Restrictive admissions criticized by NCCJ

With memories of the Griffin Bell confirmation hearings still ringing in the ears of many in the club industry, especially in view of Bell's subsequent resignation from three clubs that barred Jews and blacks from membership, there was little surprise when the president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews recently criticized private country clubs with such restrictive admissions policies.

Dr. David Hyatt, president of the 50-year-old human relations organization, called on clubs with such discriminatory practices to eliminate them. In a statement from his New York City office, Hyatt admitted guaranteeing open membership in country clubs was low on the priority scale for the NCCJ, compared to the needs of minorities for equality in jobs, housing and education.

"It is nevertheless a shameful practice on which the spotlight of public opinion must be focused until it is finally eliminated," he said. "Such elitist, discriminatory practices have no place in our American way of life."

Although the following is taken out of context, it sums up the feelings of Hyatt toward private country clubs with restrictive admissions policies: "The very fact such clubs still practice discrimination to such a widespread degree throughout our country in this 20th century remains an ugly blot on our democratic record."

Hyatt further stated such social discrimination remains one of the toughest and most poisonous forms of prejudice within the nation. "The NCCJ will press our already vigorous efforts to eliminate such practices in the months and years ahead through our nationwide educational programs for better human relations."

There was response to Hyatt's charges from National Club Association president M.E. "Bob" Meyer. The right of freedom of association, Meyer rebutted, was something also guaranteed by the Constitution. The vice president for public relations of the NCCJ, Harry A. Robinson, told GOLF BUSINESS, "Meyer has a good argument, but we are talking about the morality of restrictive admissions policies."

Meyer noted the fight for individual rights is beginning to bring other "rights" onto a collision course. Using the example of the American Civil Liberties Union, Meyer pointed out that this organization, which has been a foe of NCA in the past, had some contradictions pulling within its own organizational fabric.

"Before getting to any others of the various 'liberties,' the ACLU first enumerates its belief in 'freedom of association. Isn't that what private clubs are all about?,'" Meyer insisted. "Why aren't clubs within the Constitution and the Bill of Rights when they practice selectivity?"

Commenting on the Hyatt remarks, NCA Executive Director Jerry Hurley told GOLF BUSINESS the NCCJ criticism was another in a long line of attacks on the private club sector this year.

Dr. David Hyatt, president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, has called on clubs to drop membership restrictions against Jews, blacks, and other minorities.
GB founder Graffis in Hall of Fame

Adding to what is already a long line of awards and accomplishments on both sides of golf, GOLF BUSINESS founder Herb Graffis was recently selected for the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Just passing his 85th year, Graffis was inducted into the Hall in Pinehurst, N.C. Others also included in the annual voting by the Golf Writers Association of America were the late, noted golf course architect Donald Ross and Arthur D'Arcy (Bobby) Locke of South Africa. Locke was a four-time winner of the British Open and the first foreign player to win consistently on the American tour. Locke was inducted in the Modern Era classification, while Graffis and Ross were included in the Distinguished Service category.

Joe founded the Augusta National Golf Club. Locke was inducted into the Hall in 1947. That first foreigner to win a major was Bob Jones of South Africa.

Focus of the project is research of sewage effluents on turfgrass, based on an academic effort by the University of Florida's associate professor A. E. Dudeck.

"Reclaimed waste water offers a cheap, continuous supply of water with the nutrients already added," said E. Lawrence Packard, president of the USGA Foundation. Al Radko, national director of the Green Section, noted that sewage effluent aids in the decrease of stream and water pollution.

Dudeck's experiments will concentrate on the effect of heavy metals, which accumulate in plants, on the growth and development of Bermuda grass.

Director offered by architects group

Many courses and clubs will consider remodeling their existing facilities this year. To make that job a little easier, the American Society of Golf Course Architects is once again offering its free membership listing.

All 75 ASGCA members are covered, with easy reference for address and phone number. For a free copy of the directory, write ASGCA, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601.

Iowa GCSA elects Brown new president

It was the changing of the guard for the Iowa Golf Course Superintendents Association as Dale Brown, Indianola Country Club, recently became the state organization's newest chief executive.

Brown, a floor nominee, won over Steve Tyler, Pheasant Ridge Golf Course, in the run for president. Others elected to top offices included Henry Zimmerman, Harlan Country Club, vice president; Richard Wynne, Wildwood Golf Course, secretary/treasurer; Wendell Baken, Atlantic Country Club, southwest district director; Mike Mulvihill, Davenport Country Club, southeast district director; Bill Byers, Des Moines Golf and Country Club, central district director; Dave Schurman, Lake Creek Country Club, northwest district director; Charles Pribble, Sunnyside Country Club, northeast district director; and Richard Louvar, St. Andrews Golf Course, director-at-large.

Superintendent-of-the-Year honors went to Tim Hergenrader, Sioux City Country Club. The effort was based on Hergenrader's ability to completely rebuild all of his greens after a contaminated fungicide from the factory killed all his turf in 1975.

Also honored by the IGCSA were Walter Fuchs, Evanston Golf Club, Skokie, Ill., and Ted Smith, Sr., now retired, but for many years the superintendent at Edmundson Golf Course, Oskałosa, Iowa. Both were awarded Distinguished Service awards by the association for their many years of work with the Iowa group.

Iowa Operator of the year, Tim Hergenrader, Sioux City Country Club, Skokie, Ill., company.

Ram acquires custom club firm in west

In an effort to further build its custom club business, Ram Golf Corp. recently acquired AMW Enterprises, a Redlands, Calif., club maker and repair facility.

Doing business under the name of Mario's Golf and Repair Shop, the firm has produced custom clubs over the past 10 years for customers in the western U.S. Operator of the shop is Mario Cesario.

In another move to strengthen its position in the market, Ram has added former Masters champion Ray Floyd to its golf advisory staff. He will lend his expertise to the testing and development of equipment for the Elk Grove Village, Ill., company.

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"We all know how it goes. Once your customer decides on custom clubs, he wants them right now. Well, here's what we've done about it. As of now, full sets of all but the most specialized Toney Penna clubs are available for immediate delivery. Immediate. Right now. Through you.

"I'm talking about genuine Toney Penna custom woods in a variety of persimmon or laminated head models. I'm talking about my model 201 forged irons, and my investment cast TIP irons. The exact clubs which, until now, have been available only after the conventional 'custom club' wait.

"Together we can put an end to the waiting game.

"One more thing. You know the quality of Toney Penna clubs. Now I highly recommend my new Toney Penna DB golf balls—the different distance balls. Because they, like other products with 'Toney Penna' on them, get the same care and attention to detail. If they didn't, Rawlings Golf wouldn't put their name on them.

"Neither would I."

Circle 110 on free information card

Toney Penna by Rawlings

Rawlings Golf, a division of A-T-O Inc., 15 Industrial Parkway, Hebron, Ohio 43025
Banvel herbicides are broadleaf weed “specialists” designed for professional turf programs.

As a professional turf man you have a reputation to be proud of. And, rightly so! Your skill, knowledge and effort shows in the beauty and quality of your turf. So why take chances with understrength herbicides? Herbicides that get some broadleaf weeds but leave you with repeated deep-rooted problems—such as dandelions and plantain. Banvel 4S and Banvel + 2,4D control all the major broadleaf weeds, and most of the time with just one application. Check the chart and compare your weed problems with the herbicides available.

Here’s why Banvel herbicides are the professionals’ choice for weed control

- When used as directed Banvel will not harm trees, ornamentals or grass—it just eliminates weeds.
- No season restrictions. Lay down Banvel from early spring to late fall—all through the growing season.
- Rain will not affect Banvel. It keeps working because it translocates—penetrates leaves and is absorbed through roots to attack every part of the weed.
- Banvel is not a soil sterilant. There is no residual reaction from Banvel as it is broken down in the soil by bacterial action. It is biodegradable.
- No special spraying equipment necessary. It is easy to clean out of equipment after use.
- Mixes readily with hard or soft water.
- Easily stored through winter months without losing potency.
"Two" is better!

Some weeds simply aren't affected by single herbicide treatment. But Banvel +2,4D has an "additive effect" in that the two herbicides get weeds that one alone just weakens.

**Banvel herbicides—products for professional turf men**

Circle 125 on free information card
political hammer against fees.

In the future, OSHA will be stepping up its efforts to meet its own rules, Marshall promises. "These deficiencies raise in my own mind the question of whether other federal agencies are complying with the Occupational Safety and Health Act in protecting government workers across the nation," he said.

Although Marshall has been in office approximately 5 months, he has asked that the public, the Congress, and the press give him some "breathing space" to get OSHA back on course. Changes are good he will get that extra time. The effort by the Carter Administration is slanting OSHA toward a common-sense approach in the future. Chances are good that many of the unworkable policies of the past will be shelved for regulations that industry can accommodate.

Many in business are already impressed with OSHA's new administrator, Eula Bingham, who is known for her common-sense approach to regulation. There are definite indications OSHA will finally be thinking about the little man. The establishment of a special office for small business is imminent. This would probably cover the golf facilities in the country.

Noting the cries of small business, Marshall said, "Many in the small business community have complained that they are overwhelmed with the paperwork involved with complying with OSHA regulations."

**EDUCATION**

**Young tour pro has chance both ways**

Just in case all the skills needed to stay a member of the PGA Tour desert the young professional, the association's education department has kept some hope alive for many of the would-be money winners by allowing them to attend PGA business schools while they are on the circuit.

What it amounts to is that, at selected sites, the PGA will conduct one of its business schools for three days prior to the tournament. For example, this format was adopted at the recent Houston Open at Woodlands Country Club. More than 40 tour players are involved in the program.

Director of Education Joe O'Brien has set up the curriculum for the younger tour player who cannot afford to leave the tournament trail long enough to complete regular PGA business schools. Special courses have been constructed over the three-day span. Range of subjects includes: equipment repair, course conditioning, history of the PGA, golf course design, time management, public speaking and public relations, golf ball and club design, physical conditioning, and financial budgeting and taxes.

Upon successfully completing the course, the young tour player will be fully accredited and will receive Class A player member card. If a player decides that his tour days are over, he will be required to return to the books, completing specific educational requirements necessary to receive a certificate as a continuing Class A professional.

**MARKET RESEARCH**

**CMAA profile shows clubs big tax bite**

Real estate taxes have shot up drastically over the past 5 years at 81 percent of the private country clubs responding in a recent "Operational Profile" of its members' facilities by the Club Managers Association of America.

The 23-page study, which focuses in on just about every area of club management, covered 393 country clubs. In the tax area, the CMAA found 19 percent had had their taxes increased at least once in the 5-year span, 21 percent twice, 13 percent three to four times, and 22 percent five or more times.

Amount of the increase was also analyzed. Approximately 22 percent of the clubs had boosts under 10 percent, 25 percent fell in the 10-19 percent increase bracket, 17 percent saw their tax bills increase between 20 to 29 percent, 14 percent went up between 30 to 49 percent and a significant 13 percent had their tax load increase more than 50 percent.

When looking at the tax problem on a geographic basis, the northeast, as expected, saw the highest increases. For example, 85 percent of the 129 northeastern clubs responding said their taxes had increases over the last 5 years. Compare that to the next largest percentage from a geographic region, which was the northwest and central with a combined percentage increase of 76 percent. The southwest saw an increase of 75 percent.

Establishing an average tax load for the private country club, the study came up with a real estate tax bill of $39,800. Although the study did not differentiate in its geographic breakdown which of the clubs in this category were country clubs or city clubs, because the CMAA has members in both fields, the average tax bill for the northeast facility was far and away the greatest. The northeast bill was $57,600, doubling the southeast's $27,800 and far from the closest, the southwest's $41,200.

Other taxes were also covered. Country clubs, it found, pay on the average $6,000 in personal property taxes, more than $45,000 in payroll taxes, and an additional $1,500 for licenses and permits. The grand total for all country club taxes average $85,600.

Asking how many of the clubs had greenbelt legislation in their area, only 26 percent did. Oddly enough, of the 55 percent that answered no to whether greenbelt legislation was available in their area, only 21 percent said they would lobby for such changes in the law.

Other areas of the survey covered private country club dues and initiation fees. Annual dues at the clubs profiled were $900. Monthly dues charges having the largest percentage of the respondents fell into the $50 to $74 area. Indicating the increase in the monthly dues area, in 1971 only 5 percent of the country clubs had monthly dues charges more than $100. That figure has now ballooned to 21. Average initiation fee at the profile club was nearly $2,900. Even that average 16 percent of the nearly 400 country club answering had initiation fees of $5,000 or more.

Club use trends are also analyzed in the study. All managers reporting indicate that their facilities...
will be used more than ever. Some 70 percent of the country clubs reporting see use increasing this year.

To get more details on obtaining a copy of the survey, write CMAA, 7615 Winterberry Place, P.O. Box 34482, Washington, DC 20034 or call 301/229-3600.

Clubs & Courses

California City has new course planned

Trying to lure golfers from crowded courses in Los Angeles, the city planner of California City, Calif., has plans for a new $1 million municipal facility on the drawing boards.

George Howes, California City planner, is working with the architectural firm of Von Hagge & Devlin, Woodlands, Tex., on the new 18-hole layout for the community due north of the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The project is part of a renovation of the town’s civic center.

“We feel the completion of the complex will be a real attraction to the congested golfing situation in the Los Angeles area,” Howes reported to GOLF BUSINESS. Plans for the municipal course opening are set for spring of 1978. Preliminary designs for the course have already been presented to city officials. The golf course is just the first of several recreational projects planned for the city. According to Howes, California City ranks third in area size for cities in the state.

Promoting the Game

New Scout badge is for golf

Golf is the subject of the newest merit badge of the Boy Scouts of America. There are currently 120 subjects covered in the merit badge program, 19 of which are sports. Richard Dutcher, BSA staffer in charge of the program, pointed out, "We want to continue to foster interest in sports which last a lifetime, long after you are likely to drop team competition."

With 1½ million boys between the ages of 11 and 17, the Scouts offer a unique opportunity to promote the game where promotion is most needed: with junior-age youngsters.

Among requirements for the golf merit badge are knowledge of golf techniques, from grip and stance to shot-making, knowledge and use of golf etiquette and rules, a properly established handicap, golf exercises, and participation in at least one round of competitive play. Scouts are also asked to review the sport’s history and to discuss the advantages of amateur golfers and six vocational opportunities in golf.

A 72-page golf badge instructional booklet was compiled and edited by Joseph C. Dey, executive director of the United States Golf Association for 34 years, with author assistance from Arnold Palmer, Julius Boros, Jack Nicklaus, Johnny Miller, Billy Casper, Gary Player, Lee Trevino, and Tom Weiskopf.

Clubs and others interested in securing copies of the golf merit badge pamphlet to promote the program may obtain single copies from their local scouting office, or bulk supplies can be purchased from the National Supply Division, Boy Scouts of America, North Brunswick, NJ 08902, at the rate of $22 per package of 50 pamphlets. Payment must accompany the order. Ask for pamphlet No. 3397.
Although an excellent example of America's free enterprise system, the daily fee golf course is something that has almost been ignored over the years the golf business has grown.

Whether others in other segments of the industry want to admit it or not, these public facilities are the future of the game and the business. Recent statistics by the National Golf Foundation show that 44 percent of the more than 11,500 golf facilities in this country are daily fee operations. That same study shows that 45 percent of American golfers — the largest single segment — are playing at those courses exclusively.

No doubt the market has shifted drastically in the last decade. The emphasis is off the private country club. Some have said the private club segment of the market is mature; others say it is stagnant. Again, NGF figures back the latter. Only about 16 percent of the golfers in the country play at private clubs, although those facilities make up 42 percent of all courses.

Rising costs, escalating real estate taxes, higher wages, declining memberships, and growing social pressure to not be associated with private clubs all cloud the future of that part of the industry.

This article will focus on daily fee operators today. They come from all walks of life and all income brackets. Some, investment-minded, look at golf as just another way to channel their money. Some are devoted to their "business" full-time and get their entire families involved. Some were farmers who, after years of growing corn or raising dairy cattle, decided a golf course would be a better way to use their land.

But the identity crisis for the daily fee facility seems to be finally ending. The Professional Golfers' Association and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America are both actively pursuing this part of the market for jobs for their members. A recent survey by the PGA showed that currently only 24 percent of its membership is working at daily fee operations.

Associations outside the daily fee segment of the industry are having trouble getting access, but associations inside are not doing much better. Now in its second year, the National Association of Public Golf Courses, the brainchild of some innovators in the daily fee segment and the NGF, has fewer than 200 members and is still undergoing growing pains among its own varied and spread-out leadership.

This report will attempt to get inside the business. There are as many opinions about the future of the daily fee operators as there are public courses. Beyond everything else, the daily fee operator must be admired for his independence and ability to remain in business and consistently show a profit. Remember, unlike the private club and the municipal course, the daily fee operator must be concerned with the bottom line.

What are the numbers?

Before you talk to the market on a one-to-one basis, it always pays to do some homework. GOLF BUSINESS did a lot of that, with the help of its research director, Dr. David Harmon. The editors went to work on assembling a profile for the daily fee course in 1976, and what we found was enlightening.

In the survey, it was realized a number of different management personnel could be answering the questions we put to them. More than 52 percent of the respondents answering were the owners themselves, while another 28 percent were facility managers.

Most of the courses responding, 53.3 percent, were of the 18-hole variety. Another 41.6 percent were of the 9-hole type, and 5.1 percent had 27 holes or more.

When asked how long their season of play was, the group corresponded for the most part with the geographic breakdown of the country and the amount of courses in those areas. Courses with a season of 5 months or less were 5.3 percent of the sample, while facilities with a season of 6 to 7 months were 46.7 percent, a season of 8 to 9 months were 23.4 percent, 10 to 11 months were 3.6 percent, and year-round were 19 percent.

Just how much play is there at each daily fee operation? Our sample of courses came back with an average of more than 42,000 rounds in 1976. Average green fee for 18 holes of play was $7.50, while a fee averaging approximately $3.10 was charged for 9 holes.

Other types of sports facilities were also asked about. Nearly all of the operations (87 percent) had a pro shop of some type. More than 82 percent of the sample had golf cars. Some 35 percent offered club repair for their patrons. Less than 8 percent had any outdoor tennis, while the same percentage had outdoor swimming.

Gross revenues form pro shop sales averaged more than $67,000, well over the average of $38,000 for all facilities established earlier in the year by GOLF BUSINESS research.

Of course, the pro shop is not the only income generator for the daily
fee course. Food and beverage service is also an important part of the operation. Nearly 80 percent of the courses have a snack bar, 42 percent have a bar, and 21 percent have a dining room. Gross revenues from food and beverage sales totalled more than $31,000 for 1976.

About 66 percent of the courses own their own golf cars, while another 27 percent lease, and 7 percent do both. The breakdown on the percentage of gasoline cars exclusively on the premises (41) was about the same as the electric cars (43); the remaining 16 percent had some of each. Average fleet size for the daily fee course was 26 cars, lower than an overall average (44) for all facilities.

Golf cars at daily fee facilities are older than cars found at other types of courses. Average age of the daily fee car is 4.5 years, contrasted to 3.9 years for all courses. Gross revenue for car rentals was $26,410, and the owner operates the car revenue concession alone at 59 percent of the facilities that responded to the GOLF BUSINESS questionnaire. The golf professionals runs the concession at 21 percent of the courses.

Although "who operates the concession" is important, "who gets the profit" is probably more important. Nearly 73 percent of the owner-operators take all the golf car profits at their facilities, while only 9 percent of the golf professionals get the profits at others.

Course maintenance costs are high everywhere, but daily fee operators seem to keep this cost at a minimum. Average total expenditures for maintenance last year was nearly $36,900 per facility, compared to an overall average of $67,400 for all courses.

When questioned about the increase in overall expenditures for the daily fee operation: 76 percent said their costs increased from 1975, 22 percent said their costs held, and only 2 percent saw their costs go down.

Obviously, the daily fee operation is not all numbers. Interviewing a number of owner-operators around the nation, one soon sees that the daily fee operator is happy with his lot, is established in his community, and is sold on the future of the game (at least with the people who play on his course).

The businessman speaks
For the most part, daily fee operators interviewed by GOLF BUSINESS were satisfied with 1976 and looked to 1977 as another good season. Most saw their play increase from the year previous and this without much promotion. Besides general advertising in local newspapers and telephone directories, it seems most daily fee operators are not into the art of promotion and rely heavily on word-of-mouth marketing by their patrons.

Now in its 16th year of service, Den Brae Golf Course, Sanbornton, N.H., is a 9-hole facility operated by the Craig family. Some 27 miles from the state capitol of Concord, Den Brae is in a rural area and was bought by Ed Craig, a Scot who came to the United States in 1919.

"We are happy with our situation here," said son Alex Craig. "New Hampshire encourages privately owned recreation lands. Greenbelt legislation is in effect here and the daily fee owner gets a break." There are only three municipal courses in all of New Hampshire. Craig sees this as the direct influence of the privately owned recreation operators in the state.

With a season averaging between 6 and 7 months, depending on the first snow, Den Brae also offers yearly memberships to the area golfer. A rate of $110 is charged for singles and $140 for couples. The combination there can be father-son, mother-daughter or husband-wife. These memberships offer unlimited play for the season. The area is resort-oriented.

Oddly enough, when the recession hit in 1975, Den Brae celebrated one of its better seasons. Play was up, since more people weathered the financial storm of that summer at home. "It was strange, but we sold more golf equipment than we ever had in the past," Craig noted.

The only criticism Craig had about the business was that it was somewhat tougher to handle membership customers, as opposed to daily patrons. "Their attitudes toward management tend to differ a bit from the daily trade."

Although a completely different operation, but with an accent on daily fee play, Jug End Golf Course and Resort, South Egremont, Mass., has been around nearly 40 years in the western section of the state. The facility draws many rounds to its 18-hole course from the surrounding area, but is attempting to attract guests to its 158-unit lodge from Boston, Hartford, New York City, Philadelphia, and northern New Jersey.

Owner Joseph Bruno, 42, bought the facility in September of last year and is currently into a major renovation project. "The golf business could be quite a costly move for me, but I am convinced that with the amenities we
offer here, people will come. Locally, we know we can attract golfers.”

Turfgrass upkeep is a prime concern. Bruno has brought in a recent University of Massachusetts graduate to oversee course maintenance. Closest competition from municipal facilities nearby is in Great Barrington with a 9-hole facility.

With a large investment in land, Bruno is concerned about the tax situation in Massachusetts. “I’m hoping that the income from the project will offset the added burden the state will place on us.”

Another family is making it in golf in Marcella, N.J. The Enholms have been involved with Green Pond Golf Club since 1937. Robert Enholm took over the 9-hole operation from his parents 10 years ago and gets full-time help from his wife Mary. Northwest of Newark in Morris county, Green Pond produced 60,000 rounds in 1976, a marked increase over 1975. “We draw people from Newark, 35 miles away. They would rather come up here and have a place to play, than to wait around on some of the courses down there,” Mary said.

A lot of beginning golfers start out playing at Green Pond, since the facility caters to this segment, even allowing assignment of starting times on Sunday morning. With a season starting in March and ending in December, the operation does go after golf outing business, but never accepts any on Sundays. This day is heaviest for open play.

Like other courses around the country, the bite of taxes has been astronomical. “We’ve been hurt somewhat by the municipal courses near us. Both are 18-hole,” Mary added. Most of the play loss has been in senior golfers, who play the municipal courses for a reduced rate.

Robert Enholm’s pro shop is a moneymaker. There is not much competition from retail outlets selling golf equipment. Green Pond’s emphasis is definitely on hardgoods. There are some softgoods sales, primarily shirts and sweaters.

Pro-manager Charles Schneider directs the operation, which boasts a season of approximately 9½ months.

Schneider was the original golf professional when the facility opened in 1961 and has been a PGA member for 32 years, practically all in the Philadelphia section. Besides Malvern, Schneider is a partner in four other daily fee courses, one in nearby Jamison, Pa.

“We try to attract the family man, the average golfer. Seniors seem to like our course,” Schneider told GOLF BUSINESS. The statistics would tend to back that up with more than 45,000 rounds at Malvern in 1976. Admittedly, Schneider does very little promotion for the facility. There is some advertising in the local golf publications, but nothing extensive. Normally, outing business is rare and league play is heavy.

As far as municipal courses are concerned, there are several in the Philadelphia area, four or five that might “compete” for players with Malvern. “I wouldn’t say that they injure our business,” Schneider noted.

Assessments in Pennsylvania have gone out of sight in the last several years.”

“Some of the courses,” Bruno says, “are trying to attract the family man, the average golfer. Seniors seem to like our course.” Schneider told GOLF BUSINESS. The statistics would tend to back that up with more than 45,000 rounds at Malvern in 1976. Admittedly, Schneider does very little promotion for the facility. There is some advertising in the local golf publications, but nothing extensive. Normally, outing business is rare and league play is heavy.

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Assessments in Pennsylvania have gone out of sight in the last several years, according to Schneider. He told me about one of the courses he is a partner in, Montgomeryville (Pa.) Golf Course, where the bill rose 222 percent in one year. Many of the owners in the state are up in arms about taxes. An effort is underway by the state owners association to establish tax easement for recreational lands.

Increases in taxes have subsequently caused boosts in green fees. Schneider remembered how charges for green fees were $4.50 per 18 in 1962, while today those prices have gone up to $7. Golf car rentals at Malvern are $10 per 18 plus 6 percent for state sales tax.

Very little shop business is done at Malvern. Few sets of clubs are sold and softgoods sales are nil. Schneider keeps balls, gloves, hats, and some bags in stock.

One of the youngest course owners interviewed was 33-year-old Walter Nielsen at Nine Eagles Golf Course, Odessa, Fla. A native New Yorker, Nielsen got involved in the golf business three years ago. Knowing that plans were underway to develop homesites in a tract 20 miles outside nearby Tampa, Nielsen sunk his money into Nine Eagles.

Unfortunately, the recession hit and although the golf course was completed, the homes never really materialized. “It’s been tough, but I plan to stick it out,” Nielsen stated. Plans were in the works for a clubhouse for Nine Eagles, but that went by the wayside when the financial picture in Florida dimmed. At present, Nielsen is working the course out of a trailer.

Young working people and the tourist trade are the two primary groups Nielsen is trying to get at Nine Eagles and he is succeeding. Most players at the facility utilize part of Nine Eagles’ 60-car fleet, because of the extreme length of the course.

Happily the lot of the daily fee owner, Nielsen admits he is somewhat envious of the position of the municipal courses in the Tampa area. “I enjoy the golf business, but I really don’t see a lot of big money in it. The game is getting too expensive for the average golfer. Something has to be done before a lot of golfers lose interest, due to the high prices on equipment, balls, fees, everything.”

Florida is one of the few states in the union that offers greenbelt legislation to any great degree, but here also, Nielsen sees an obvious drawback. “I won’t sign my life away for a tax cut. The law really doesn’t help the daily fee owner,” he said. What Nielsen is referring to is a clause in the Florida law that stops a course or club applying for the easement from taking advantage of the law unless it promises not to sell the land for at least 10 years. Otherwise, back taxes from the time to easement is granted to the time the sale is made have to be paid.

Considering his present situation, more competition near city
In the metropolitan Philadelphia area, Malvern (Pa.) Golf Club is an 18-hole facility with 16 years of golf behind it.