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GOLF IS UP!

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Returns from GOLFDOM's Annual Survey indicate courses show substantial gains for 1936 on all fronts.

NO ONE doubts that golf slumped seriously during the depression. Similarly, all agree that the past several years have seen the game recover much of the ground it lost. But just where does the game stand today, as compared with the heyday of 1929-30? To gather authentic data on this question, GOLFDOM mailed detailed questionnaires in mid-September to the officials in charge of the three departments of any golf course—course, clubhouse and golf shop.

At this writing, approximately 20 per cent of the nation's courses have been heard from and tabulation of the returns has advanced to a point where certain definite conclusions can be drawn of the condition and growth of golf during the season just past.

Three sets of questions were asked.

Blanks sent to green-chairman and greenkeepers sought data on budgets this year as compared to last; on labor and machinery costs; on the progress of fairway watering; on amounts spent for fertilizer, seed, etc.; on equipment owned by the courses; and on other matters that help to paint the picture of how the grounds departments of the nation's courses fared this season.

A second set of questions went to club managers. They were asked about the

membership situation, golf play, income from dues and initiation fees, amount of restaurant and other departmental business, foot costs, volume of beverage sales, labor problems and the like.

The third questionnaire, to the golf professionals, gathered data on the year's increase in golf play; amount of club, ball, bag and accessory sales; the number of lessons given; ratio of equipment purchased from pros vs. other retail outlets; the length of the golf season; and similar pertinent questions.

This year's survey is more elaborate and comprehensive than GOLFDOM has conducted since 1931, and the cooperation of the officials in returning the blanks has assured the tabulation of data from enough clubs to avoid errors due to insufficient data.

GOLFDOM is the only agency that assumes the responsibility of determining the nation-wide condition of golf each year. Its released national totals are deliberately held to the conservative side, so that readers may depend on the figures published below, with the possibility that

Send Us Your Club's ANNUAL STATEMENT

Make a note now to send GOLFDOM a copy of your club's annual financial statement.

The information it contains, combined with similar data from other clubs, is valuable in helping us arrive at the true pulse of club conditions.

Statements of individual clubs are treated as confidential documents. They are never made available to outside parties.

in some cases they are 10 to 15 percent under the true national totals.

GENERAL DATA

Golf Courses in U. S.—As of October 1, 1936, our records indicated there are 5,361 golf courses, classified as follows:

Private clubs—9-hole	2,366	
Private clubs—18-hole & over	1,339	3,705
Daily-fee—9-hole	576	
Daily-fee—18-hole & over	474	1,050
Municipal—9-hole	314	
Municipal—18-hole & over	292	606
Total for U. S.		5,361

Included in the 18-hole totals above are 59 layouts of 27 holes, 54 of 36 holes, 3 of 45 holes, 4 of 54 holes and 3 of 72 holes.

Number of Golfers, Private Clubs—There were 639,000 men golfers at private clubs this season, as compared with 558,000 a year ago—a gain of 81,000 or 15 percent. The average 9-hole club added 18 players this year—a gain of 19%—and now has a roster of 110. At the 18-hole clubs, 29 new members boosted the roster by 11% to 283.

Popularity of golf with women continued to show advances. The 9-hole clubs showed a 34% gain in women's play, with 31 players per club as compared to 23 in 1935. At the 18-hole clubs, the gain was

19%, the 48 players of 1935 having been boosted to 57 this season.

There are now roughly 150,000 women players at the private clubs of the U. S., which means there is one woman player for every four men players. In this matter, a word of caution—while women represent 20% of the private club players, they account for almost one-third of the rounds of golf played. This is due to the fact that the average woman golf enthusiast finds more opportunity to visit the club during the season than the average man, who often must limit his golf play to week-ends.

Also to be included in the private club golfers are the Juniors, of which there are some 40,000 in 9-hole clubs and 32,000 in 18-hole clubs, or 17 and 23 per club, respectively.

Thus, the number of private club players in the U. S. is estimated to be very close to 861,000.

Number of Fee-Course Players—Because operators of public courses rarely record the number of different individuals responsible for the rounds played, it is difficult to arrive at figures that will accurately present the total number of golfers patronizing these layouts. Many individuals play only three or four times a year. Such casual golfers are not included in the figures below or in the municipal course estimates to follow. Only players with ten or more rounds per season are considered; on these "active" players it is much easier to gather dependable statistics.

During 1936, the 9-hole fee courses were patronized by 114 "active" players, the larger layouts by 290; national totals are roundly 66,000 at 9-hole plants and 137,000 at the 18-hole layouts, a total fee patronage of 203,000 "active" players.

Number of Municipal Course Players—Nine-hole municipal courses of the U. S. were played by an average of 431 "active" golfers this year, giving a total of 135,000 patrons. The 18-hole munys averaged nationally 570 "active" players, for a total patronage of 166,000. Total municipal course "active" players amounted to 301,000 in 1936.

Total Golfers in U. S.

Private clubs	861,000
Daily-Fee courses	203,000
Municipal courses	301,000
	1,365,000

• NO MORE GOLFDOM'S UNTIL JANUARY •

In accordance with our annual custom, there will be no issues of GOLFDOM in the months of November and December. The next issue of this magazine will be dated January and will reach readers on or about January 5th, 1937.

In addition to these players, many thousands of individuals play less than ten rounds of golf annually, and added thousands of caddies and course employees are followers of the sport. No records are kept on these players, but GOLFDOM conservatively estimates there are at least 750,000 of such golfers.

Rounds of Golf—Figures are actual up to September 1 and estimated for balance of season. These figures do not include rounds by "intermittents."

	<i>Average Rounds per Course</i>	<i>Total Rounds for 1936</i>
9-h Private	6,384	15,104,544
18-h Private	12,404	16,608,956
9-h Daily Fee	9,768	5,626,368
18-h Daily Fee	13,708	6,497,592
9-h Municipal	12,402	3,894,228
18-h Municipal	35,832	10,462,944
Total for U. S., 1936.....		58,194,632

GREENS DATA

18-Hole Courses—Average 79 acres of fairways; 4,809 sq. ft. of turf per green. 22% of the courses report fairway watering facilities; 8% are contemplating installation in near future. 17% of the clubs have swimming pools or other bathing facilities; an additional 15% are considering the installation of pools soon. Course budgets went up from \$10,203 in 1935 to \$10,730 this year, with an estimated increase for next season to \$11,211. This year's maintenance budget went 66½% for labor, 11% for machinery and 22½% for supplies. Expenditures for fertilizer, \$528; for seed, \$258; for brown-patch remedies, \$139; for arsenate of lead, \$105. There are 12 ball washers at the average course.

9-Hole Courses—Average 43 acres of fairways; 3,602 sq. ft. of turf per green. 7% of the courses report fairway watering facilities; 5% are contemplating installation in near future. 18% of the clubs have

swimming pools or other bathing facilities; an additional 10% are considering the installation of pools soon. Course budgets went up from \$2,697 in 1935 to \$2,889 this year, with an estimated increase for next season to \$2,960. This year's maintenance budget went 67% for labor, 14% for machinery and 19% for supplies. Expenditures for fertilizer, \$119; for seed, \$67; for brown-patch remedies, \$29; for arsenate of lead, \$21. There are 5 ball washers at the average course.

PRO-SHOP DATA

Sale of Clubs:

	<i>Average Sales per Shop</i>	<i>National Sales Total*</i>
9-Hole Private	\$ 931	\$1,566,873
18-Hole Private	2,112	2,827,968
Daily Fee	1,530	1,165,860
Municipal	855	359,100
		\$5,919,801

Sale of Balls—Number of balls sold to Sept. 1:

<i>Type of ball</i>	<i>Private 9-h</i>	<i>18-h</i>	<i>Daily Fee</i>	<i>Municipal</i>	
75c	499	2,156	520	670	
50c	222	573	335	606	
35c	260	399	501	782	
25c	169	122	557	1,015	
		1,150	3,250	1,913	3,073

* * *

Total balls sold, in dozens, to Sept. 1:

75c	418,295 doz.
50c	167,624 doz.
35c	179,114 doz.
25c	146,929 doz.
911,962 doz.	

* * *

Total ball income in pro-shops: \$5,976,531. This figure includes balls sold by concessionaires at courses without regular pro-shops.

* Adjusted to eliminate courses where no clubs are stocked or sold.

Sale of Bags—National averages to Sept.

1: 9-Hole Private	\$125
18-Hole Private	258
Daily Fee	151
Municipal	105
* * *	

Sale of Accessories and Apparel—National averages to Sept. 1:

9-Hole Private	\$150
18-Hole Private	358
Daily Fee	263
Municipal	108
* * *	

Total Shop Sales, estimated for entire year:

		1935 sales % better than
9-Hole Private	\$2,293	25%
18-Hole Private	5,320	17%
Daily Fee	2,900	30%
Municipal	2,734	39%

HOUSE DATA

This section of GOLFDOM's survey went only to 18-hole private clubs, of which there are 1,339 in the U. S. Figures below should not be taken as indicative of conditions at 9-hole private clubs or at public and semi-public courses.

National Averages—Clubhouse open for business 10 months of the year. Present membership 338, up 8.3% from 1935.* Book value of entire plant, \$325,000. Total clubhouse departmental business, \$38,680—up 14.7% from 1935. 23% of this business is with women. Dues and initiation fees, \$35,915—up 9% from 1935. Restaurant gross, \$24,055. Meals served, 30,505—up 13.5% from 1935. Food costs have increased 10%; menu prices have been advanced 5%. Employees (clubhouse only) earn \$468 each; club payroll is \$10,488. This does not include manager's salary. Wages have been raised by 13% at 60% of the clubs. Three out of 4 clubs have bars. At these clubs beverage sales were \$14,938 against \$12,635 in 1935—up 19%. Breakdown of beverage sales: beer, 13.8%; wine, 5.9%; soft drinks and mixers, 14.9%; liquor, 65.4%. Liquor sales are split—scotch, 49.6%; gin, 25.4%; rye, 16.5%; bourbon, 8.5%.

Who's Who For the 1937 Augusta Masters' Tourney

AUGUSTA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB announces that those who finished within the first thirty in the 1936 Masters'

* This figure differs from data given earlier on the golf players in these clubs, because wives and juniors are not counted as members, and also because some members are non-golfers.

Tournament will be invited to play again in 1937. The remainder of the U. S. section of next year's player list qualify by finishing within the

First thirty of the 1936 U. S. Open
Last eight of the 1936 U. S. Amateur
Last eight of the 1936 PGA

Automatic qualification is extended to all former U. S. and British Open Champions and U. S. and British Amateur Champions; also to members of the Walker and Ryder Cup Teams.

BRITISH golf manufacturers are considering a plan to appropriate between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to be used in increasing play on municipal courses in the United Kingdom.

Present indications are that a man to organize and push the trade development work will be appointed in the near future.

Winter Sports Programs Show New Promise for Clubs

CONTINUED increase in winter sports is indicating to foresighted country club department heads that there are logical possibilities for active operation of their clubs on a year-round basis.

Winter sports programs at country clubs, formerly a feature to any marked extent only at New England clubs, registered strong this past winter at many central states clubs. Greenkeepers consequently found themselves superintendent of outside plants with plenty of work maintaining skating rinks, toboggan slides and ski territories.

Pioneering work in this field done by Paul Wanberg, greenkeeper at the Weston (Mass.) GC and other New Englanders with winter sports maintenance experience, was found to be a valuable guide. Wanberg, by the way, says that he never has discovered any turf injury resulting from skiing over the Weston fairways.

Winter sports work has permitted several greenkeepers in the central states, as well as in the east, to keep members of their greens staff at work all year.

Liquor revenue in the clubhouse and the snow and ice conditions of the '35-'36 winter, together with skeet installations, made the financial part of last winter's activities generally good for golf clubs north of the Mason-Dixon line.

Development of the all-year programs points to expansion of pros' duties to those of recreational directors.