

Florida, California lead golf course construction

Golf course construction continues strong in the United States with Florida and California leading the way, according to the National Golf Foundation.

The NGF was tracking 1,630 projects nationwide at the end of 1990, up from 1,356 projects a year earlier.

The final 1990 tally shows 289 courses opened, one below the 290 in 1989, but well above the 211 in 1988. The nation averaged less than 150 openings annually for many years before that.

Things look bright for 1991, according to the NGF. The 560 courses under construction at the end of 1990 is a significant increase over the 463 a year earlier. The number of courses in planning rose from 603 to 781 during the same period.

Florida led in course openings for the sixth straight year with 41, more than the next two states combined — South Carolina, 21, and California, 17.

However, California ranked first in courses under construction with 43. Michigan was a close second with 42 and Florida third at 39. California is consistently among the top five in total golf course construction activity.

Of the 289 courses opened in 1990, 206 were new facilities of nine or 18 holes and 83 expansions of nine or more holes.

The number of expansions shows many operators are trying to close the gap between supply and demand in their areas, according to the NGF. In a recent survey, golf course operators said their facilities were at 90 percent of capacity. Most added that their areas needed more courses.

The NGF's review of golf course construction for 1990 shows that:

- Real estate continues to drive much golf course activity. Forty-seven percent of the courses opening last year and 42 percent of those under construction were parts of larger real estate developments.

- Among the three leading states in course openings — Florida, South Carolina and California — all are warm-weather, vacation and retirement-oriented regions. Florida had 76 percent real estate courses, South Carolina 71 percent and California 59 percent, all above the national average of 47 percent.

- Seventy percent of courses opening last year are accessible to the public, either daily-fee or municipal. Overall, public courses outnumber private ones two to one. Approximately 80 percent of all rounds played are at public facilities.

- Among the 206 new courses opened a year ago, 60 were 9-hole courses, of which 38 had no further expansion plans. With rising land costs, especially in urban areas where golf supply is low, 9-holers remain important and viable. Over-

all, 9-holers make up 40 percent of the nation's 13,951 courses.

Many courses under construction are carry-over projects from 1990 that had set opening dates in the third and fourth quarters of last year but were unable to meet them. Delays were caused by weather, financing, environmental and permitting concerns.

A breakdown of this information and additional aspects on course supply are available in the NGF's Golf Facilities in the United States, 1991 Edition.

The Top 10

Openings

1. Florida	41
2. South Carolina	21
3. California	17
4. Michigan	15
4. North Carolina	15
6. Texas	13
7. Georgia	11
7. Illinois	11
9. Minnesota	10
10. New York	8
10. Pennsylvania	8
10. Arizona	8
All others	111
Total	289

Under construction

1. California	43
2. Michigan	42
3. Florida	39
4. Georgia	28
4. Ohio	28
6. Illinois	24
7. North Carolina	21
7. South Carolina	21
7. Virginia	21
10. New York	20
10. Pennsylvania	20
12. Minnesota	17
All others	236
Total	560

In planning

1. California	116
2. Florida	93
3. Michigan	35
4. Pennsylvania	30
4. Virginia	30
6. Ohio	28
6. New York	28
6. Georgia	28
9. North Carolina	27
10. Illinois	26
11. Indiana	25
12. South Carolina	23
All others	292
Total	781

BENTGRASS

Chester Manni
Bodega Harbour Golf Links
Bodega Bay, CA

Armen Suny
Castle Pines Golf Club
Castle Rock, CO

David Fleming
Singing Hills Country Club
El Cajon, CA

Kenny Goodman
Bull Valley Country Club
Woodstock, IL

Wesley L. Mathany
Glen Echo Country Club
Normandy, MO

Ben Crenshaw & David Doguet
Barton Creek Conference Resort
Austin, TX

Timothy O. Madden
Mt. Snow Country Club
Mt. Snow, VT

Steven A. Nash
International Town & Country Club
Fairfax, VA

Anthony W. Gustaitis
Whitemarsh Valley Country Club
Lafayette Hill, PA

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