

Foodservice and spikeproof carpet aid success of daily fee course



Golfers take a break at Centerton's 19th Hole restaurant. The popular gathering spot features "Club Champion" spikeproof carpeting in a variety of patterns.

In the backwoods of southern New Jersey, on land that once was a cornfield, sits a golf club where the chef's score may be more important than the golfers'.

Actually, Centerton Golf Club isn't a private club. It is a public course with golf facilities that owner Ed Carman describes as "pleasant, interesting, and challenging enough for the best of players."

The course, 6650 yards in all, carries a par 71 rating from the South Jersey Golf Association.

But one doesn't have to care a fig about golf to enjoy the clubhouse-restaurant and banquet facilities. Although Carman developed the club in 1964 with the idea of attracting south Jersey golfers, many travelers from Philadelphia (55 miles away) and Atlantic City (60 miles away) come to enjoy the golfing and food. Carman notes he does not advertise. Over the years, word of mouth from satisfied customers has established Centerton.

As you drive up the winding passageway off the country road, Centerton's 20,000-square-foot, Colonial-style building comes into view. Parking is handled by attendants, and the parking facilities can easily handle 1,000 cars.

Inside the main building there are two large, separate kitchens that service seven banquet rooms and a 19th Hole Restaurant. Four brightly-decorated locker rooms and the executive offices are also housed there.

Centerton's facilities will accommodate up to 800 visitors at one time. Carman credits the club's excellent service to his four managers. Each handles a special area: private party bookings, waitresses, and bartenders; food preparation and selection; golf shop; and grounds.

Carman explains that each manager works independently, but "I have my fingers in all of their jobs."

At the height of the season, Centerton's front tee is busy from sunrise to sunset with golfers readying to play the well-groomed 18 holes — twosomes, foursomes, and company golf outings.

Ed's brother, Allan, handles the pro shop, signing tee times, organ-