

NGF report paints rosy development picture

JUPITER, Fla. — the surge in construction activity that began eight years ago reached an all-time high in 1995. According to the National Golf Foundation's (NGF) annual report on golf course development in the U.S.

The report, "Golf Facilities in the U.S., 1996 Edition," shows that 468 courses of various lengths and sizes came on line last year. Further, the report indicates that new course construction has more than doubled over the past 10 years.

The outlook for 1996 is strong.

Under Construction			
	New	Exp.	Total
D	359	241	600
M	80	26	106
P	61	50	111
In Planning			
D	271	92	363
M	75	32	107
P	60	21	81
In Development			1,368

The NGF report shows there were 820 other courses under construction as of Dec. 31, 1995. This means as many as 450 of these could be coming on line this year, according to Rick Norton, NGF's vice president and general manager of Research and Consulting.

The 468 new courses in 1995 brought the five-year total to 1,912. That's an average of 382 courses a year. Ten years ago the nation was averaging just over 150 a year. This not only eclipsed the previous high of 381 set in 1994, it was also the fifth straight year that — in contrast to the leveling off that's occurred in golf participation — golf course development activity has increased.

More than half (56 percent) of the 468 courses coming on line in 1995 were 9-hole layouts. As a result, NGF analysts look at the 468 as 336 18-hole equivalents. In 1994, just more than 60 percent of the 381 courses that opened that year were 9-holers. This produced a total of 262 18-hole equivalents.

There's a message in the numbers, according to Rick Norton.

"To my mind, the fact that golf course development has not only held its own, but has increased to the extent that it has, is a

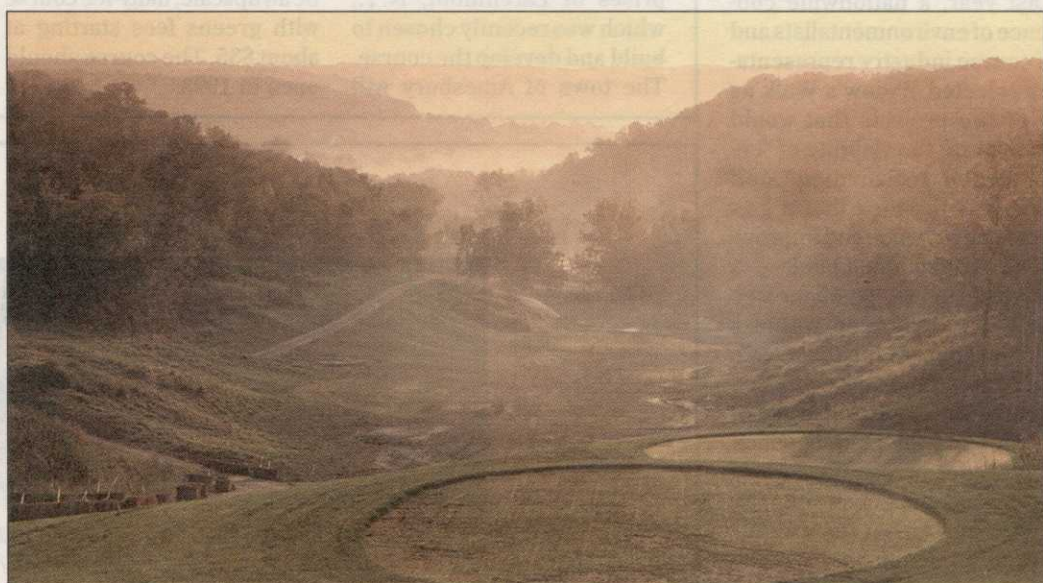
great example of the confidence that both developers and lenders continue to have in the health and future of the game," said Norton.

To further illustrate his point, Norton notes the number of facility owners who are expanding their golf courses these days.

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Course Openings: 18-hole Equivalents

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
D	126.0	170.0	165.0	174.5	190.5	242.0
M	30.5	41.5	37.0	35.5	38.5	45.0
P	67.5	57.5	54.0	52.5	33.5	49.0
T	224.0	269.0	256.0	262.5	262.5	336.0



THE GENERAL PLANS JULY OFFENSIVE

The latest signature golf course at Eagle Ridge Inn & Resort in Galena, Ill., *The General*, should open in July, according to Bob Graunke, director of grounds. "The deep freeze endured by much of the country in January was a blessing for *The General* since it stabilized the ground," he explained. Graunke and the others on the development team — co-designers Roger Packard and Andy North, as well as builder Paul Clute & Associates — used pre-germinated bentgrass and blue grasses in order to help set the bent on which golfers will ultimately play.

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