

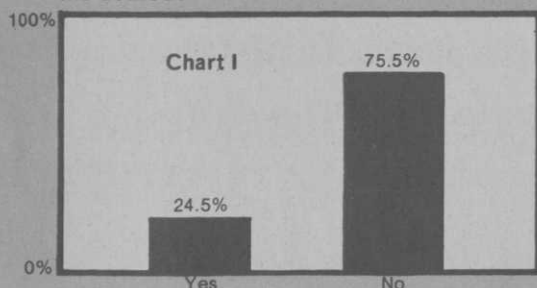
Privately-owned Golf Cars:

Are They Allowed on the Course?

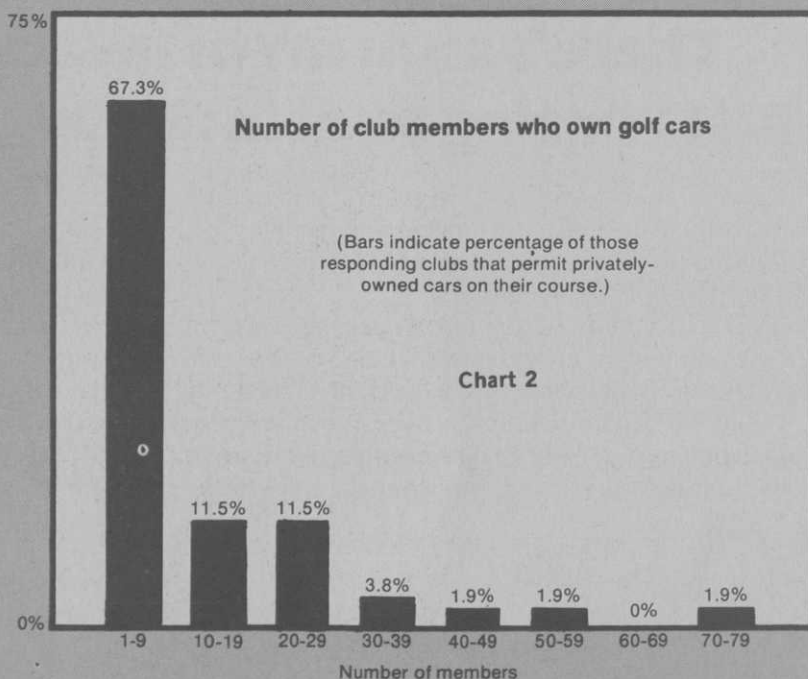
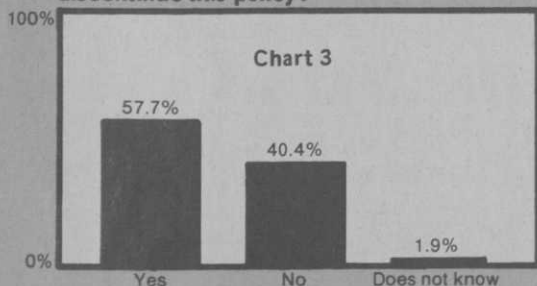
Although about 25 per cent of the clubs surveyed allow privately-owned cars on their courses, more than half of these plan to discontinue the policy

By the Editors

Does your club permit its members to use their personally-owned golf cars on the course?



If personally-owned cars are permitted on the course, does your club plan to discontinue this policy?



Should members be permitted to operate their personally-owned golf cars at the club? This issue is being discussed among administrative circles at many country clubs, particularly these days when clubs must tap every possible source of revenue to defray rising taxes and operating costs. With golf car rentals playing a larger role in the profit picture of clubs, many administrators apparently look upon continuance of a policy permitting personally-owned cars as a hindrance to further growth of rental revenues.

As reported in GOLFDOM's Third Annual Marketing and Research Report/1970 (February,

1971), gross revenue at United States golf courses from golf car rentals jumped 31.4 per cent from \$143 million in 1969 to \$187.9 million in 1970—a year that was not so kind to other sources of revenue. And although clubs were cutting back on many expenditures in 1970, they considered golf cars too important an area to bear scrimping. As a result, the average size of golf car fleets jumped from 27 cars in 1969 to 29 cars in 1970.

Now clubs want to make certain that their investments pay off, and GOLFDOM in the past year has received several requests for statistics on the number of clubs that permit members to operate their own cars on the course. Many of the administrators explain that they are considering discontinuing the policy, but realize that the sensitive area of mem-

ber relations must also be taken into consideration. If statistics show that prohibiting the use of personally-owned cars has become a prevalent policy, these administrators feel their cases then would have some reasonable basis.

In response to these inquiries, GOLFDOM did a formal survey of a geographically well-distributed sampling of country clubs to determine their policies on golf cars, the results of which are revealed in the graphs accompanying this article.

According to the survey, the trend is rapidly moving away from personally-owned golf cars. In addition to the overwhelming majority of respondents who indicated that they prohibit member-owned cars on the course, almost 58 per cent of those that still permit them have plans to discontinue the policy. □