business or for the making of business contacts, I see no grounds for assuming that this is universally so, and thus that membership in a club automatically affects promotion and advance potential."

Another contention the Labor Department made was that since companies were involved with such clubs, they, in actuality, were controlling the admissions policies of the clubs. This point was also dismissed by the Justice Department. The point made was that such club policies were not extensions of corporate doctrines.

Even with the issue seemingly settled, there is some concern in the industry that the new cast of Democratic characters may review the question of restrictive admissions policies. Once again, the national spotlight focused in on the club industry, at a time it can do without that kind of publicity.

Indications are that pressure groups for both women's rights and black rights groups will be keeping a watchful eye on the Carter White House and the new Congress to make sure no one is involved with such clubs. Such activists as Georgia's Julian Bond have made it quite clear they will not stand for such practices by politicians, be they appointed or elected.

For the moment, the parting shot of the Ford Administration on the OFCC and the clubs has quieted with the changing of the White House guard, but those in the club business will be keeping a watchful eye on the nation's capital this spring.

NAPGC a year older, wiser in Year II

In any new organization's formative years, not too much gets accomplished except for the group getting its collective feet on the ground.
That is the best way to summarize the first year of the National Association of Public Golf Courses, as the group of public course owners goes into Year II of its existence.

St. Charles, Ill., outside of Chicago, was the site for the annual conference in conjunction with the National Golf Foundation’s eastern workshop for daily fee operators. The Pheasant Run Lodge and its dinner theater even had Elizabeth Ray, former friend of former congressman Wayne Hays, on its marquee, but according to NGF Executive Director Don Rossi, the course operators had more than enough incentive to come to the seminars without Ms. Ray.

On that point, Rossi was right. More than 200 owner-operators from more than 15 states and Canada made it to the late fall meeting. All were interested in what was new in the business and how they could run their facilities better. Some just wanted to know how to save their facilities.

Probably the most sobering talk was presented by NGF Regional Director Jerry Claussen. Although Claussen saw significant growth in his Rocky Mountain region, he emphasized that the day of the small “mom and pop” operation was past and skilled, professional management would have to take over.

“From what I have seen, there is a lack of competent management in this market. And management, not market, is the key to success,” Claussen stated.

New information was delivered in big doses, as such authorities as course consultant William Sherman, NGF Education Director Carol Johnson, turfgrass expert Andy Bertoni, golf course architects Lawrence Packard and Jack Kidwell, and PGA Director of Club and Professional Services Gary Wiren paraded to various seminar podiums.

Sherman zeroed in on the evils of the golf course owner not being aware of how local zoning can directly affect them. He cited a case in San Jose, Calif., in which the city placed zoning restrictions on an owner who wanted to sell his course to a home developer. In reality, the municipality wanted to obtain the course itself.

Johnson, along with PGA professional and course owner Don Essig III, went in depth on how the operator could make better customers out of his golfers by making them better players. Through the institution of added instructional programs, golfers could become better players and would directly increase their frequency of play.

As the amount of golfers at public facilities increases, said Johnson, it would only be natural for owner-operators to put some sort of program into action. “There is very little golf taught at public courses,” Johnson commented. Her point was well taken in view of the fact that at least 75 percent of all golfers now play at such facilities.

Essig pointed to the importance of establishing the beginning handicap for the novice and encouraging the less experienced to find out as much about golf as possible. “The owner or his professional must adopt an enthusiasm about teaching the game. If you aren’t interested in instruction, your students will soon..."
Steve Alberg talks taxes to course owner-operators during the National Golf Foundation's eastern daily fee seminar in St. Charles, Ill. Alberg summarized the effort his organization had been making in the private sector to fight higher taxes.

"We consider ourselves a real friend of all in the business, especially the architects," Siemens told GOLF BUSINESS in an interview in Palm Springs, Calif. "Qualified builders are a necessity today. There are no shortcuts anymore and it is so important to know and be able to ask the right questions at the right time."

On this current job site, to be called Rancho Las Palmas, Siemens was building a 27-hole facility within a 360-acre tract for their association president this past year. Along with coordinating his busy schedule between job sites, Siemens has enjoyed his year as head of the Golf Course Builders of America.

This month Siemens ended a well-run term by handing his gavel over to the new chief executive of the GCBA, Eugene Brown of Greenville, N.C.

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Builder Siemens watches every detail

Nick Siemens is a man with a watchful eye. For more than 10 years and at more than 65 course sites, he has been a man who believes in carrying out specifications to the letter. There is little doubt he is one of the top course builders in the nation.

His colleagues were so convinced of his talent, they voted him their association president this past year. Along with coordinating his busy schedule between job sites, Siemens has enjoyed his year as head of the Golf Course Builders of America.

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