Wisconsin, Minnesota boast highest figures

Golf fever is highest in Wisconsin and Minnesota, according to the latest research released by the National Golf Foundation.

NGF's Golf Participation in the U.S./1989 Edition reports that nearly 16 percent of the residents in Wisconsin and Minnesota play golf.

Utah, Iowa, Michigan and North Dakota follow the top two, with 14 percent of their populations being golfers.

Michigan also is one of seven states able to boast more than one million golfers, California leads the nation with 4.8 million, followed by New York with 1.7 million; Texas, 1.6 million; Illinois, 1.5 million; Ohio, 1.4 million; Michigan, 1.3 million; and Florida, 1.2 million.

According to the report, the number of golfers nationwide increased in 1988 from 21.7 million to 23.4 million — the third straight year the number increased by more than 7 percent.

Also, figures show that national golf participation exceeded 10 percent for the first time, climbing from 9.7 to 10.4 percent.

While the number of golfers nationwide has grown, so has the total rounds played — from 434 million to 487 million rounds.

Fueling this growth in rounds played, according to NGF Vice President of Research Dr. Gordon Benson, is the extraordinary increase in the number of frequent golfers, those who play 25 rounds or more a year.

The number of frequent golfers grew from 4.8 million to 5.6 million — a 16 percent rise," Benson said. "This is a sharp departure from the previous year when frequent golfers showed no increase in numbers.

The importance of these frequent golfers is underscored by the fact that although they represent only 24 percent of the golf population, they play 75 percent of the total rounds."

Wisconsin, Minnesota lead in golf participation. California is the leader with 2.4 million; and Florida, 1.2 million.

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