NGF predicts 250 golf course openings a year through the 1990s

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pipeline may be even longer than that.

Experts agree that local financ-
ing remains a viable source. But when larger lending institutions get skittish in 1990-91, the funds and corresponding construction abates. In essence, the approach-
ing slowdown will reflect the lack of lending options during 1990 and 1991 — and the institutional lending community doesn’t ap-
pear ready to get back on the horse.

"I’m afraid that lenders need to have some success in other areas before they warm to golf projects again. They need to feel comfortable again," said Gary Gilson, a par-
tner in the Kansas City law firm of Shook, Hardy & Bacon, which specializes in golf course acquisition and divestiture.

"We anticipate 250 openings per year through this decade," said NGF Vice President Rick Norton. "Overall, the trend is going down some-
what. But I don’t want to sound doom-and-gloomy because we’re seeing golf much more realistically now — as a more publicly acces-
sible, fiscally responsible unit."

"We’re still going to see some pretty strong numbers in ’93, but the momentum is not there in ’94," said Norton.

The NGF figures indicate that 236 daily-fee facilities opened their

Jones Trail

at halfway point in Alabama

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. —

Alabama’s Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail has reached the half-
way point of completion, with nine of the 18 planned courses now open to the public.

Birmingham’s Oxmoor Valley and Mobile’s Magnolia Grove, two of the Trail’s 54-hole facilities, are fully open, each with two champi-
onship courses and an 18-hole Short Course available for daily-
fee play.

The Trail’s other 54-hole facil-
ities — Huntsville’s Hampton Cove and Auburn-Opelika’s Grand Na-
tional — each has an 18-hole championship course open, with a second scheduled to open in 1993. Huntsville’s Hampton Cove also recently opened its Short Course to area golfers.

"We are on schedule," said Bob Barrett, vice president of SunBelt Golf Corp. "With courses open at all our 54-hole facilities, golfers across Alabama can now enjoy a Robert Trent Jones-designed course. Since each course is dis-
tinctly different, golfers of all skill levels will be able to sharpen their game on the Trail."

In addition to four 54-hole facili-
ties, the following three 36-hole facilities went in 1993: High-
land Oaks in Dothan, Silver Lakes in Calhoun County, and Cambrian

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