

The Development of Golf in Shanghai: Present Situation, Problems and Implementation Path

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Abstract: Into the new era, to explore the development of golf in Shanghai, the existing problems and countermeasures. Around the development of golf in the three aspects of the theoretical issues, namely, how the development of golf in Shanghai, what are the remaining problems, how to achieve the development of golf. On the basis of current research, this paper analyzes the rules and reference paths of the positive interaction between golf and Shanghai's urban development, so as to provide theoretical guidance and decision-making reference for the healthy development of golf in Shanghai. The research shows that: (1) there are a large number of potential golf consumers in Shanghai, and golf course construction, education and training and event operation are relatively mature. However, in terms of market fit, continuous exploration is still needed to achieve standardization, scale and collaboration development; (2) Compared with the status quo of golf development in the United States, the remaining problems in the development of golf in Shanghai mainly revolve around four aspects: population, courses, education and training and events; (3) The implementation path of the high-quality development of golf in Shanghai includes clarifying the value orientation of golf and pursuing the unity of three-dimensional interests; The implementation of golf industry autonomy and legislation, strict market access mechanism; Existing golf events to do fine and strong, the competition that has not been launched should be introduced and innovated; Develop the whole population golf education, standardize the whole process of education system.

Keywords: shanghai nunicipality; golf; world famous sports city; the status quo; countermeasures for development

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century, the British first brought golf consumption into the lives of the people of Shanghai. In 1990, Shanghai International Country Golf Club was established. After more than 20 years of construction, the development of golf industry in Shanghai has been leading the Yangtze River Delta region [1]. Due to the high development of economy, Shanghai Sports Bureau has put forward more stringent requirements for the development of golf in the whole city. In 2017, the Shanghai Sports Bureau proposed in its proposal that, in addition to the development of China's Olympic advantageous sports, Shanghai should also focus on the development of tennis, golf, sailing and other sports that are suitable for the international metropolis and match with the world famous sports cities [2]. As of November 2022, according to incomplete statistics by Shanghai Golf Association (hereinafter referred to as "Shanghai Golf Association") and the author, there are now 21 official golf courses (including 4 9-hole courses, 11 18-hole courses, 2 27-hole courses and 4 36-hole courses) and 12 driving ranges in Shanghai. Therefore, how to expand the population of golf in Shanghai, standardize the

development of golf courses, and promote the development of golf to match the development process of Shanghai city, we need to learn from the development characteristics of the world's famous sports cities to a certain extent, implement the requirements of the "14th Five-Year Plan" of sports development in Shanghai, and further explore the law and reference path in line with the localization development of Shanghai. To promote the positive interaction between golf and the urban development of Shanghai.

2. Development status of golf in Shanghai

2.1. Golf consumer group

Golf is a competitive sport for the whole population. It has the characteristics of wide age coverage, profound ethical and moral system, and close connection with nature. According to the census data, Shanghai is a metropolis with 24,870,895 permanent residents and 10,479,652 permanent residents from other provinces and cities. The number of potential consumers is huge. The core consumers of Shanghai Golf include Friends of Earth, Friends of Outer Earth and course members. According to Zhang Yi's statistics on the consumer group of Shanghai golf club, from the perspective of consumer gender, the proportion of male consumers is 74.6% higher than that of female consumers, indicating a gender imbalance among participants. The professional groups of golf consumers are mainly private business owners and corporate executives; Consumers with annual income of 500,000 to 1 million accounted for 32.46% of the total sample (Table 1) [1]. With its typical circle marketing, golf constantly drives people with similar family pedigree, educational background and economic conditions to participate in the golf circle where golf is the main hobby.

Table 1. Golf club consumer income

Annual income (10000 rmb/year)	Frequency	Percentage
<10	13	16.89
10-20	10	12.99
20-50	19	24.67
50-100	25	32.46
100-500	7	9.09
>500	3	3.90
Totally	77	100

2.2. The golf course

2.2.1. Formal golf course and driving range

The number of holes is an important index to measure the size of a formal golf course [3]. At present, according to the incomplete statistics of the Shanghai Golf Association and the author, the number of golf courses in Shanghai is higher than the regional average, with a total of 33 official golf courses and driving ranges. The number of holes in the official course ranges from 9 to 36. Specifically, there are 4 9-hole courses, 11 18-hole courses, 2 27-hole courses and 4 36-hole courses. The course conditions are shown in Figure 1.

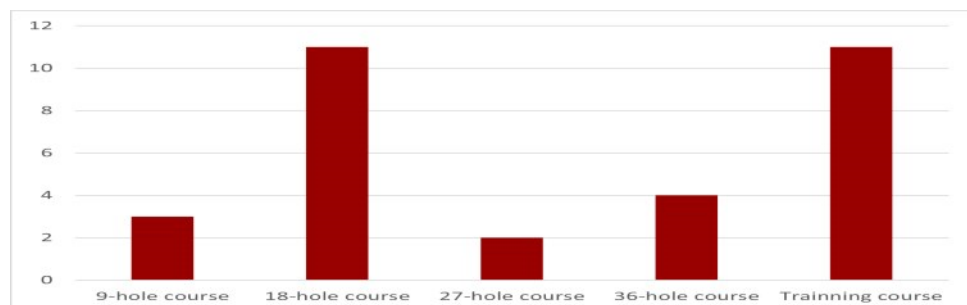


Figure 1. Number of Golf Courses in Shanghai (by Number of holes)

Taking Meilanhu Golf Club in Shanghai as an example, it realizes the safe natural cycle of zero pollution and zero emission in terms of realizing the ecological value of the course. The course charges for membership and playing time. Membership is divided into individual members, corporate members, guest members and visitors. Playing time is divided into weekdays, holidays, and morning ball discount and ladies discount [4]. Take Shanghai Zhongyi Huangxing Sports Park Golf Driving Range, one of the largest golf driving ranges in Southeast Asia, for example. With 270 playing Spaces and a total length of 350 yards, it is the first urban golf course in China that has been successfully operated up to now.

The number and spatial distribution of courses in Shanghai are shown in Figure 2 and Supplementary File 1. Due to the needs of urban development, there is no space for formal golf courses in the central urban area, so the proportion of golf courses distributed in the suburbs and coastal areas is relatively large. Locations are mainly distributed in Pudong New Area, Jiading District, Minhang District, Changning District and Songjiang District, accounting for 69.7% of the total number of courses in Shanghai.

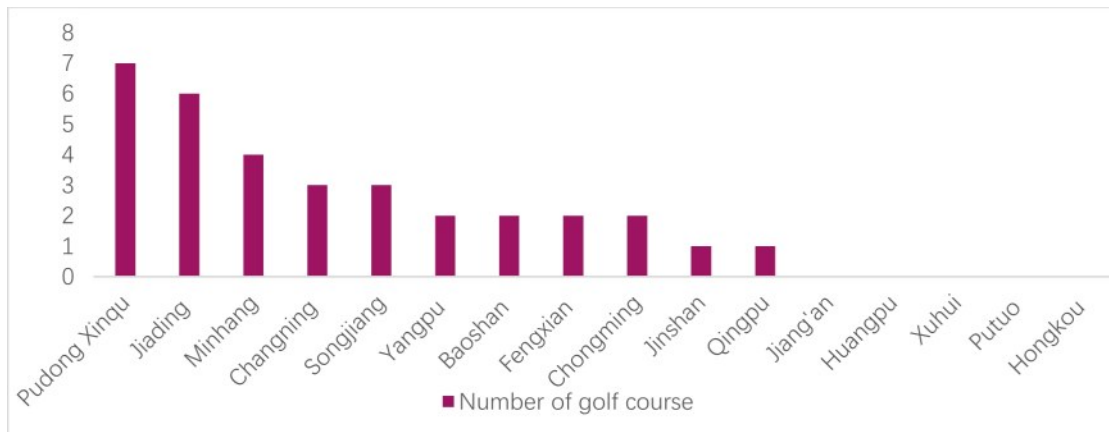


Figure 2. Number of golf courses in Shanghai by region

Whether domestic golf courses are profitable or not can be counted through the data of "Chaoxiang White Paper -- China Golf Industry Report" (hereinafter referred to as the "White Paper"). In the distribution of profit areas of the courses visited in 2017, 59% of the golf courses in East China were profitable, accounting for the largest number of profits [5]. Among the developed golf cities, Shanghai golf course ranks first together with Beijing with a profit ratio of 50%. In addition, there are four courses in Shanghai in the 4th Asian 100 Best Golf Courses in 2020.

2.2.2. Golf simulator

Simulated golf is a sport that uses computer speed measurement software to simulate outdoor golf to indoor simulation. In Shanghai, golf simulator was introduced into China for the first time by Shanghai Houwen Indoor Golf Company as the industry initiator. At present, it is the agent of VICTOR Golf, the world's first brand. In recent years, golf simulators have attracted the attention of the industry in the Shanghai market, such as V-KINGS Golf Fitness Center. According to the white paper survey, golf participants see simulated golf as an alternative to outdoor courses and a new sport style, but in terms of market fit, it still needs to be explored to achieve standardization, scale and collaboration [5].

2.3. Golf education and training

The teaching modes of golf education in Chinese colleges and universities are mainly divided into three categories: skill education, management education and lawn education [6]. Colleges and universities in Shanghai offer golf courses, including Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, Shanghai Institute of Sport, Tongji University, Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts, Shanghai Tourism College and China Vocational School. Besides the above three universities, Fudan University, Shanghai Normal University and Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine have golf clubs. Golf courses are also involved in primary and secondary schools. The main schools include the Affiliated Foreign Language Experimental School of East China Normal

University, Shanghai Wuning Road Primary School, Gao 'an Road Primary School, Shanghai International Studies University Affiliated High School, Jianping Middle School, and private Yongchang School.

2.4. A golf tournament

Golf events held in Shanghai are mainly initiated, promoted and organized by the Shanghai Golf Association [7]. The 2025 development goal set by Shanghai in the outline of building a World famous Sports City is to basically build a world famous sports city. By 2035, we will work towards this goal at a higher level. It will be completed by 2050 and form a unique development pattern of Shanghai with "one city, one capital and four centers". The "one capital" mentioned herein refers to building Shanghai into a world-class international sports event capital [8].

Shanghai clubs are learning how to use events instead of course marketing to boost their brand and influence [1]. In the performance evaluation of Shanghai City Amateur League Project Series in 2017, there are three golf events shortlisted for Class B, namely Shanghai Golf Evergreen, Shanghai Amateur Golf League and Shanghai Golf Challenge. The Shanghai Municipal Sports Bureau will provide financial support to the organizers to meet the fitness needs of different groups [9]. In 2018, the China PGA Tour, the City Amateur League Golf Fun Challenge and the Super Lychee National Golf Series were held in Shanghai. Next year, two golf events will be included in the 2019 Shanghai City Amateur League Project Series, namely the Shanghai Foreign and Chinese Enterprise Golf Classic and the Shanghai Golf Challenge [10]. In 2020, Shanghai Municipal Sports Bureau approved the Shanghai Sports Events Development Special Fund (the first batch) and (the second batch) support plan. Shanghai Weimei Culture Development Co., Ltd. undertook 2019 World Golf Champions-HSBC Champions and 2020 Buick China Junior Golf Championship by itself [11,12].

3. According to the status quo of golf development in the United States, the remaining problems of golf development in Shanghai are analyzed

3.1. Golf population

There are about 25 million amateur golfers in the United States, almost 10 percent of the population. The National Golf Foundation (NGF) estimates that the golfing population in the U.S. is about 101 million, or one in three Americans over the age of six has played golf and its spin-off media [13]. The white paper estimates that the number of golfers in China is only 1 to 1.1 million, and the core population is only 380,000 to 390,000. Compared to China's population, Shanghai has fewer players. Statistics released by the seventh national census of Shanghai show that the city has a permanent resident population of 24.87 million and a floating population of 10.47 million. In order to achieve the goal of fully building a world famous sports city, the current golf participation population of Shanghai is far from that of famous sports cities in the United States, such as New York and Los Angeles.

3.2. Course maintenance and operation

The natural conditions of the game of golf are limited by the required venues and their maintenance [14]. In the United States, golf can rely on its laws to realize the ecological value of the course, strictly regulate the site selection, design, review and supervision of the course, realize industrial autonomy with the help of industrial measures, reduce the ecological impact, implement a number of ecological improvement projects, and reduce the negative impact of stadium construction on the city [15]. In January 2017, a total of 27 golf courses were involved in the national golf rectification in Shanghai, involving three types of problems, namely, banning, cancellation and rectification. Of these, three were abolished and three were revoked. The reason behind the correction is that adjacent to the national secondary drinking water source protection, poor management and other reasons need to be cleaned up. There are still many problems in the nature of the project, design standards, administrative review, supervision, industry autonomy and other aspects of the golf course in our city. We should try our best to avoid the derivation of social space problems that harm the ecological security of the city [16].

3.3. Education and training

The development speed and popularity of golf in many American colleges and universities are among the top in the world. For example, PGA professional golf management major is set up in colleges and universities, which is divided into theoretical courses and technical practice courses, and golf teams are set up. Known as the cradle of professional golfers, the National Committee Association America (NACC) has developed a highly mature business model, And through market development, commercial sponsorship, media publicity, tournament broadcast and other ways to form a positive cycle of golf in individual fields [6]. In terms of the golf education and training industry in Shanghai, the learning of young players is greatly influenced by their families. 61.1% of them mainly buy one-to-one courses to learn golf, and very few of them can get relatively professional and systematic golf training on campus, usually in the form of part-time coaches leading clubs to campus. Compared with other track and field, football, basketball training lack of long-term and stability [7].

3.4. Competition events

Take the famous sports cities of New York and Los Angeles as an example. Both of them have experience in holding international top single events related to golf, including golf Grand Slam events, PGA Championship, US Open and so on. Although the HSBC Champions and BMW Masters held in Shanghai are professional events with certain influence, there is still a development gap between them and the developed golfing regions in terms of tournament system, tournament culture, tournament income, tournament service level and international influence [7].

4. The implementation path of high quality development of golf in Shanghai

4.1. Clarify the value orientation of golf and pursue the unity of three dimensional benefits

The sustainable development of golf in the future should first clarify the three-dimensional orientation of golf, realize the two-way interaction between sports value, economic value and cultural value, and pursue the unity of sports benefits, economic benefits and social and cultural benefits. In the process of golf swing, human strength, flexibility and coordination can achieve the most perfect combination. Secondly, in Shanghai, a first-class city, the essential characteristics of golf can enable participants to interact with nature, relieve tension, so as to realize the two sports values of fitness and health [7]. From the perspective of supply and demand, Gu Yue pointed out that promoting economic development is one of the reasons for the development of golf market [17]. In order to move forward to a higher level of sports city construction goal, the development level of golf market in Shanghai should make up for the huge lag compared with the level of economic development. Take the United States for example, when the per capita GNP reaches more than \$1,000, the development of golf will be accelerated; When the per capita GNP reaches \$5,000, golf will flourish. Golf economy plays a positive role in improving the investment environment of cities and towns, improving the living environment of urban residents, solving the problem of employment, and promoting the development of social economy and social culture. Statistics show that the total GDP of Shanghai in the first half of 2021 was 2,010,253 million yuan. According to the population data of the seventh National population census, the per capita GDP of Shanghai in the first half of 2021 was 80,800 RMB. Golf industry is listed as one of the world's largest sports industry with its strong economic benefits [14]. Golf in Shanghai should shift to a period of rapid development to improve the quality of population increment. In October 2020, Shanghai issued the outline for the construction of the world famous Sports City. In the field of golf, it is necessary to accelerate the establishment of the golf culture, so that the unique golf culture highlighting Shanghai can stand up, live and go out, so that the golf culture can shape the spirit of Shanghai and integrate into the city's blood, and improve the golf culture matching the status of the world famous sports city.

4.2. Implement the golf industry autonomy and legislation, strict market access mechanism

Standard 18-hole golf course construction is on the basis of occupying larger land resources. Shanghai should adhere to the implementation of industrial autonomy, play the role of the supervisor of the Shanghai Golf

Association, clarify the nature of the course construction planning through laws, improve the construction policies of various locations, strengthen the ecological standards of the course, and strengthen the supervision of the operation period, so as not to repeat the situation of the course being evacuated after construction. The development advantages of golf market mainly include economy, policy, population, social organization, education and other foundations. Yu Xiaoping put forward the "SEC (Sport's Condition -- Economic Function -- Cultural Effect)" effect diagram of golf, that is, the marketization of golf has brought more participating population. It makes the economic function increase to some extent [14]. How to further improve the level of autonomy of golf industry in Shanghai on the basis of the existing scale and level, and strengthen the level of market operation is a practical problem to be solved urgently.

4.3. Existing golf events to do fine and strong, those not yet carried out to do the introduction and innovation

The World Golf Championships HSBC Champions and BMW Masters held in Shanghai have become regional representatives of golf events, playing an important role in building the city's name card. In the future, the development of golf events in Shanghai should pay attention to the attention, professionalism and contribution of golf events, build a hierarchical system of amateur events, and constantly break through the ceiling of the requirements of the industry for golf events. Under the background that the integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta has become a national strategy, in the field of golf, we should continue to build Shanghai's original brand events, introduce international golf events with Shanghai as the tour area, and enhance Shanghai's influence and competitiveness in the world.

4.4. Develop golf education for the whole population and standardize the whole process education system

In terms of golf education, Shanghai should strive to develop the whole population of golf education, and constantly improve the number and quality of golf practitioners. Taking golf into the campus as an example, practitioners should be required to hold the certificate and carry out the program and planning on the basic knowledge structure, framework, teaching content, teaching method, teaching process and teaching result evaluation of the teaching process.

5. Conclusion

The development of golf in Shanghai: the core consumer group of golf is relatively low, mainly male and middle and high income group; Golf courses gather in the suburbs and coastal areas, and the development is affected by land, policy, management and other factors. Both primary and secondary schools and universities are involved in golf education, which is not widely covered compared with other sports. In the accelerated development period of golf events, there are fewer international events and self-owned brand events.

There are still some problems in the development of golf in Shanghai: compared with the status quo of golf development in the United States, there are still some problems, such as the small population base of golf, the lack of legal norms for the ecological value of golf courses, the absence of professional golf management in golf education schools, and the lack of international top golf events.

The concrete implementation paths for the in-depth development of golf in Shanghai are as follows: to clarify the value orientation of golf and pursue the unity of three-dimensional benefits; the implementation of golf industry autonomy and legislation, strict market access mechanism; the existing golf competition events to do fine and strong, those not yet carried out to do the introduction and innovation; develop golf education for the whole population and standardize the whole process education system.

Supplementary File 1: Spatial distribution patterns of formal golf courses and various golf driving ranges in Shanghai.

Author Contributions

Wrote the literature review and checked the article, Z.Y.; collected data, processed empirical data, presented empirical results, wrote the main part of the paper and proposed research conclusions, H.Z. All of the authors read

and agreed to the published the final manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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