

# The Japanese Way of Playing Golf

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# The Japanese Way of Playing Golf

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## Introduction

Golf in Japan developed in parallel with the rapid Japanese economic growth since the end of the Second World War, and has become one of the most popular sports among Japanese adults. During the recent recession, it appears that the passion for golf may have cooled off slightly. Nonetheless, until the Japanese economic bubble burst in the early 1990s, a large number of people were captivated by the sport. The intent of this paper is to analyze how golf became popularised and how it was enjoyed in the era of high growth of the Japanese economy following the end of the war.

## I. The Popularization of Golf in Japan and the Golf Environment

### 1. The popularization of golf in Japan

Before World War II, golf was a minority sport that was only played among the elite. However, starting in the late 1950s it began to gain popularity. Its growth passed through four phases. The first started in 1958, and this initial boom continued through the 1960s. In 1957, there were about 116 golf courses throughout the country; by 1969, there were 583. The number jumped five times within a single decade. This first phase is symbolized by the fact that, while golf was previously a sport reserved for members of the privileged class, such as company presidents and managing directors, in this period it began to reach ordinary people, including some leaders of trade unions and the Japan Socialist Party. The fundamental reasons for the popularisation of golf after the war already existed in this first phase. Four of these reasons are described as follows.

Firstly, Japan possessed a financial system that allowed the inexpensive development of golf courses, because attractive packages, subject neither to interest nor to taxes, was readily available. Secondly, deposit-based golf memberships had become investment tools, making golf not only a sport but also a profitable leisure activity. The third was the birth of so-called 'business golf': at company expense, a host would invite clients to play golf, as the golf course was thought to be an ideal place to create good business contacts and make deals. Fourthly, Japanese economic growth had lifted the average earnings of members of the working class, who had been exceptionally poor before the World War, so the ordinary citizens too could participate in golf alongside the elite.

The second period lies within the 1970s, when a highly advanced society began to take form in Japan. As with the first golf boom, the construction of golf courses continued rapidly. Within ten years, the number had increased by 820, reaching 1,403 in 1979. The

speed of this expansion was similar to that of the Japanese economy, and seemed somewhat abnormal. During this period, middle- to low-level managers, company presidents and managing directors of small- and medium-sized firms and wealthy shop owners all started to enjoy golf and the serious popularization of golf emerged.

The third period was in the 1980s, when the Japanese economy was still developing strongly, and Japan had gained the status of a world power. The standard of living was improving, leisure time was growing, and the popularisation of golf entered a new era. Since the enactment of the Resort Law in 1987, golf courses proliferated even more rapidly. The number rose from 1,416 in 1980 to 1,926 in 1991, meaning an increase of 510 in 11 years. The government's *White Paper on Leisure* reported that the population of golfers was estimated to be 10 million in the early 1980s, and that by the end of the 1980s it had grown to 13 million, showing that golf had certainly become a nationally popular sport.

The fourth period covers the time following the bursting of the Japanese bubble economy, following the collapse of the Japanese stock market. This period began in February 1991. Plans to build more golf courses which had been fixed before the collapse of the bubble could not be cancelled, but had to proceed. As a result, in the five years from 1991, a further 479 courses were constructed, and the total number of golf courses reached 2,273. The damage caused by the collapse of the bubble economy appears to have been much more extensive than originally estimated. It seems that the Japanese economy had fallen into a serious slump and is still struggling to emerge from its recession.

**Table 1. The Numbers of Golf Courses in Japan**

years	Numbers	years	Numbers	years	Numbers
1951	72	1970	583	1983	1438
1957	116	1971	620	1984	1469
1958	117	1972	669	1985	1496
1959	160	1973	773	1986	1538
1960	195	1974	927	1987	1588
1961	263	1975	1093	1988	1640
1962	295	1976	1228	1989	1722
1963	336	1977	1322	1990	1818
1964	387	1978	1371	1991	1926
1965	424	1979	1403	1992	2028
1966	469	1980	1416	1993	2127
1967	496	1981	1419	1994	2200
1968	528	1982	1425	1995	2273
1969	558				

Resorse: Nipon Golf Nenkan.

## 2. The golf environment

Building an 18-hole golf course usually requires an area of at least 120 hectares of land. I have estimated that an area of 6,000 square metres per person is needed for golf; this is an area equivalent to 40 football pitches, or 128 tennis courts. Thus, golf, in comparison with other sports, has a low utility efficiency rate. This is particularly serious since the golf courses in Japan are commonly located in populated areas where land prices are generally high.

Furthermore, nature has imposed two limitations on Japanese golf courses. First, grass is not well suited to the climate in Japan. Therefore, huge volumes of fertilizers, herbicides

and pesticides must be used, causing enormous pollution problems. Second, due to the high price of land in Japan's plain areas, the majority of the golf courses have been constructed in remote villages or mountainous areas, which are the sources for the water used for agriculture and drinking. This has triggered water shortages and contamination, to such an extent that the surrounding local environments have been severely degraded. Environmental disasters of this scale have never been experienced in the UK or France.

Golf in Japan has been strongly affected not only by the natural environment, but also the political and economic nature of the country. Firstly, the popularisation of golf in Japan and the development of golf courses after the World War took place under Japan's unique deposit-based golf club membership system. Secondly, many golf courses were built under special terms which assumed that rural farming villages, which were believed to be a strain on the growth of the Japanese economy, would soon become depopulated. Secluded mountain areas and remote districts lured golf course development projects as part of their policies to deal with depopulation. This in fact served to encourage the practice of dishonest acts by central and local politicians, government officials and golf course developers. Thirdly, the construction of golf courses was carried out as part of a speculative resort development programme. This was one of the main factors behind the rise of the bubble economy. The deposit-based golf memberships led to an enormous financial bubble, resulting in many cases of political and economic corruption involving politicians and government officials. The relationship between gangsters and financiers was strengthened, and golf in Japan came to be enjoyed under the political and economic environment described above.

A primary factor that conditioned the way golf was played after the end of the World War II was the deposit-based golf membership system. We will now discuss this system in some additional detail.

In Japan, 90% of golf clubs are private, and issue deposit-based memberships, while the remaining 10% are public. A distinctive system has been employed since the 1960s, with the purchase of a golf membership meaning that an owner gives a deposit to the proprietor of a golf club for a certain length of time, and in exchange is permitted to use the facilities. These memberships can be bought or sold at market price. Unlike stocks and securities, the membership provides neither legal warranty nor ownership. Thus if a business goes bankrupt, the membership loses its value completely, and becomes no more than a worthless piece of paper. The price of memberships rocketed until the bubble economy burst. They became common investment instruments, similar to stocks and real estate. The deposit is repaid by a due date, though the repayment may be deferred as well.

Using these deposits, proprietors were able to finance golf course developments free of taxes and interest during the immediate postwar period, when there was a severe shortage of funds. Moreover, high interest rates, the strict screening of loans and management monitoring were disregarded: a vast fund could be freely utilised. Official statistics and accounts were hidden and extravagant advertising was used. In this way, approval was regularly given to the development of golf courses in neglect of nature and the environment.

The following is a typical example of how the deposit system worked before regulations came into force in 1993. A developer would first submit a planning application, receive approval from the relevant local government agency, and issue golf memberships to the public. The proprietor would then recruit 500 personal members, for example, at a price of 5 million yen. From this sale, 2.5 billion yen would be collected from politicians, real estate agents, gangsters and businessmen who had lent title deeds, and would be given to

celebrities and sports personalities who had helped in obtaining authorization for the golf course development. Later, the proprietor would allocate the first 500 issues of membership to the public at a price of 10 million yen, and would manage to raise 5 billion yen. Personal membership holders at this point would try to profit by selling their memberships at the market price of 10 million yen, gaining a profit of 5 million yen. Furthermore, immediately after the first issue of memberships were sold, the proprietor would announce that a third issue would be sold at 20 million yen as a commemorative issue and they would generate 75 billion yen from the sales of 500 of the second issue at the value of 15 million yen. The idea behind this was that if a membership was worth 15 million yen at that time, but would likely be valued at 20 million yen a year later, meaning a profit of 5 million yen, people would rush to buy the second-issue memberships. Of the second issue, 500 would be allocated to the public at 20 million yen each, and the proprietor would collect 10 billion yen. In total, he would be able to raise 22.5 billion yen. Assuming that the cost of constructing a golf course was 10 billion yen, the proprietor would have been able to secure a surplus fund of 12.5 billion yen. Additionally, the more memberships a proprietor issued, the more profits he could make.

Proprietors frequently invested these large surpluses into other golf courses and other businesses. The deposit-based golf membership system can thus be called a modern version of alchemy. Golf memberships produced a vast amount of capital, and proprietors gave some of this money to politicians and bureaucrats, in a way that seemed like political donations, and to celebrities and powerful businessmen who could give good publicity to their courses. Thus, a corrupt system of politicians and bureaucrats surrounding the golf industry was born. Golf in Japan has developed under a corrupt political and economic climate.

## **II. The Japanese Way of Enjoying Golf**

### **1. High-priced golf**

The cost of playing golf in Japan is considered high by global standards: land prices for golf courses are relatively high; large sums of money have been spent on the construction of golf courses; there is a high demand for golf in urban areas; and business entertainment expenses on golf in particular are so high that the supply-demand is unbalanced. The commercialism associated with it includes overpriced food and drinks, the use of caddies, and luxurious facilities. This had made golf an expensive sport.

In Japan, only 10% of golf courses are public, and almost 80% of people play on golf courses as guests, meaning that they do not possess their own memberships. In addition, even 70% of golfers in members-only clubs are guests. Therefore, the mainstream of golf in Japan is played by a group of guests, or in other words, non-members.

According to research carried out by the Economic Planning Agency during the 1990s, the average cost for non-members to play a game of golf on a privately-owned course on a weekend was 25,670 yen in Tokyo, 10,670 yen in Paris, 6,640 yen in New York and 7,140 yen in London. The cost in Tokyo is nearly four times as much as in New York or London. The average cost of playing golf on weekdays was 18,820 yen in Tokyo, 8,370 yen in Paris, 6,500 yen in New York and 5,890 yen in London. Thus, the weekday cost was also four times as much in Tokyo in the United States and the United Kingdom. In the West, there are many inexpensive golf courses, especially in the countryside, and that consequently the

**Table 2. The Comparison of Golf Fee**

(Unit: Yen)

	Visitor Fee on Private Course		Fee on Public Course	
	Week end	Week day	Week end	Week day
Tokyo	25,670 (100)	18,820 (100)	9,920 (100)	7,640 (100)
New York	6,640 (26)	6,500 (25)	4,610 (46)	4,340 (44)
London	7,140 (28)	5,890 (23)	2,100 (21)	1,680 (17)

Source: Report by The Economic Planning Agency.

difference in the price between Japan, the US and the UK may have been much more significant. We note, also, that the cost was relatively high in Paris.

To become a member of a private golf club in the West, after an assessment is completed and provided that there is a vacancy, an individual is expected to pay an enrolment fee and an annual membership fee and then, officially becomes a member of the club. The Economic Planning Agency had reported that the cost of playing golf on the private courses in the UK was 244,000 yen per annum, including both the enrolment (the average of 20 years) and membership fees, and 20,000 yen per month. In the UK, no extra fee is charged each time a member plays golf, so it costs 5,000 yen if one game is played per week and 2,500 yen if two games are played per week. The situation in France was similar. The same research showed that in the early 1990s in Japan, potential members were first required to purchase a deposit-based membership worth 32.44 million yen at the time. Considering this, the Economic Planning Agency estimated that the annual burden on club members in Japan was 10 times as much as in the UK and seven times as much as in the US.

The *White Paper on Leisure* found that the average Japanese played golf approximately 12 times per year. My own recent research shows that a mere 35% of the entire golfing population played at least once a month, whereas 22% played 3 times or less a year. The small amount of golf played on courses by the Japanese actually facilitated the increase in the number of golf ranges. The *White Paper* stated that on average, it cost 1,500 yen per visit to a golf range, and that golfers needed to use them 17 to 18 times a year in order to get full satisfaction.

## 2. Conformity (yokonarabishugi) and golf

One of the factors that has influenced the way in which the Japanese play golf is the principle that individuals tend to try to conform to the style of their peers. This characteristic is particularly strong in group-minded Japanese society, and is based on the idea that people tend to adapt themselves to others. However, it also makes people over-anxious about others and trends. The explosive growth of golf courses in Japan seems remarkable from the point of view of the principle of the imperative of economic growth. However, looking from the viewpoint of the development of sports and culture, it has brought about countless problems.

Firstly, conformist ideas in golf have had a negative impact on manners and etiquette on the golf courses. Golf was an English gentleman's sport, and distinctive manners were formed over the years. However, since the sport diffused in a very short period of time in Japan, there was not sufficient time to teach Japanese golfers to establish acceptable rules of

etiquette in Japan.

The fact is that golf courses in Japan are often crowded, making it difficult to establish good manners and rules for people to enjoy golf to the full. Moreover, golfers are usually forced to have a caddy so that their game can be guaranteed to finish on time. Also, company hierarchies are brought out onto the golf course, so that for instance, a clerk will always flatter his boss; it is hard to believe that this behavior qualifies as a sport.

People such as “office ladies” (female office workers) and bar hostesses, who have no knowledge of golf, as well as gangsters and company golf competitions can all be seen on golf courses. It reminds one more of a picnic than a sport. No courtesy is shown; people laugh and scream loudly without heed to others. The high cost of golf had made people act arrogantly so that, unlike in Britain, one does not see golfers continuing their game after fixing a hole that they had made in the grass or weed. It is believed that the majority of Japanese golfers do not like to be told how to behave on the course because they pay a lot of money to play a single game.

Secondly, conformity in golf has led to the creation of a unique golf “village society” in Japan. Author Makiro Abe, looking back on his experiences in the early 1960s, described the following situation. The two top executives of a certain company were known to be advanced golfers, and most of the management staff played golf. Consequently, a “golfing society” emerged within the firm, usually with the company president and managing director acting as leaders. However, management personnel who could not join in felt somewhat alienated.

One journalist has pointed out that golf is a ‘must’ for management in Japanese salaried society, and that business golf is a way to communicate effectively in the workplace and is one of the secrets of success in commercial life. One “salaryman” was quoted as saying that, by playing golf, his company gained recognition, his face became known and finally he was able to make successful business deals. He also claimed that there was no doubt that golf represented a shortcut for a salesperson to attain his or her true potential. Diet Member Akiko Santou, of the Liberal Democratic Party, has argued that people who does not play golf can never be first-class politicians and, at the present time, cannot associate with large corporations because everything is talked over during rounds of golf. Even in the political environment, golf has won the recognition of a “golf society.”

A well-known economic critic, Keitaro Hasegawa, has pointed out that the Japanese do not willingly associate with individuals who they do not understand, which means that a person who says that he does not like to play golf faces ostracism by his peer group if others play golf.

### **3. Style and golf**

The Japanese inclination to adore and value style and appearance is deeply reflected in golf. It is a fact that Japanese golfers are extremely fussy about their forms, equipment and clothes, and the external appearance of golf clubs and facilities is often given more consideration than the game itself. It is a common scene in Japan to see a businessman devoting himself to correcting his form by swinging a briefcase or an umbrella on a platform while waiting for a train to arrive.

One American has criticised the fact that the Japanese adorn themselves with designer clothes from top to bottom, and look as if they are publicity executives. He stated that in the US, people wear a T-shirt and a pair of shorts on the course, and nobody complains if a person is barefoot.

From ancient times, the Japanese have shown the characteristic of revering tools. It is easy to picture a modern salaryman chuckling alone while polishing his expensive golf clubs at home. Not only the skill of the swing, but also the golf clubs, clothes and the appearance of the club house are important factors for the Japanese. This has actually raised the cost of golf as well as the golf industry, and has indeed supported the development of the Japanese economy. On the other hand, it can be seen as a waste of money and resources.

According to the *White Paper on Leisure*, sales of golf equipment in 1990 hit 584 billion yen. This figure constituted 67.2% of the sales of all ball game equipment. This clearly demonstrates the fact that Japanese golfers are materialistic. The Japanese are fond of gadgets and enjoy showing off their expensive golf clubs. Conversely, they cannot afford to play golf as many times as they would like, and not only because of the high membership fees.

#### **4. Excursion-type golf**

In Japan, golf has changed from being simply a sport, to being a recreational pursuit that takes place all day. The reason for this is that golf courses are often found in areas far away from home and the round trip can take from four to six hours, meaning that a supposed three to four hour game takes up a whole day. Moreover, the golfer has to get up at around four or five o'clock in the morning, so the trip is similar to a school excursion. Therefore, I call this kind of golf "excursion-type golf."

Because of the limited number of games they can afford to play, Japanese golfers have a tendency to immerse themselves in the game. This has affected them psychologically, in that they want to be treated like lords: to play on a magnificent golf course with a caddy; to have an expensive lunch at a golf club whose facilities are luxurious and boast of marble tiles and an extravagant bath and a hot spring; and to enjoy a party after the game. I call this "recreational golf." This type of golf was combined with business golf, and a form of expensive and luxurious golf has developed from it. Recreational golf here has been altered to entertainment and business golf.

Cheap golf on public courses as well as courses that are open from early morning has attracted many golfers as well. This phenomenon is unique to Japan, and has been described by one foreign journalist as follows: "It is 4 o'clock on Tuesday morning. The car park of Akabane Golf Club near the River Arakawa still looks dark. Masao Ito aged 23 and his friends are eating breakfast purchased from a convenience store in the parked car. After finishing their night shift at a company based in Ikebukuro, they have come to play early golf before going back home. This is only the beginning. In the dark, a large number of people are queuing outside the club house, their golf bags are placed on the floor, and they are rubbing their eyes." He continues, "If you want to play on a real golf course, not a practice field, you have to put up with little things like that. For an American who does not play golf, it is very hard to understand their feelings." What he is describing may perhaps be called "ascetic golf."

#### **5. Entertainment and business golf**

Entertainment and business golf in Japan is closely related to the distinctive culture of business administration, and this is one of the main characteristics of Japanese golf. Entertainment golf includes, firstly, company golf that is intended for employees to enjoy golf themselves on the company's entertainment budget, and secondly, golf for entertaining business contacts.



Company golf is mainly carried out by executives, middle managers and ordinary salaried men at their company's expenses. Japanese firms provide workers with large funds for entertainment expenses, and executives are allowed to play golf both officially and privately. The firms hold large numbers of corporate golf memberships, partly as a form of investment, and the executives are permitted to use them privately. Invoices are passed on to the accounting department. Company golf by middle managers and salaried men is also authorised to a certain extent.

It is designed in such a way that those invoices are easily claimed on their firms' expenses. It is not surprising to learn then that this is often called 'invoice golf.'

The intent of business golf, which plays a central role in entertainment golf, is to invite customers to play golf in order to encourage good business relations and make deals. In Japan, business golf has become a common business practice.

One non-Japanese expressed his understanding of business golf as, 'I have experienced what they call "business golf" a few times. I originally thought that people would play golf on friendly terms but I was wrong. The hosts had to wake up early in the morning to meet their clients. Then they tried as hard as they could and with an extremely polite manner to welcome their clients, and they would play in order of position within the company.'

An executive from one general contractor, a construction company which actively carried out business golf, explained to a newspaper that, 'As there is no obvious difference in the technology employed among the different construction companies, we are obliged to strengthen relations with our clients in order to obtain orders. Spending a few million yen on business golf in order to get a billion yen worth of orders is not a big investment. I have a busy schedule, playing golf twice a week on weekdays'.

Business golf is also popular in the medical instrument industry, where there are approximately 40,000 workers in charge of medical reporting. An incident where an assistant professor at the University of Tokyo received entertainment from a firm was described in a newspaper as follows: 'Which medical instrument to use is decided at a doctor's own discretion. Therefore, it is really a fight about how to provide all the equipment to powerful doctors.' In addition, in this industry, 'It is common sense to entertain clients with golf and alcoholic drinks.' One newspaper reported, 'The head of the secretarial section of a large steel corporation, in his mid forties, carries a corporate credit card and entertains his clients three to four times a week, at a cost of 40,000–50,000 yen per person. He carries out entertainment golf about 40 times a year.'

Not only unofficial deals, but also aggressive business golf intended for political and administrative circles has been extensive. This fact was revealed in a recent series of incidents. One such incident was a financial scandal involving so-called 'MOF-tan,' meaning employees of banks or financial institutions in charge of gathering information from the officials of the Ministry of Finance. In this case, they did so by entertaining them using business golf. The newspaper disclosed in an exclusive interview with one 'MOF-tan,' that the majority of its 2 million yen budget for business golf expenses was spent on MOF officials: drinking in Ginza three times a week on average and playing golf six to eight times a month. Whether central or local, the fact is that government officials and politicians responded to business golf provided by firms with the objective of gaining various advantages. There are too many scandals of this kind to enumerate.

An argument is currently raging among business leaders on whether business golf is right or wrong. The leader of the opposition faction, Minoru Otsuka of Otsuka Shokai,

claims that entertainment expenses are not necessarily of benefit in raising profits, so it may be more advantageous to budget generously for salaries and operating expenses instead of entertainment. He disagrees with entertainment golf. Corporations such as McDonalds, IBM Japan, Orix and Yamato Transport have also argued against the practice of business golf.

Under recent conditions, where various incidents involving the business entertainment of MOF officials by banks have been revealed to the public, opposition to business golf is beginning to grow among leaders of the financial sector. Shoichiro Toyota, who was the head of the Federation of Economic Organizations in 1998, expressed his support for the opposition to business golf at a press conference, saying, 'It is better not to play golf with clients'. On the other hand, Yoshifumi Tsuji, the president of Nissan, has argued passionately that the entertainment costs of business golf should generally be borne by the company.

## 6. Investment golf

The deposit-based golf membership system that fundamentally regulated Japanese golf, led to a tendency whereby the purchase of golf memberships became a moneymaking tool. Fluctuations in golf membership prices are symbolized by changes in the membership value of Musashino Golf Club in Tokyo. The price of a membership, which was worth 1 million yen in 1971, doubled each year since then, reaching 3.4 million yen by the time of the oil shock of 1973. Following the shock, the value appeared to stagnate slightly, but in 1978 was valued at 3.68 million yen. By 1983, it had reached 10.5 million yen and in 1986 was worth 30 million yen. At the peak of the bubble economy it had escalated to 49 million yen, meaning that in just 20 years the value of golf memberships market had expanded nearly 50 times. This tendency was not exceptional.

This rise in membership values led to potential capital gains, and as long as memberships could be sold at higher than the purchase price within a certain period, it was easy to make a substantial profit. Golf lovers and corporations did not simply buy memberships to enjoy golf, but also to make a fortune by buying and selling them.

During the bubble economy, one newspaper published an article describing a speculative golf venture involving the pension fund of a trading company employee who retired at the age of 60: 'I sold government bonds worth 4 million yen (with interest and principal) after 2 years and invested the money in golf memberships instead. Within 2 years, the value of my memberships had doubled and I feel very grateful that I am now able to play golf once a month.'

According to the Membership Possession Assessment Survey of 1984 carried out by Taiyo Kobe Bank, 74% of owners of small and medium-sized enterprises owned at least one golf membership: 30.1% owned at least two, 21.4% three, 7.7% four, and 15.6% five. It seemed evident that people were purchasing memberships for investment purposes.

However, after the burst of the bubble economy, the price of golf memberships fell dramatically. It is believed that their value has slumped to just one fifth or one sixth of the prices during the peak period, and in recent years there are many memberships whose value has shrunk to one tenth or one twentieth of the original worth. Corporations and traders who paid high prices must have suffered substantial losses. It is widely known that golf course developers, membership sales agents, construction companies and banks in particular have made many failed speculative investments, and have suffered enormous damage. Investment golf now appears to have been a fantasy that was manufactured by the golf industry.

**Table 3. The Membership Value of Golf Clubs in Tokyo**

(Unit: 10,000 Yen)

Clubs	'71	'72	'73	'74	'75	'76	'77	'78	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83
Ome	175	480	540	450	475	490	400	530	680	760	900	1,280	1,330
Koganei	1,350	1,600	3,500	3,300	3,450	3,250	3,270	3,730	4,500	8,500	8,500	7,800	7,800
Sakuragaoka	260	680	800	750	730	625	650	820	1,000	1,270	1,570	1,850	2,500
Soubu	160	350	450	410	435	450	440	420	550	730	950	1,200	1,400
Tama	140	380	420	420	440	420	430	440	550	760	800	1,050	1,400
Tachikawa-Kokusai	100	310	300	280	305	225	181	230	275	330	400	700	780
Tokyo-Kokusai	120	400	340	310	315	300	240	305	390	430	570	750	800
Hachioji	265	630	820	740	715	710	655	800	1,000	1,180	1,580	1,800	2,300
Fuchu	280	450	900	810	780	755	720	920	1,150	1,600	1,750	2,150	1,950
Musashino	100	200	340	350	355	375	355	368	460	590	800	950	1,050

  

Clubs	'84	'85	'86	'87	'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96
Ome	1,800	1,760	3,800	3,800	4,150	5,600	5,100	3,500	2,700	2,950	1,950	1,500	1,600
Koganei	8,500	9,000	25,000	29,000	31,000	45,500	37,000	18,700	13,000	14,000	9,500	9,200	10,300
Sakuragaoka	3,100	4,050	7,500	6,000	7,400	12,500	8,800	7,000	4,650	4,200	3,600	3,300	3,880
Soubu	1,700	1,800	3,000	3,700	4,100	5,300	5,300	3,150	2,600	2,500	2,050	1,750	2,050
Tama	1,400	1,950	3,200	3,800	4,050	6,500	5,600	3,500	2,850	2,350	2,050	1,650	
Tachikawa-Kokusai	740	830	2,100	2,100	2,250	4,400	3,400	1,980	1,850	1,900	1,260	1,000	960
Tokyo-Kokusai	800	1,180	2,600	2,700	2,650	4,150	3,200	2,150	1,850	1,900	1,300	1,320	1,470
Hachioji	2,700	2,900	6,200	5,700	6,100	9,000	7,300	4,750	4,600	3,800	2,820	2,200	2,350
Fuchu	2,200	3,400	6,000	6,000	5,500	9,900	7,500	4,700	3,250	3,250	2,370	2,000	2,800
Musashino	1,250	1,300	3,000	2,900	3,550	4,900	3,900	2,620	2,200	2,200	1,800	1,350	1,300

Sources: 'Zenkoku Golf Kaiinken Souba' Annual Reports.

As explained above, the way in which the Japanese enjoy golf is quite different to how it is played in the Western world. It may be more appropriate to say that it is rather twisted.

This short essay is a summary of my thesis 'Japanese and Golf' which was published in the book titled *Leisure and the Contemporary Society*, March 1999, Hosei University Press. The bibliography has been purposely left out from this paper in order to avoid duplication.

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