

Evolution —

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setting as the reason(s) people pursue the career.

An analysis of golf course superintendents in the United States reveals the average individual is 41 year old, earns \$57,057 annually, has been a superintendent for 11 years and has worked at two different facilities. These figures represent the mean, thus significant differences may exist depending on region of the country, the number of holes at a course, course type (private, resort, public), number of employees supervised, size of maintenance budget, etc. Those who complete a rigorous certification program administered by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America generally earn higher salaries and have a greater opportunity to advance in the profession or in the administration of their golf facility. It is not unusual for a superintendent who earns in excess of six figures.

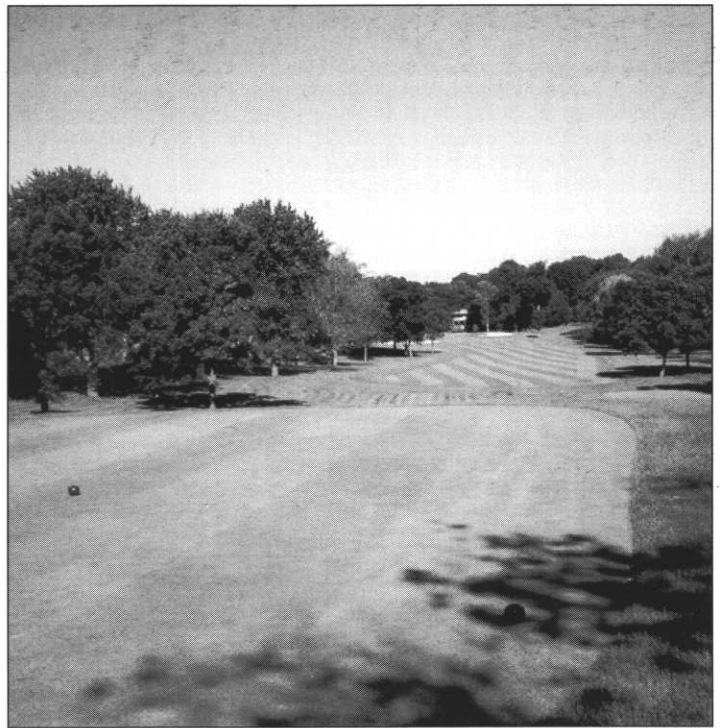
The Future

A 1997 study by the National Golf Foundation examined trends in the golf industry for a period from 1986-96. It found the growth in golf facility construction significantly outstripped demand. In real terms, the supply



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HARD TO BELIEVE BUT AUGUST IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER and that means it's time to play the MGCSA Championship. This year's tournament takes place at Wayzata Country Club on August 20th. Pictured above is Wayzata's tenth hole.

of golf courses grew 2,350 including a rate of 392 courses per year from 1991-96. In terms of golfer demand, the 1986-96 period saw an increase from 20 to 25 million golfers, however the number of golfers (25 million) and rounds played (460 million) has remained essentially the same from 1990-95.

In 1999, the NGF updated its study and found golf facilities continued to be grow at impressive rates. In 1997 there were 16,010 golf courses and that figure grew to 16,743 in 1999. Annual golf course openings topped 500 for the first time in 1999. In terms of golfer participation, an all-time number of rounds played (564.1 million) and the second-highest number of golfers (26.44 million) were realized in 1999.

Most observers are cautiously optimistic that the growth of golfers will gain momentum as the "baby boomer" generation begins to age. There are approximately 78 million baby boomers, and this group was responsible for the biggest growth in the game when it reached 20-30 years of age. Research indicates that golfers spend more and play more as they age. Thus the boomers should fuel growth. The recent success of younger players and minorities on the professional tours will likely spur participation as well.

For the superintendent profession, the expansion in golf courses and other golf facilities such as driving ranges, pitch and putts, etc., plus a probable increase in golfer demand is likely to result in good career opportunities for some time to come.

(Editor's Note: Information gathered from GCSAA archives and Golf Course Management Magazine)