

Industry Survey Finds Rounds of Golf Played in Massachusetts Increased By 40% in 2020

Commonwealth's Golf Industry Expecting Another Strong Year
Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations

For many golfers, the annual playing of the Masters marks the unofficial start to the golf season. And thanks to warmer than average temperatures in late March, most Massachusetts golf courses are now open and looking forward to another strong golf season.

While Massachusetts was one of the last states in the nation to allow golf due to the outbreak of COVID-19, a recent survey of over 370 golf courses in the Commonwealth found that rounds of golf played in 2020 increased by 40% over the previous year. The survey of public and private golf courses, conducted by the Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations (AMGO), also found that the golf industry expects the gains in rounds played to be maintained and possibly increase this year.

“Golfers across Massachusetts turned to the game in record numbers last year,” said Mike Higgins, Executive Director of the New England Section of the Professional Golfers’ Association. “During a time of isolation and great disruption, golf was an ideal activity for many because it is a socially distant sport, is a great way to spend time outside with friends and family safely and is an activity that is easily accessible and affordable to the public.”

The AMGO survey also found that golfers reported feeling safe and that courses were able to keep current with the evolving golf-specific guidance provided by the Commonwealth over the course of last season.

“During the 2020 golf season, there were no major COVID-19 outbreaks identified on golf courses,” said David Hamer, Professor of Global Health and Medicine at the Boston University Schools of Public Health and Medicine. “Being outside in fresh air with the social distancing required by the game, means golf is a very low-risk activity and one that carries many health benefits, especially for players that walk.”

The AMGO survey found that the percentage of walking rounds, defined as players carrying their bag, using a pushcart or caddie, was also up 30%.

In spite of the late start to the season caused by the pandemic, the significant increase in golf rounds helped preserve thousands of jobs at area courses and clubs. According to a study released in 2014, the golf industry in Massachusetts supported nearly 25,500 jobs with \$796.8 million in wage income and generated roughly \$74.3 million in charitable giving.

“Massachusetts has a deep connection to the game of golf, and our industry plays an important role in generating good-paying jobs as well as providing a vehicle for charitable groups to raise money,” said Richard Luff the President of the New England Golf Course Owners Association. “As more of the public becomes vaccinated, we are looking forward to a full return to normal in

our industry and our lives.”

AMGO continues to work with the Commonwealth to make adjustments to the remaining golf specific state guidance.

For further information please contact Jesse Menachem, Executive Director/CEO of Mass Golf. jmenachem@massgolf.org

The Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations (AMGO) is dedicated to promoting, protecting and serving the interests of the game of golf, its facilities, administrators, employees and golfers in Massachusetts.

Mass Golf
New England Section of the PGA of America
New England Golf Course Owners Association
Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England
Golf Course Superintendents Association of Cape Cod
New England Chapter, Club Management Association of America
New England Golf Association
Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund
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