

Tennis: the 20th hole



There was a time when a private golf club could be launched and thrive with installation of roughly 6,600 yards of greensward and 18 flags. But it was soon discovered that a 19th hole, including locker room and grill as well as tap, was almost mandatory. Today, it seems no less imperative that the facility include tennis courts.

The economic need for the modern club to serve as a family recreational center has combined with the upsurge in the popularity of tennis to make the tennis court an essential "20th hole." Many of the most conservative old-line clubs have felt the need to add tennis to insure the recruitment of new, younger members and the increased utilization of all other club facilities. And it now appears virtually inconceivable that any newly founded private club would not include tennis from its inception.

Typical of the pattern is the handsome Rolling Hills Golf and Racquet Club in Montgomery, Ala. This 1,000-acre development along Byron Nelson Blvd. opened in 1976 with one 18-hole course and six all-weather tennis courts. The latter are of the Chevron Laykold surfacing system and are lighted for nighttime play with Chevron's lighting system, which provides

an even diffusion of light with no glare, hot spots or stroboscopic effect.

According to principal owner Hugh Smith, these courts were selected for their durability and minimal maintenance under heavy use and in all climatic conditions. "Following a cloud-burst," said Smith, "they dry in half an hour, and the only care they've required is an occasional sweeping off of leaves."

In less than 2 years, Rolling Hills has achieved a membership of 350 and expects to reach its optimum of 700 by 1980. So far, 200 homesites abutting the golf course have been developed, and a total of 800 are planned for completion over the next 10 years.

As projected expansion is realized, space has been reserved for a second 18-hole golf course and an additional 20 tennis courts. "Even that may not be the end of it," said Smith. "With a metropolitan population of 400,000, Montgomery is the fastest growing city in Alabama."

Rolling Hills is the ninth private country club in the area. "In starting a new club today," said Smith, "you have to compete for all of the family's recreational demands, and in planning your facilities, the inclusion of tennis is an absolute necessity." □

Comparing budgets

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tear on vehicles. Less traffic damage to turf results also.

10. WATERING SYSTEMS—the age of the water system would influence the cost of its upkeep. Also, a club with approximately 600 heads on fairways would have greater costs than the club with the average of 185 heads.

11. AUTOMATIC vs. MANUAL IRRIGATION—automatic irrigation generally reflects a labor savings when compared with manual irrigation.

12. SOURCE OF WATER—some clubs are blessed with an abundant source of water for irrigation of the golf course and grounds. Others must purchase all or supplemental water.

13. UNIONIZATION—generally increases the cost of golf course maintenance, especially in the fringe benefit area.

14. PESTICIDE RESTRICTIONS—because of the differences in State Regulations some chemicals are restricted in certain states requiring the use of more expensive alternatives.

15. PURCHASING—practices vary from club to club.

16. INFLATION—because of inflation, a 1968 budget of \$90,000 would have to be increased to over \$200,000. An article written by Robert Siebert entitled "The Impact of Inflation on the Golf Course Superintendents" and "Maintenance Budget" concludes that — "the maintenance budget has not kept pace with the rapid inflation of the 1970's."

17. STYLE OF MAINTENANCE—the controversy of "overgrooming is overspending" is often voiced in turf maintenance circles. Some clubs have chosen to not rake periferal sand traps or to mow all of the rough, thus returning the golf course to the "links" fashion of maintenance with resultant savings. Unfortunately, the style of maintenance is usually not discussed when the budgets are compared.



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