

## BRIEFS

**JUPITER, Fla.** — Jack Nicklaus and several partners have signed a contract to buy 369 acres for a private golf course community to be known as The Bear's Club. The planned private course would not be intended for tournament play but for members only. Nicklaus would design the course, which would be located near his home in Lost Tree Village.

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**PINEHURST, N.C.** — The Pinehurst Resort and Country Club has banned metal spikes from its eight courses. The policy went into effect Jan. 1. Resort officials say the use of non-metal spikes allows for smoother putting surfaces and will improve the health of the greens.

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**DEVIL'S TOWER JUNCTION, Wyo.** — A new executive-length course will open in April near the Devil's Tower Monument. The new 18-hole layout sits on 40 acres. It will feature waterfalls, ponds and streams, bridges and mountains, plus a complete golf shop. Kent and Nikki Neiman, longtime residents of the area, will be the owners/operators.

## Course development continues strong in Europe

By Dr. FALK BILLION

**MUNICH, Germany** — Since the new figures (by end of 1997) on the number of courses and golf club members permeate through its players, the European golf industry is becoming aware that there is actually a slow-down in the growth in the numbers of courses.

The increase in numbers of players, however, seems to have sped up again after a slow-down around the middle of the decade.

Here are the latest figures, compiled from the National Golf Federations, one important source being the German Golf Federation:

In those 22 European countries with five or more golf courses each (which excludes most of the Eastern European States) there are some 4,500 courses now in existence.

*Dr. Falk Billion (Munich) is a leading German golf course management consultant. Billion is a chartered (certified) golf course appraiser and has been actively involved in more than 120 golf course projects with more than 180 studies, reports and appraisals since he established his office in 1991.*

The number has increased by 1,660 over the last seven years. The annual growth rate in the early 90s, as high as over 6 percent, is down to less than 3 percent in 1997.

The three leading countries with the highest numbers of courses are England (1,843), Germany (534) and France (508). That's for the supply side.

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### Golf Courses in Europe in the 1990s

COUNTRY	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	# growth	% growth
Austria	49	55	67	69	77	83	95	98	49	100.0
Belgium	49	49	53	65	71	75	77	77	28	57.1
Czechia	8	8	9	9	10	12	12	13	5	62.5
Denmark	66	69	81	101	112	117	124	126	60	90.9
England	1,390	1,427	1,512	1,592	1,693	1,775	1,810	1,843	453	32.6
Finland	59	71	75	77	83	84	89	89	30	50.8
France	380	425	456	482	490	490	500	508	128	33.7
Germany	314	329	353	399	423	464	496	534	220	70.1
Greece	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	0
Hungary	1	1	3	4	4	4	4	5	4	400.0
Iceland	33	37	39	43	44	47	50	57	24	72.7
Ireland	274	276	289	310	321	348	359	367	83	33.9
Italy	108	117	153	162	180	187	190	200	92	85.2
Luxembourg	1	1	2	4	6	6	6	6	5	500.0
Netherlands	108	119	128	128	138	155	159	160	52	48.1
Norway	16	19	25	29	38	42	55	60	44	275.0
Portugal	21	26	33	33	36	36	43	48	27	128.6
Scotland	422	423	424	428	428	428	471	475	53	12.6
Spain	103	131	136	145	163	170	180	186	83	80.6
Sweden	220	257	349	349	361	361	375	380	160	72.7
Switzerland	40	40	44	46	51	51	56	59	19	47.5
Wales	123	125	127	130	142	147	152	157	34	27.6
EUROPE	3,790	4,010	4,363	4,610	4,886	5,087	5,308	5,453	1,663	43.9
# growth/yr		220	353	247	276	201	221	145		
% growth/yr		5.8	8.8	5.7	6.0	4.1	4.3	2.7		

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