



Golf Participation in the U.S. Increases 20 Million Golfers Now Play the Game

More than 20 million golfers teed it up in the United States last year, according to the National Golf Foundation. That represents an increase of 15 percent over 1985, when there were 17.5 million golfers in the U.S. These figures just released by the NGF were obtained from a survey of more than 57,000 U.S. residents conducted by the NGF and Market Facts Inc. during January and February of this year.

The survey results are significant because a 15 percent increase in the number of U.S. golfers is a dramatic departure from NGF surveys of recent years showing an average three percent increase in golf participation.

"The large jump in golf participation is a great signal for the golf industry," said NGF President and CEO David Hueber. "It is far too early to tell if this increase represents the beginning of an explosion in golf participation, or if the 1986 figures simply reflect the volatile nature of golf participation in the large segment of infrequent golfers. We will need more data to determine if there is indeed a trend. All related demographic indicators paint a very good picture for golf in the coming years.

Hueber says the 1986 increase could be attributed to several factors, including the high profile the game enjoyed following Jack Nicklaus' win at the Masters in April of 1986.

76.1 percent of all U.S. golfers are male according to the survey results, but women accounted for 38.9 percent of all new golfers in 1986 to represent 23.9 percent of the total golfing population. Women showed the largest percentage increase in participation of any demographic group.

The number of rounds of golf played in the U.S. last year did not keep pace with the significant increase in golfers. A total of 421 million rounds were played, according to the NGF survey, up from 415 million rounds played in 1985. The survey also showed that 66 percent of all rounds were played on public golf courses.

SURVEY OF GOLFERS (in millions)

| | 1986 | 1985 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| TOTAL GOLFERS: | 20.2 | 17.5 |
| Male | 15.4 | 13.8 |
| Female | 4.8 | 3.7 |
| Senior (50 or over) | 5.9 | 4.7 |
| Junior (5-19) | 2.3 | 2.0 |

GOLFERS BY REGION:

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Northeast | 4.0 million golfers |
| North Cental | 7.2 million golfers |
| Western | 4.1 million golfers |
| Southern | 4.9 million golfers |

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