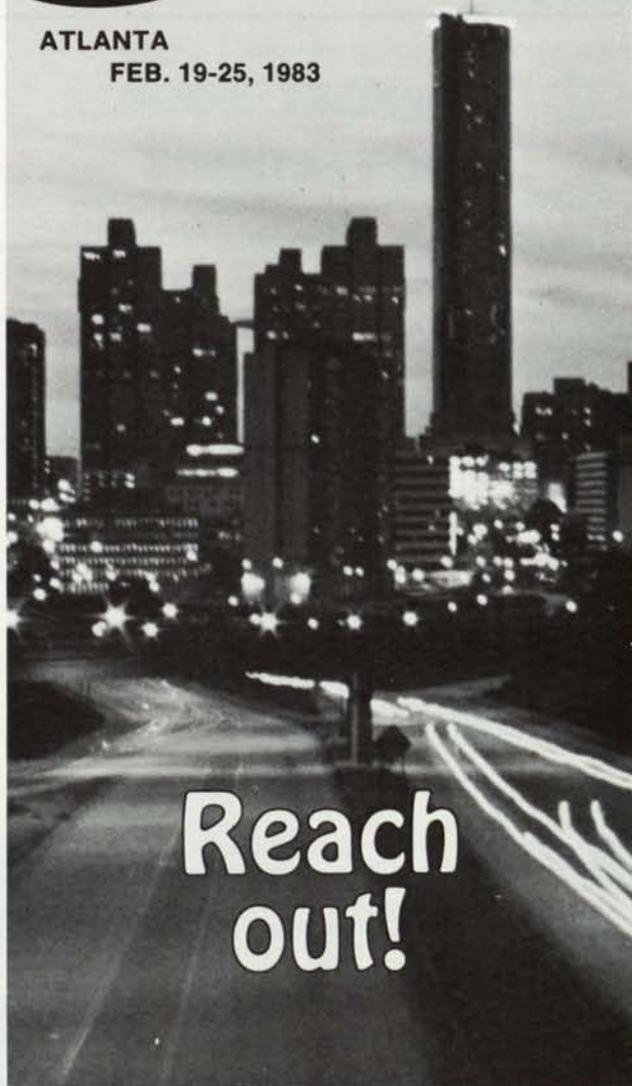


54TH International Turfgrass Conference & Show



ATLANTA
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Reach out!

How does all this affect golf? We must continue to spread the word of potential golfers that golf is fun, healthful, relaxing, a game of character and can be played during one's entire lifetime. Competition among recreational activities is keen! It should be. \$200 billion a year for recreation is big business. Some 25 or more types of outdoor recreational activities are vying for these recreation-spent dollars. NGF has numerous programs designed to attract people of all ages to the Game of a Lifetime. We seek the support of every golf-oriented organization or business.

How does a recession affect golf? We have learned by past experience that rounds of golf played are likely to increase during a recession.

I recall public golf course operators saying, during past recessions, that they had planned to raise their green fees but, due to heavy play by unemployed people, the fee structure was not changed. Even in depression times, golf is a good buy. It is 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 hours of entertainment for a few dollars.

And, as NGF Executive Director Don A. Rossi recently remarked, "The good thing about golf is that it is for everybody. Mama can play; papa can play; and grandpa can play with grandson. Hard times tend to bring people together. More people stay home instead of travelling."

The same holds true during energy crises. Golfers will not travel as far, but play on nearby courses usually flourishes.

Golf facility development in the 80s will continue to be an important element in the growth of golf. Even more important - courses now being built usually are quality creations prepared to compete for the attention of both public and private golfers.

Increasing numbers are being professionally designed and constructed under specifications which have made American courses the finest in the world.

Due to spiraling land and course development costs, the NGF suggests that prior to embarking on a new golf venture, developers assure themselves through intensive feasibility studies that the planned golf course has possibilities for success.

Cost of developing a new 18-hole facility, including land and clubhouse, could easily exceed \$3 million. Annual course maintenance costs may range from \$85,000 to \$200,000 or more. They have tripled in many areas during the past two decades.

My guess is that the 80s will average from 125 to 200 course openings per year.

A record high of 16 million people are now actually playing golf in the nation. They are also playing more rounds of golf than ever before.

There are more player development programs in action throughout the century than ever before. New junior golf promotion ideas are constantly being initiated. The PGA of America is sponsoring excellent junior golf programs. The NGF has long been involved in developing junior golf play.

The PGA Tour recently committed \$200,000 for the construction of a short course and training center for youngsters between the ages of 6 and 12 at Walt Disney World at Lake Buena Vista, Florida. Says TOUR Commissioner Deane Beman, "Our real need is to expose youngsters to the game who have never swung a club or seen a tournament."

We of the Foundation feel golf is prepared for whatever the 1980s may bring. NGF has the finest staff ever. NGF is ready to provide assistance in facility development, course management and operation, player development - in fact, in almost anything that will help this great Game of a Lifetime to grow!

Harry C. Eckhoff
NGF Director Information Services