Florida on top of 1989’s course boom

Florida continued to lead the way in new golf course construction in 1989, opening 50 of the 290 that began operation across the United States, according to a National Golf Foundation report. Florida’s total was more than the next three states combined, as the industry saw a 39 percent increase over the 211 that opened in 1988. The NGF reported 403 courses were under construction and 603 were being planned last year, two records for the decade of the 1980s.

"These figures are a very positive sign that the golf industry is well on the way to its goal of at least 400 new courses per year," said NGF President Joseph F. Beditz. NGF statistics show that of the 290 courses, 66 percent were public facilities. Since 61 percent of the country’s courses are now public and 80 percent of all golfers play primarily on public courses, the NGF sees that figure as encouraging.

In the race of states Florida led for the fifth straight year. Michigan nearly quadrupled its construction, with 10 courses, and jumped from 10th place to second.

Texas and California were the two big disappointments. Texas, which ranked second with 20 courses in 1988, fell to sixth place with 12 courses last year. California dropped from fifth to ninth, slipping from 12 courses to 10.

Those slowdowns were countered, however, by increased construction in several northern and Sunbelt states. North and South Carolina had 14 courses open in each, followed by Illinois with 13, Indiana and Georgia with 11 each, and Arizona, Ohio and Virginia each matching California’s 10.

The top ten states in course openings during 1989 were:
1) Florida, 50.
2) Michigan, 15.
3) Tie, South Carolina, 14.
4) North Carolina, 14.
5) Illinois, 13.
6) Texas, 12.
7) Tie, Indiana, 11.
8) Georgia, 11.
9) Tie, Arizona, 10.
10) Virginia, 10.

The top ten states in courses under construction are:
1) Florida, 46.
2) California, 31.
3) South Carolina, 25.
4) Michigan, 23.
5) Illinois, 21.
7) Georgia, 18.
8) Ohio, 17.
9) Texas, 16.
10) Pennsylvania, 15.

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