

Craze turns on switch for 9-5 workers

from page 20

said. "I base this on the daily work force once shut out of the game and now, thanks to Nitelite, able to participate and enjoy a sport in which so many are involved.

"The course super and pro, or designated substitute, must be on hand to protect the course and conduct nocturnal business. This could turn out to be a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week operation."

Newcomb is more cautious in his assessment. "Still," he observed, "another 50,000 to 100,000 rounds annually can buy a lot of added staff and generate increased course profitability."

He noted that Nitelite play has found favor at convention sites. Executives cooped up in seminars during the day flock to the arclight action.

The manufacturer pointed out that the totally translucent illuminated ball is official size and weight, but acknowledged that that one or two clubs longer may be required when judging distance to the green.

lite ball in July 1987. Fifteen foursomes played 12 holes in four hours. Water holes were skirted. The ball was teed up all the way around.

Lee and assistant Doug Thompson have staged several night events since the program. Late-late evening golf is so popular that premium rates are charged to discourage all-night — and early-morning — play. Even so, it's hard to close up shop before midnight.

The inaugural Moonlight Pro-Am tourney last December at Boca Raton, Fla., Executive Country Club, won by Jean Guy Dumont, netted \$1,200 for the American Cancer Society.

A series of scramble events to benefit the ACS concluded with the NiteLite Nationals last October at Doral Country Club in Miami, Fla.

A tourney at Monroe, La., proved a fantastic fund-raiser, as did an event at Hickory Woods Golf Course in Ypsilanti, Mich. Course manager Jeff Fulton was worried

'Still, another 50,000 to 100,000 rounds annually can buy a lot of added staff and generate increased course profitability.'

**— Nelson Newcomb
Pick Point president**

The longest known drive is 310 yards by Scotty Baker, son of Jim Baker Sr., pro at St. Leo (Fla.) Golf Course. Scotty, 5-11 and 220, whales the regulation ball in the 375-yard range.

A Nitelite tournament at Arrowhead Country Club in Emmons, Minn., lured 1,500 players and there have been several tourneys at the Marriott Camelback in Scottsdale, Ariz. Ex-Sen. Gary Hart and Karsten Solheim, manufacturer of Ping golf clubs, paired for second place at 1 under par.

Billy Max, head pro at Colonial Country Club in Lynnfield, Mass., held a nighttime New England Pro-Wife tourney. Said Max, "The course looked like World War II with the balls shooting through the darkness like tracer bullets."

Billed as the first professional NiteLite tournament and dubbed "The Night Belongs to Michelob" in a bow to its sponsor, a Tournament Players Association four-hole event scored high in popularity last June at Urbana, Ill., Golf and Country Club. More are planned this year.

Richard Lee, pro at Hyland Hills Golf Course in Southern Pines, N. C., staged a Carolina PGA Section pro-am with the Nite-

that the last foursome wouldn't finish until daylight. Fortunately, it completed its nine-hole round at 5:30 a.m.

Bill Ridge, assistant pro at Bob-O-Link Country Club in Lawrenceburg, Ky., played 504 holes in a day — and night. He beat the old marathon record of 424 holes by starting at midnight and playing the first 17 nine-hole rounds with a NiteLite ball.

Owner Dick Harris put the finishing touch to his new Falmouth (Maine) Country Club course last Oct. 31 with a nine-hole scramble which he described as "fantastic, fun and a great social event."

"The darker the better," Harris said. "You can't lose the ball, the eyes adjust, it's a unique mix of people and party atmosphere, and its popularity is going to grow."

Harris wasn't the perfect host. He, wife Nancy, son Jeff and Laurel Myers scored a winning 1-over-par 37.

Golf enthusiast Karen Glidden, from the shop staff at Salmon Falls Golf Course in Buxton, Maine, was a quick convert to "Glow Ball."

Casting about for tournament ideas and increased member participation, she spotted the balls at Nevada Bob's. Dyer explained the variety of uses. Glidden received owner John Barber's approval to experiment. In late May, Glidden picked July 29 as the best tourney trial time — the night of a full moon.

The choice proved ideal. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. "The moon shining on the adjacent Saco River made a beautiful sight for the 45 scramble contestants starting play at 9:15 p.m.," she recalled. "All that was missing was the baying of the hounds. In their place was laughter and levity."

While applauding Glidden's enterprise, Newcomb echoes Harris' outlook — dimmer is brighter. "The blacker the evening, the better ball visibility," said Newcomb.

Golfers who once slipped out of the office early to get in a few holes before darkness, soon may be arriving at work sleepy-eyed. There may be many a suspicious look when they try to explain that they were up all night, not with the baby, but playing golf.

History repeats itself in new form near historical site

Mirror Lake, the home of Nightlite ball manufacturer Pick Point Enterprises, is about 75 miles from Lynn, Mass. The General Electric Co. baseball field there was in 1926 the site of the first organized night baseball game.

The next shining moment in sports history may have originated in this tiny New Hampshire town, population 1,500

Pick Point's future may never be as bright as GE's present, but president Nelson F. Newcomb takes pride in doubling of the company's work force since golf took over the night shift.

Foursome in '30s ahead of their time

Illustrating that there is little new under the sun — or moon — the retiring professional at Riverside Municipal Course in Portland, Maine, recalled participation in a night playing experiment there 50 years ago.

Frank Tirabassi, brother Americo and the late Charles Rounds and Roy Walker teed off at 9:30 p.m. Rounds had painted a half-dozen balls with phosphorus and induced the others to give

night golf a whirl.

All but Frank called off darkness play after three holes. Frank went the nine-hole route and scored a 4-over-par 40. His only trouble seeing the ball came on the short par 4 seventh hole. He took a double-bogey 6.

"I hit my second shot into a trap," he said. "The ball blended with the color of the sand. I couldn't distinguish, and needed two shots to get out."

Is your community up to par?

Or is it short on public golf?

Our research shows the demand for golf in the U.S. is such that some 4,500 new courses will be needed by the Year 2000.

This averages out to 375 per year. . . **one new golf course each and every day for the next 12 years!** Unfortunately, the current rate is closer to 125 per year.

Clearly, golf course construction is not keeping pace with demand . . . especially in the public/municipal sector where the bulk of the demand is occurring.

Recognizing the impact this imbalance could have on the future growth and enjoyment of the game, the National Golf Foundation has developed programs to help communities realize the many benefits of golf course development.

Please contact us to learn how the NGF can help your community assess and meet its public golf course needs.



BUILDING FOR GOLF'S FUTURE

1150 SOUTH U.S. HIGHWAY ONE • JUPITER, FL 33477 • (407) 744-6006