

Golf course owners unite!

By Cecil R. McKay
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There are many associations within the golf industry, from PGA to club managers and golf superintendents. Now, a new association movement is taking place, which is the daily fee golf course owners.

So far, we have the Michigan Association of Public Golf Courses (M.A.P.G.C.), Ohio Association of Public Golf Courses (O.A.P.G.C.), Oregon Golf Course Owners Association (O.G.C.O.A.), and Florida Golf Course Owners and Operators Association (F.G.C.O.O.A.). Several other states are making attempts at starting associations, including Indiana, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, California, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

No association can exist unless it offers positive benefits to the membership it serves, and the Golf Course Owners Associations are no exception. A current list of benefits being provided by the various associations include:

Management Workshops—Where owners can meet and discuss mutual problems or successes. More and more, owners are finding that by telling their own success stories and listening to others, they gain in management skills and increase the strength of the golf industries competing for the recreational dollar. Owners have to learn to promote, and make their local people want to spend more money on golf rather than TV, or vacation trips, boating, etc. In the resort area states, the owners are working together to promote golf vacations and visitors to their state.

Insurance Programs—Golf courses have historically been rated for insurance based on experience in other industries. The golf course associations are finding impressive savings available by combining into group policies, developing their own experience rates, and having policies manuscripted specifically for golf courses.

Newsletters—These periodical bulletins keep members alert to news within the industry, and of legislation, or governmental programs that may affect their business.

Lobbying Power—By working together, owners can make their needs or concerns known to their legislators. Problems involving taxation, governmental restrictions, municipal competition, liquor laws, etc., can be more effectively challenged with a group action.

Promotion—Course owners combining to promote the game of golf can be

a very strong power. The states of Michigan and Ohio are beginning to hum with excitement over their golf tournaments. In 1979, the state of Michigan (MAPGC) challenged Ohio (OAPGC) to a play-off to determine a champion. The play-off was held in Orlando, Florida in November (neutral turf). In 1980, the challenge was reissued, and the play-off will be in Las Vegas, November 16th. A few new wrinkles have been added, such as: Winning players of golf leagues at participating courses are automatically seeded into regional tournaments, and a challenge is being issued to all states to participate at the Las Vegas outing. The winners will be the daily fee golf champions of the United States.

Two objectives are being met by this tournament program, Number one is to create a tournament for the average daily fee golfer. This event is played as a handicapped best ball using a four person team, which gives everyone a chance. Number two is promoting golf as a fun type activity, and operating as an incentive for leagues.

Now the average golfer not only has a chance to win in a local league, but may go on to win at the regional, state, and even national level. There is even talk of getting sponsors behind teams, complete with shirts, caps and bagtags.

The success of the association movement can probably be traced back to the efforts of the National Golf Foundation and their management work-

shops. In 1980, Don Rossi, Executive Director, has announced that a daily fee workshop will be held in Las Vegas, November 16-19, which coincides with the National Daily Fee Golf Tournament.

The results of all this activity should be a stronger daily fee golf industry operating more efficiently, and creating a better product for their customers.



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