

U.S. Golf Course Construction Continues to Show Strength

Latest NGF Annual Activity Report Shows 381 Projects Completed in '94

JUPITER, Fla. — According to NGF's latest audit of golf course construction in the U.S., 1994 was another good year for both project completions and new starts.

The 70-page document, *Golf Facilities in the U.S./1995 Edition*, shows that 381 new layouts of various sizes came on line last year, making it the fourth straight year that the number of completions increased. It also brought the number for the past five years to 1,733 ... which is an average of 347 per year.

Due to the fact that nearly two-thirds of the courses built last year were of the nine-hole variety, the 381 courses for the year translates into 262.5 18-hole equivalents. The fact that this 18-hole equivalency total is identical to the one for 1993 when 358 project completions were recorded reflects the increase that occurred in 1994 in the number of nine-hole projects that opened for play.

In all, 4,725 golf holes were added to the U.S. supply in 1994; increasing this total by 2%. The national course count at year-end stood at 14,393.

The report also shows that another 769 projects — representing 10,611 holes — were under construction as of Dec. 31, 1994, and that as many of 400 of these projects could open for play this year. This would be the highest one-year total recorded in the 34 years the NGF has been tracking golf course construction activity. At the moment, however, the 381 recorded last year stands as the new high-water mark.

An analysis of the top line numbers for 1994 provides several insights into today's facility development and operations market. For example, it shows that:

Public golf continues to dominate development.

Eighty-eight percent of the courses that came on line last year were public ... and 84% of these were daily fee. Furthermore, the chances of this trend continuing is reflected in the fact that over 80% of those courses currently under construction or in planning also are public.

Over the past 20 years, the number of public facilities in the U.S. has increased about 40% while privates have declined 8%. Today, nearly 70% of the nation's golf facilities are public. (The NGF makes a distinction between facilities and courses; defining a facility as an operation consisting of one or more golf courses.)




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