiasm by Bremen's children. In it was constructed a life-size street surrounded by a white fence. This area, equipped with traffic signs and intersection lights, was exposed to the heavy traffic of tiny cars, bicycles, tricycles, scooters and youthful pedestrians.

While an 11-year-old boy wearing white gloves and hat was put in charge of the main crossroads, a real Bremen traffic policeman directed the whole game via an overhead loudspeaker system. The young drivers demonstrated every situation likely to occur in normal traffic and explained the correct behavior to the audience in a lively game of questions and answers.

Between formal programs, youngsters were permitted to ride or drive the vehicles, carefully observing the traffic rules they had just seen demonstrated. The huge hall was filled to capacity and the number of performances planned had to be tripled.

"School classes came in the morning and little boys and girls from all parts of the city came in the afternoon," the police officer in charge explained, while putting a curly-headed six-year-old aboard a tricycle. "One dropped the other one along, but when they left they had learned how to behave in the street."

By the end of the week 13,000 Bremen children had participated in the program and learned to "play safe" against the permanence of death.

END

INFORMATION BULLETIN
Top, left, Borchshoehe is one of five modern Bremen schools called for under reform plans.

Top, right, Peissenberg, Bavaria, youngsters enjoy snack consisting of hot chocolate and a roll.

Left, teacher trainees and guest students do gymnastics outdoors at Jugenheim Teachers College.

Below, left, puppet show at Peissenberg delights kiddies and helps them learn to count.

Below, trainees at Jugenheim watch kindergarten tots do "hand painting — free style."

(Photos by Claude Jacoby, PRD HICOGI)