

GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK — 1972

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THE NEW YEAR promises to be good for golf facility development. National Golf Foundation records reveal 290 new golf courses or additions to existing facilities in some stage of construction at year's end. Of these, 258 are regulation length and 32 are par-3's or executive type.

New regulation length courses under construction total 174; additions to existing courses account for 84. For par-3's the figures are 28 and 4, respectively. NGF files also show another 517 regulation courses and 84 par-3 projects under consideration or in planning.

Michigan leads with 25 golf courses under construction followed by Florida with 17, Ohio 16, New York 14, Texas 13, Indiana 12, California, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Wisconsin — 11 each, Iowa 10 and Georgia 9.

During the past decade over 300 new golf courses or additions have opened in the nation each year. This record was maintained in 1971 when 371 new facilities came into play. There were 228 new regulation length courses, 89 additions, 42 new par-3 or executive layouts and 12 additions opened during the year.

The leading states with new golf course openings in 1971 were Michigan 29, Florida 26, Texas and Wisconsin 18, New York 16, Pennsylvania 15, North Carolina and Ohio 14, California 13, Colorado and Illinois 12, Indiana and Washington 11, Kentucky 10 and South Carolina 9.

Of the 371 new course openings in 1971, 33% were private operations, 48% semi-private, 15% municipal and 4% miscellaneous (col-

legiate, industrial or military). About 35% were part of real estate or resort developments.

About 65% of the new courses opening for play in 1972 are expected to be semi-private or municipal operations. And probably 40% of these facilities will be associated with new planned communities, high rise apartment and condominium complexes, second home projects or recreation and resort areas.

The continued growth of semi-private and municipal courses is in keeping with the trend of recent years. Golf no longer belongs solely to a few; it is everyone's game.

Sixty new municipal golf courses opened throughout the nation in 1971. This is an increase of 43% over 1970. Thirty-five were regulation length; 12 were additions to existing courses; 9 were new par-3 or executive layouts and 4 were par-3 additions.

Many of these new golf facilities are a part of extensive municipal recreation and park complexes. In addition to a well designed golf course, they often include tennis courts (sometimes lighted for night play), swimming pools, artificial ice skating rinks, playground and picnic areas, a community center building, fishing, camping, hiking, nature study and sometimes ski areas.

This new look for municipal recreation complexes is being spurred by strengthened federal incentives currently in operation. Many municipalities are taking advantage of a state grant-in-aid program administered by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, U.S. Dept. of Interior, or the Legacy of Parks Program directed by the Dept. of Housing and

Urban Development.

The new Legacy of Parks Program which became effective July 1, 1971, replaces the former Open Space Land Program. Only public bodies are eligible for grants under this program although the matching funds may come from a private source. However, ownership of land acquired with program assistance must remain in the public bodies. The matching grants from HUD may cover up to 50% of project costs based on fair market value of property acquired and other eligible project costs.

Among the projects eligible for matching grants are large city parks, regional parks and areawide recreational facilities. This includes development of swimming pools and areas devoted to picnicking, camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, nature study and skiing. It also includes land acquisition costs for sites of golf courses. For detailed information on this program, write to "Legacy of Parks" in care of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C. 20410.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (U.S. Dept. of Interior) makes grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to states and through them to political subdivisions and other units of states for planning, acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities including golf courses.

Prime importance is attached to projects in areas where concentrations of people live. Projects must be available for use by the general public. Development of basic rather

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than elaborate facilities is favored and projects furnishing a broad range of outdoor recreation uses and experiences are preferred. Funds apportioned to the states under this program finance 50% of total allowable project costs on a matching basis.

This program became operational in 1965. Since its inception through 1971, \$503 million were approved for 50% matching grants. Grants have helped to finance such diverse projects as multipurpose metropolitan parks, picnic areas, campgrounds, bicycling paths, swimming pools and golf courses.

Rogers C. B. Morton, Secretary of the Interior, has announced the distribution of \$255 million appropriated by Congress for fiscal year 1972 grants to states and their cities and counties under the BOR Land and Water Conservation Fund program.

This year's appropriation provides the largest amount of money for grants to states in the history of the program. "With apportionment of these funds, we will have provided

more than three quarters of a billion dollars in Federal funds," Secretary Morton said. "When mated with an equal amount of state and local money, this means an investment of over \$1.5 billion for preservation of needed outdoor recreation areas and for development of facilities to service public needs."

In order to speed up action on requests for grants, regional offices of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation may now review and approve grant-in-aid projects involving public parks, open space and recreation lands and waters. Regional offices are located in Philadelphia, Pa. (Northeast region); Atlanta, Ga. (Southeast); Ann Arbor, Mich. (Lake Central); Denver, Colo. (Mid-Continent); Seattle, Wash. (Pacific Northwest) and San Francisco, Calif. (Pacific Southwest).

During the decade ending in 1970, municipal golf courses increased in the nation by almost 48%. The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission's municipal golf development program illustrates what is happening in many communities.

The Commission, which is largely responsible for parks and outdoor recreation facilities for Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties (Washington, D.C. suburbs), operated only one 9 hole golf course in 1960. Today it owns and operates 72 holes of golf (six courses—two 18's and four 9's) and plans to begin construction soon of a third 9 at its Northwest Park Golf Course.

Frank Rubini, commission director, says, "our goal is to have an 18 hole municipal golf course for every 30,000 people living in the two counties concerned. Three more 18 hole facilities are on the drawing board on which construction will begin within three years."

Northwest Park Golf Course, which opened for play in 1964, had 55,540 rounds played on its 18 hole layout during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971. Needwood Golf Course, also 18 holes (opened in September 1969), had 55,763 rounds during the same period.

The Commission's four 9 hole golf course operations — Sligo, Paint Branch, Oxon Run and Hensen Creek —each served from 65,000 to 74,000 customers during the same fiscal year.

Sixty-two powered golf cars are maintained at each of the 18 hole operations. Golf professionals are responsible for the cars and either own or lease them. The Commission receives 10% of the gross income from the cars.

While municipal golf courses still comprise less than 15% of the nation's 10,400-plus golfing facilities, they handle about 45% of the country's golf play. Municipal golf continues to expand its role in the American golf scene as alert communities provide more and better facilities for their residents.

In order to better serve golf course planning groups, the National Golf Foundation recently reorganized its golf facility development services. Buddie Johnson of Livermore, Calif., is responsible for 7 west coast region states; George Kerr, of Richardson, Texas, has 10 west central area states; Larry Smith of the Chicago headquarters office is responsible for 7 north central states; Fred Stewart, Nashville, Tenn., serves 7 south central states; Harry Eckhoff will continue to cover the 17 states on the eastern seaboard from his Arlington, Va., office.

Facility development consultants are available to any golf course planning group for assistance with the development of needed golf courses in their respective areas.



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