

City of Longview
Department of Parks & Recreation
Mint Valley Golf Course
ANNUAL REPORT
For
2005



MINT VALLEY GOLF COURSE DIVISION - 2005

The Golf Course Division is responsible for the administration of all operations relating to the Mint Valley Golf Course. Specifically, these operations include: An 18-hole championship golf course; a 6-hole par three course; full service practice facility with a covered driving range, chipping and sand bunker areas, and a practice green; pro-shop and restaurant facility; course and equipment maintenance facility; and a 40-power cart storage rental facility. The division employs a maintenance staff of four full-time employees and up to seven part-time employees. The pro-shop/restaurant operations are contracted out with a pro/manager who hires his own staff. He retains a percentage of the green fees, lessons, cart rentals, and driving range revenue, and all of the pro-shop equipment sales and restaurant revenue.

The Mint Valley Golf Course Maintenance Division had many significant accomplishments in 2005 that directly affected the playability and overall enjoyment of our public golf course facility. The most impressive accomplishments were the remodeling of the woman's restroom on number 10 and the pro shop landscape renovation that when combined, saved the City approximately \$24,200 because the work was accomplished in-house. Other key accomplishments included improvements in drainage to the course, course irrigation system improvements and the practice tee remodeling. The categories below indicate where resources were channeled and what challenges staff faced in 2005.

New Construction

- Remodeled women's restroom on number 10. The cost to have an outside contractor do the work was approximately \$15,000. Staff completed the remodel in house for under \$5,000.
- Renovated and landscaped the pro shop beds and irrigation system. The costs for an outside firm to do this project was \$16,500. Staff completed the project for \$2,300.
- Renovation of the practice range tee. Using over 300 yards of sand staff extended the practice tee out 32 feet and installed new irrigation. Increasing the hitting area will improve the overall turf quality throughout the year.

Drainage Repair and Installation

- Approximately 1,000 feet of drainage were added to the fairways and bunkers (sand traps) in the last year. These improvements provide access areas where rainwater can drain off faster after rain storms.
- Upgraded the entire drainage network for the par-3 course to eliminate the wet conditions. The following areas have had new drain tile added or old tile renovated:

1. Holes 1,2,5,6,9,14,15,16,18 and chipping area.
2. Bunkers on 2,3,8,9,10,11,13,14,15,16,17 and 18

- Staff upgraded and added over 100 catch basins in various areas of the course. These are grated openings in low areas that take water off very rapidly during storms.

One significant challenge facing staff is standing water. The current flood pump station (located at hole number 14) is extremely inadequate and cannot keep up with a moderate to heavy rainfall of one-half inches or more. The drainage from the course and the surrounding residential area on the east side of the course flows into the ponds. The ponds are interconnected and the only source of removing the water in them is through the pump station adjacent to hole # 14. The ponds must be pumped down in order to create capacity to handle the runoff water from the course. After a rainstorm in excess of ½ inch, it takes several days to a week for the present flood pumps to remove sufficient amounts of water to allow for course drainage to begin. Consequently, the puddles stay visible, play is disrupted, and we experience delays in getting maintenance equipment on the course. The golfing public views this as sub-standard conditions when there is standing water that lasts several days after the rain has stopped. Upgrading from our current 1,700 gpm to a 6,000 gpm system would have a huge impact on our fall through spring playing conditions.

Irrigation Maintenance and Additions

The existing system is 30 years old and requires two people to maintain it from June through September. As this system continues to age, the time spent on irrigation repairs increases. Many of the replacement parts are no longer available from the manufacturer thus finding replacements has become a challenge. The demand for hand watering is also magnified as thatch development increases and the standard for higher turf quality rises. Below are some of the irrigation-related areas addressed this past year:

- Replacement of irrigation pump repair parts at a cost in excess of \$1,900.
- Expended approximately 63 full-time hours on irrigation pump station repairs.
- Raised and reset over 200 sprinkler heads.
- Repaired four hydraulic leaks.
- Added new irrigation and sprinkler heads to areas of the course that had been underserved.
- Added irrigation to the front of the range tee.
- Added and upgraded pro shop irrigation system
- Spent over 350 man hours hand watering dry areas to keep fairways green.

Course Sanding

The results of the sanding program have been tremendous over the years. Sand is added to the course to firm up the ground and improve the playability in the fall, winter and spring months. This sanding helps to keep golf balls bouncing, feet drier and makes the course more desirable to golfers. Golf carts and maintenance equipment also have more frequent access to the course during wetter times of the year because of our sanding efforts. This year, staff spread over 2,000 yards of sand on fairways, around tees and greens, and in selected rough areas.

Tree Plantings

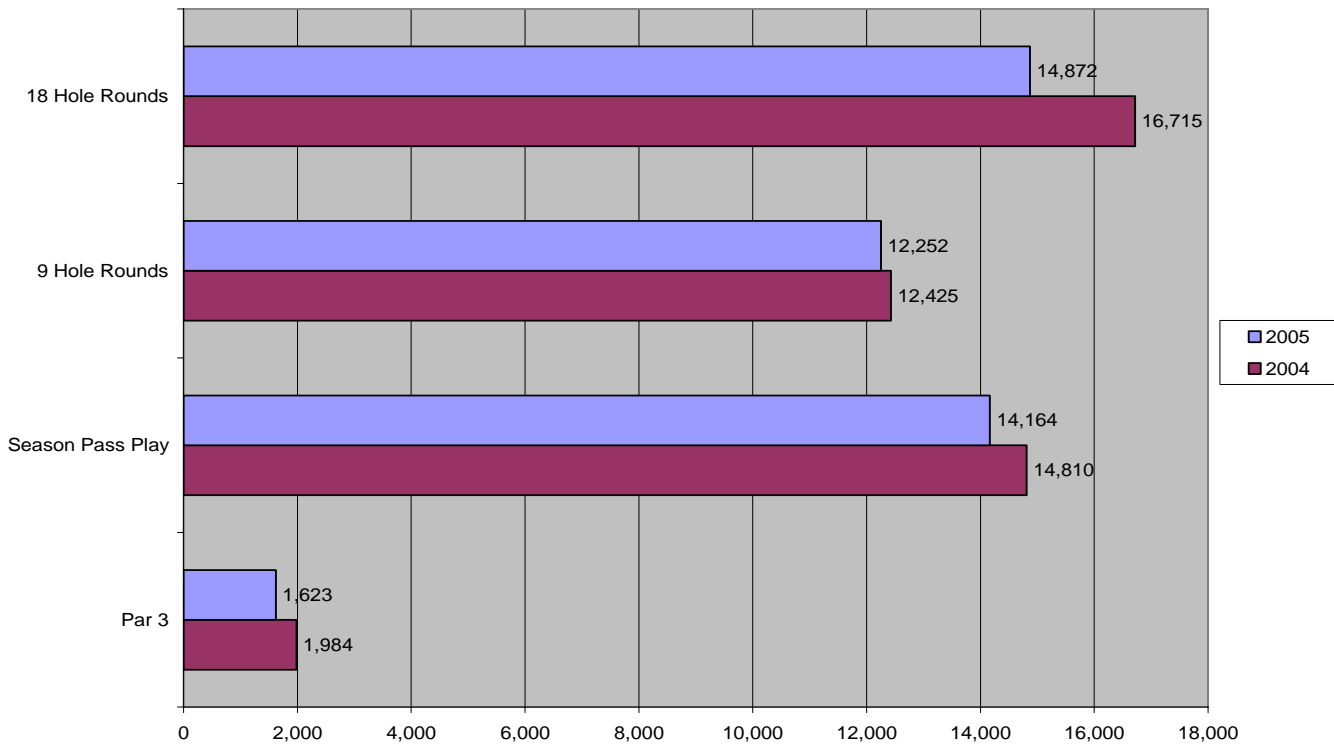
Trees are an important part of the golf course. They define the holes, enhance the playing experience, protect golfers on neighboring holes, add to the aesthetics of the course and are a noise and visual barrier. Many of the original shore and lodge pole pines are not well suited for our wet soil conditions and are slowly dying out. Staff has continued to replace these trees with ones that grow well in our golf course environment. This replacement program started six years ago, and many of the newer trees are already having a positive impact on the aesthetics and course playability. 42 trees were added in 2005.

Other notable 2005 maintenance items:

- New yardage signs on number 5, 11 and 13 tees.
- New entrance sign designed and purchased and will be installed at the start of 2006.
- Designed and printed a new golf course marketing brochure.
- Upgraded the website
- Contracted with a firm to provide new ball washers at the tees in exchange for advertising rights on the washers.
- 150 grass-eating carp added to the ponds to help control aquatic weeds.
- Deep-root fertilized new trees to increase growth.

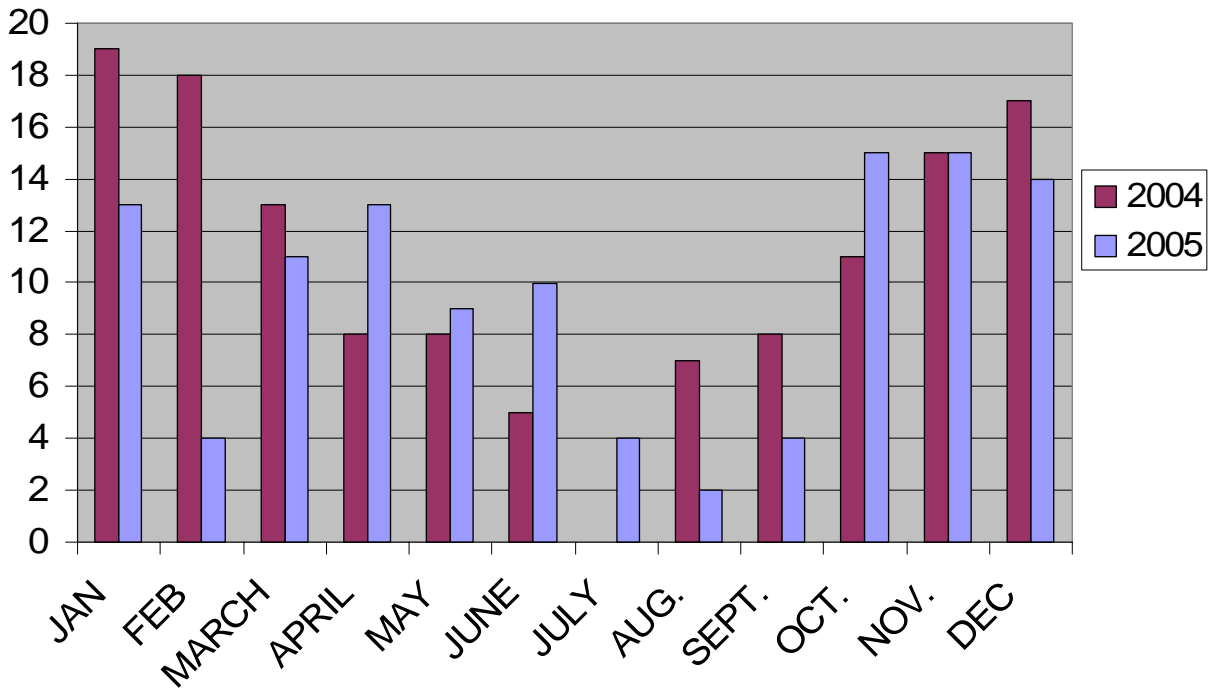
During 2005, golf on a national level realized an increase in rounds of 5.2% over last year. Of the eleven national regions, seven posted a reduction in the number of rounds played. The northwest region was one of those that posted fewer rounds than last year – nearly 1%, which can be attributed to the extremes in weather conditions. For example, the unusually warm and dry conditions in January and February of 2005 resulted in 57% and 36% increases in rounds of play for the two months while the heavy rainfall in April, November and December resulted in 19%, 18% and 35% decreases in rounds played. This is consistent to what we found at Mint Valley. In January and February our rounds were up by 72% and 37%. In April, November and December, our rounds were down by 34%, 19% and 34%. Add to this the 15 days of rain in June, normally one of our prime golfing months, and we ended the year with 6.5% or 3,000 fewer rounds than the year before. The following graph is a comparison of the rounds played.

Rounds of Play Comparisons

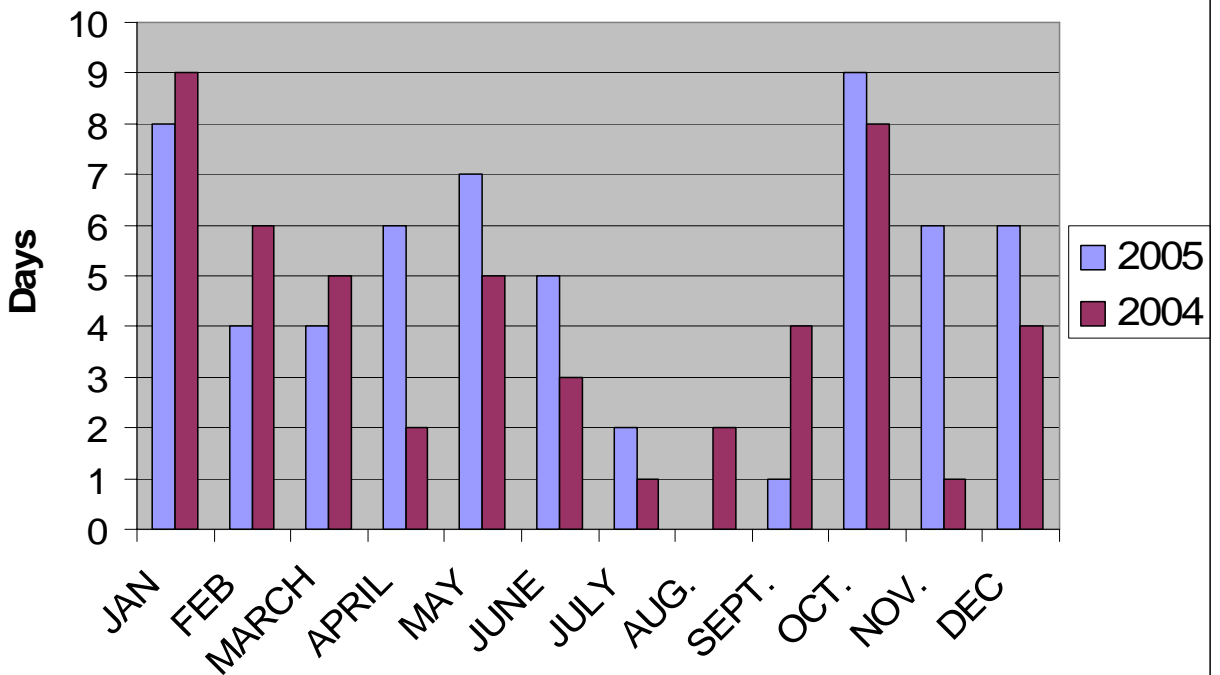


The following graph is a visual history of the rainfall for the last two years. When compared with the variances in the rounds played, one can see the impact the rain has. It is worth noting that even in months like December where the number of days of rain are comparable for the two years, the amount of rainfall becomes a factor in impacting the rounds played. This is particularly true when rain falls on weekend days, which are the busiest golfing days of the week. This is compounded when the weekends impacted are those during the prime golfing months – June through August. In our comparison of the last two years, there was rain on fifty weekend days in 2004 and fifty-eight weekend days in 2005. Of these days, six occurred during the prime months in 2004 and seven in 2005.

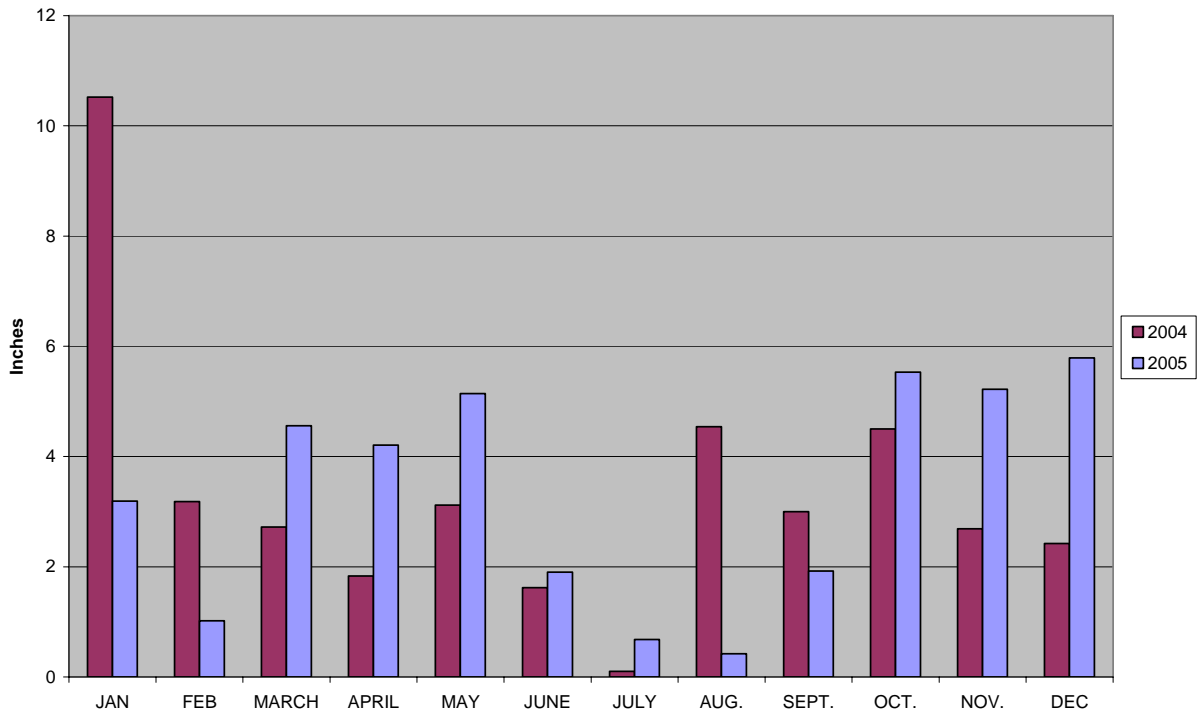
Days of Precipitation Weekdays 2004-2005



Days of Precipitation Weekends 2004-2005

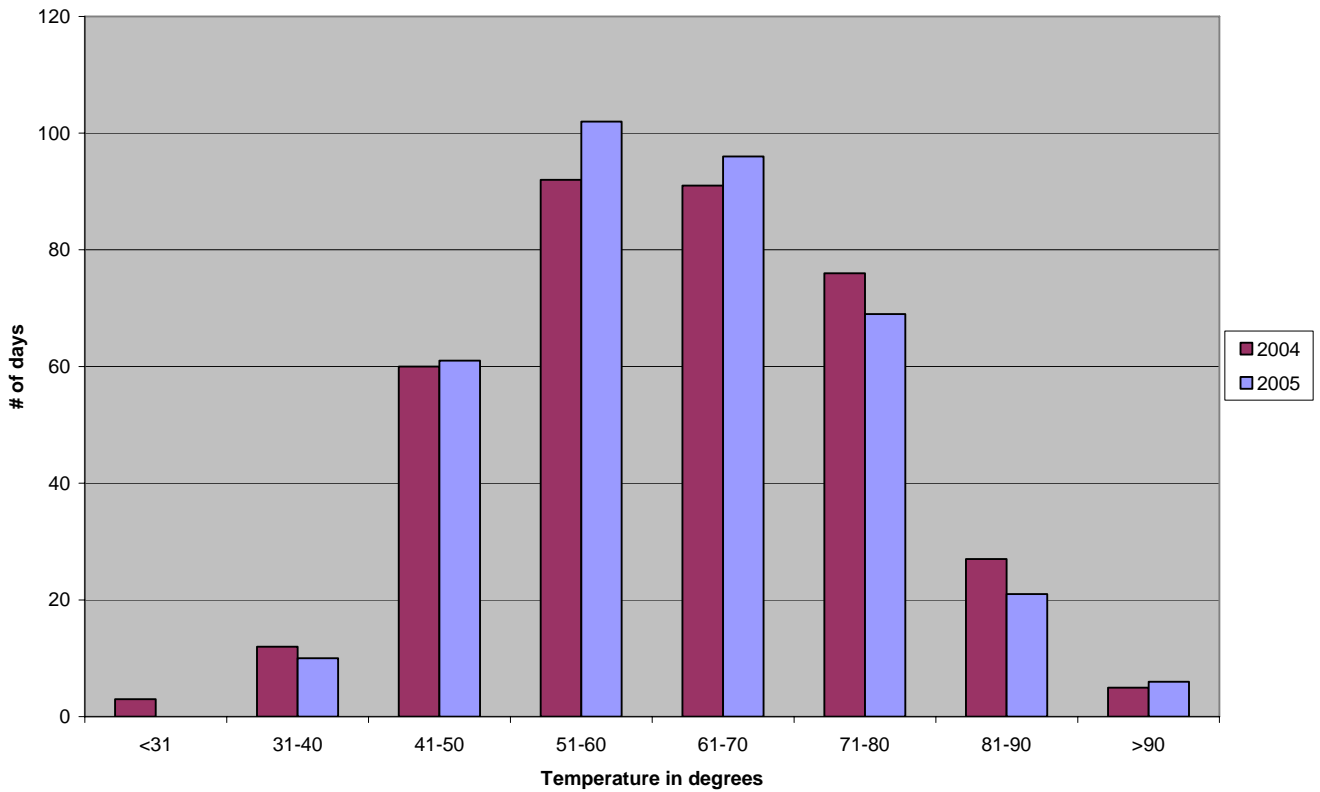


Inches of Precipitation



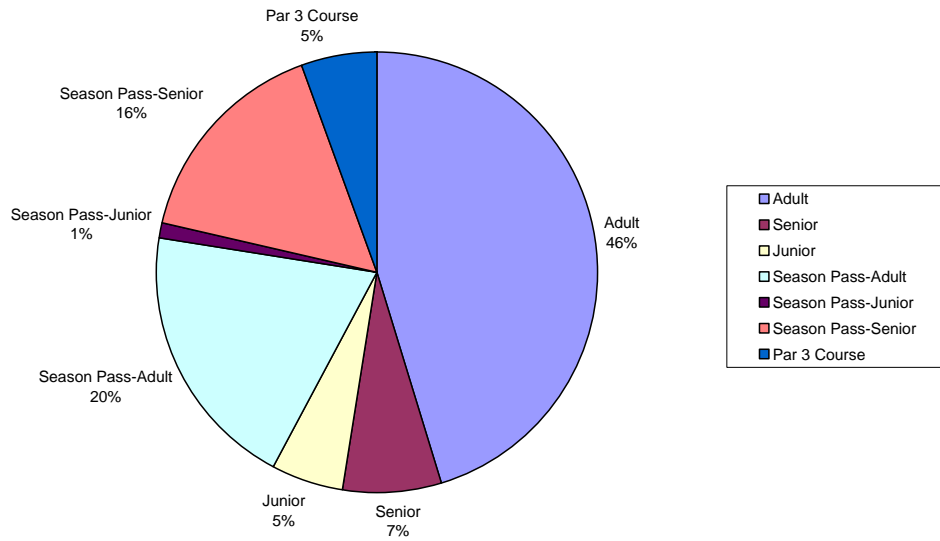
Temperature can be a factor also, but as the following graph shows, there were not significant variances between the last two years.

High Temperature Readings

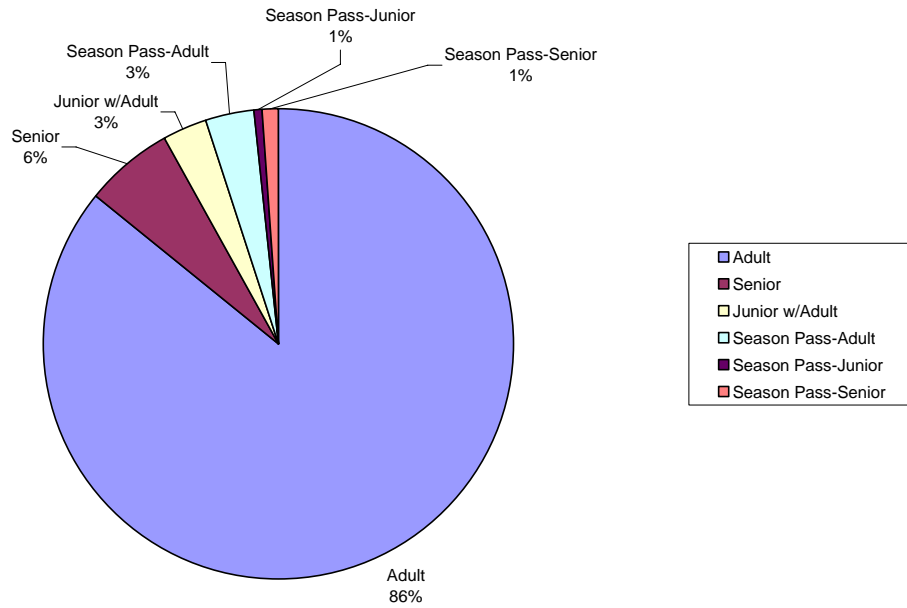


The 18-hole rounds of golf at Mint Valley are broken into six categories – adult, senior, and junior daily fee rounds and adult, senior and junior pass holders rounds. The following graphs show the percentage of rounds played in each category over the last two years.

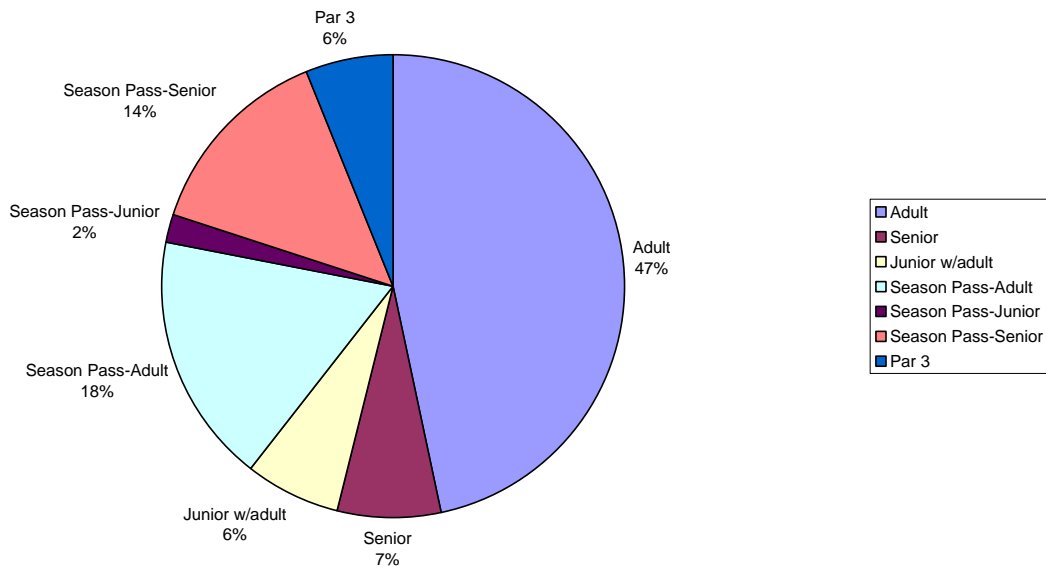
2005 18 Hole Rounds



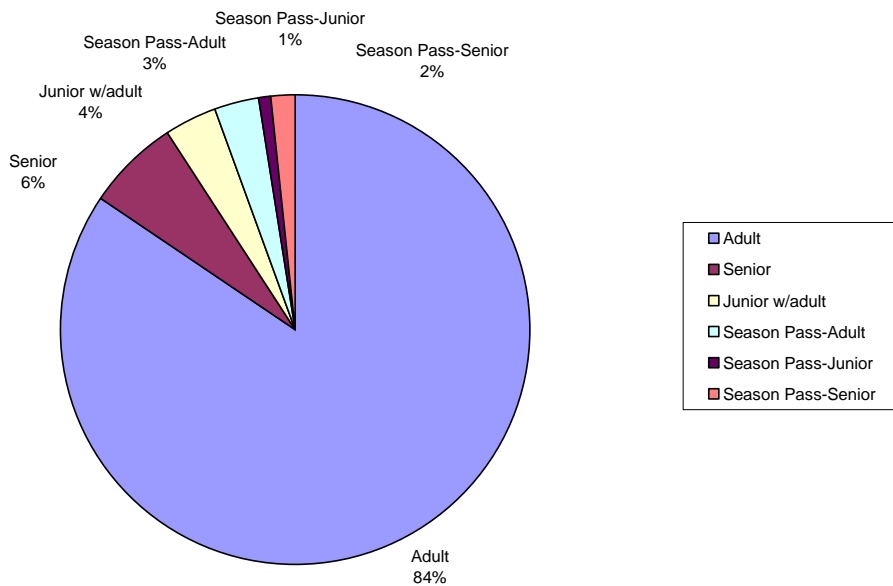
2005 9 Hole Rounds



2004 18 Hole Rounds

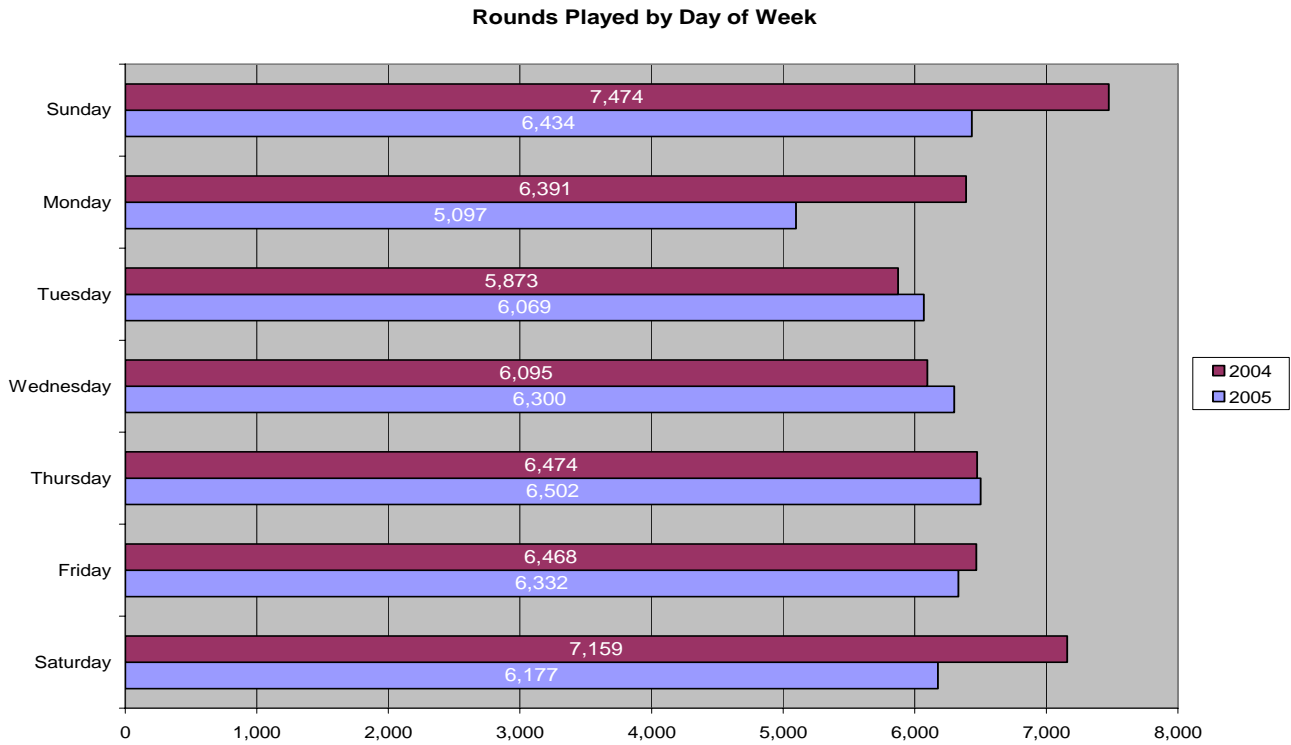


2004 9 Hole Rounds



In 2005 there were 42,911 rounds played at Mint Valley. Compared to the 45,934 rounds played in 2004, this reduction of 3,000 rounds reflects a 6.5% decrease. Although weather played a factor with rain falling on eight more weekend days in 2004 over 2005, a greater reason seems to be the increased cost of gasoline. Golfers tended to select courses closer to home, which resulted in fewer players coming to Mint Valley from the

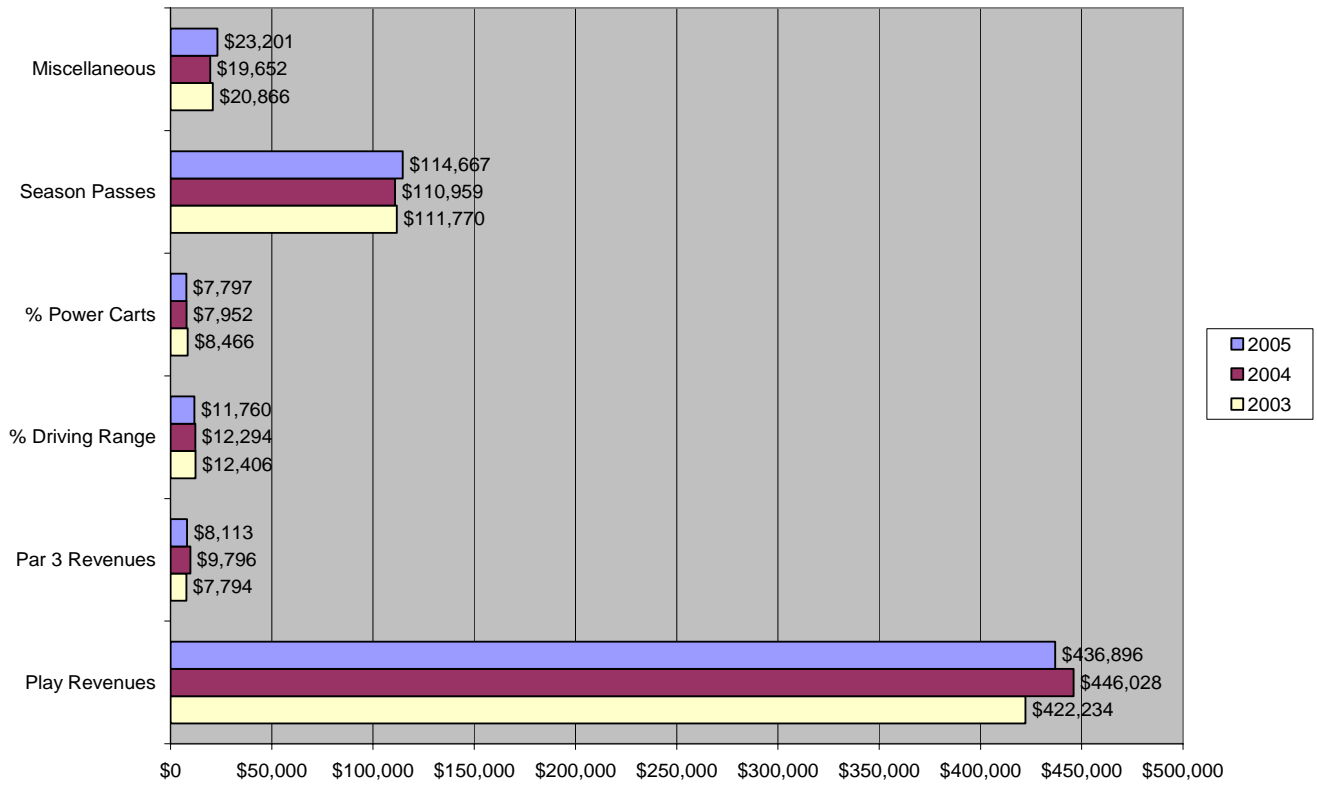
Vancouver/Portland area. The following graph shows the breakdown of rounds played by the days of the week.



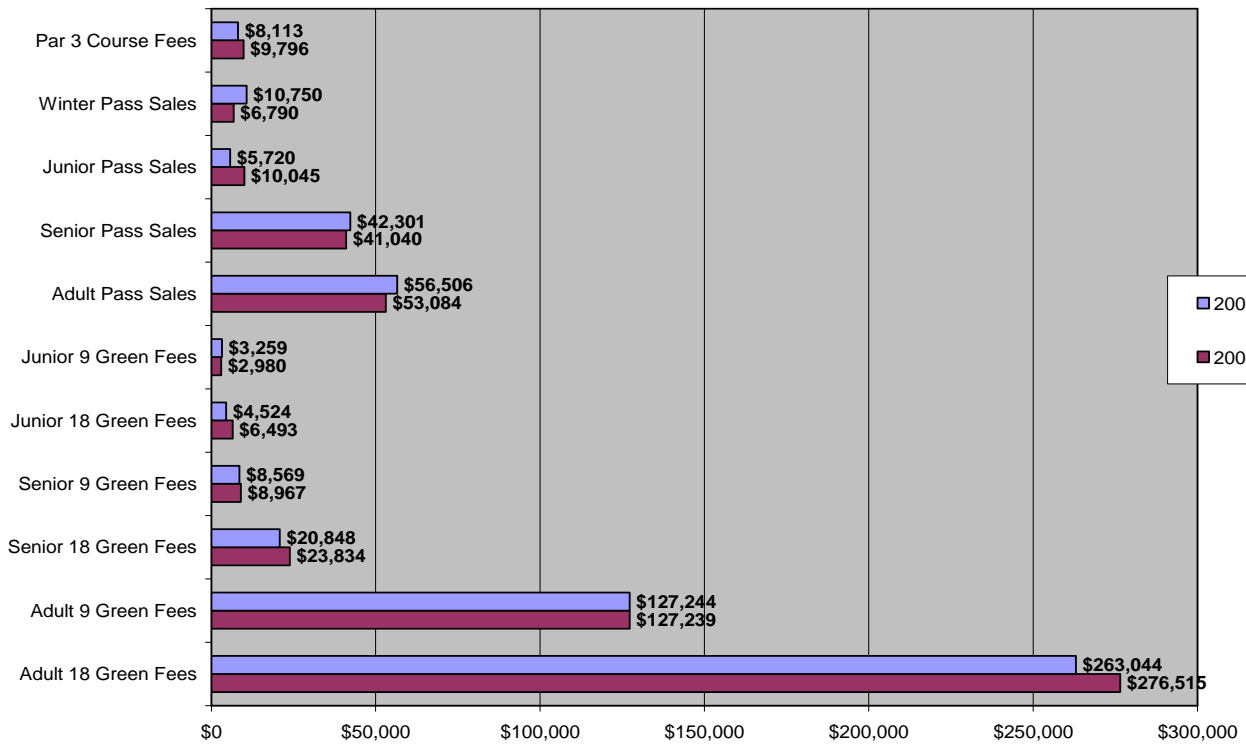
REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

As mentioned earlier in this report, the city is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the course, but has elected to contract out the clubhouse operations with a pro/manager. The golf course is an enterprise fund and as such the revenues received must be sufficient to offset the costs incurred to operate the facility. This was accomplished in 2005 with revenues of \$602,434 and expenditures of \$600,985. As the following chart shows, there were not significant variances in the amount of revenue generated from any of the city's revenue sources over the last three years. Since green fee rates were raised for 2005, there should have been a noted increase in play revenue. This was not the case due to the reduction in rounds play by 3,000.

Revenue Comparisons

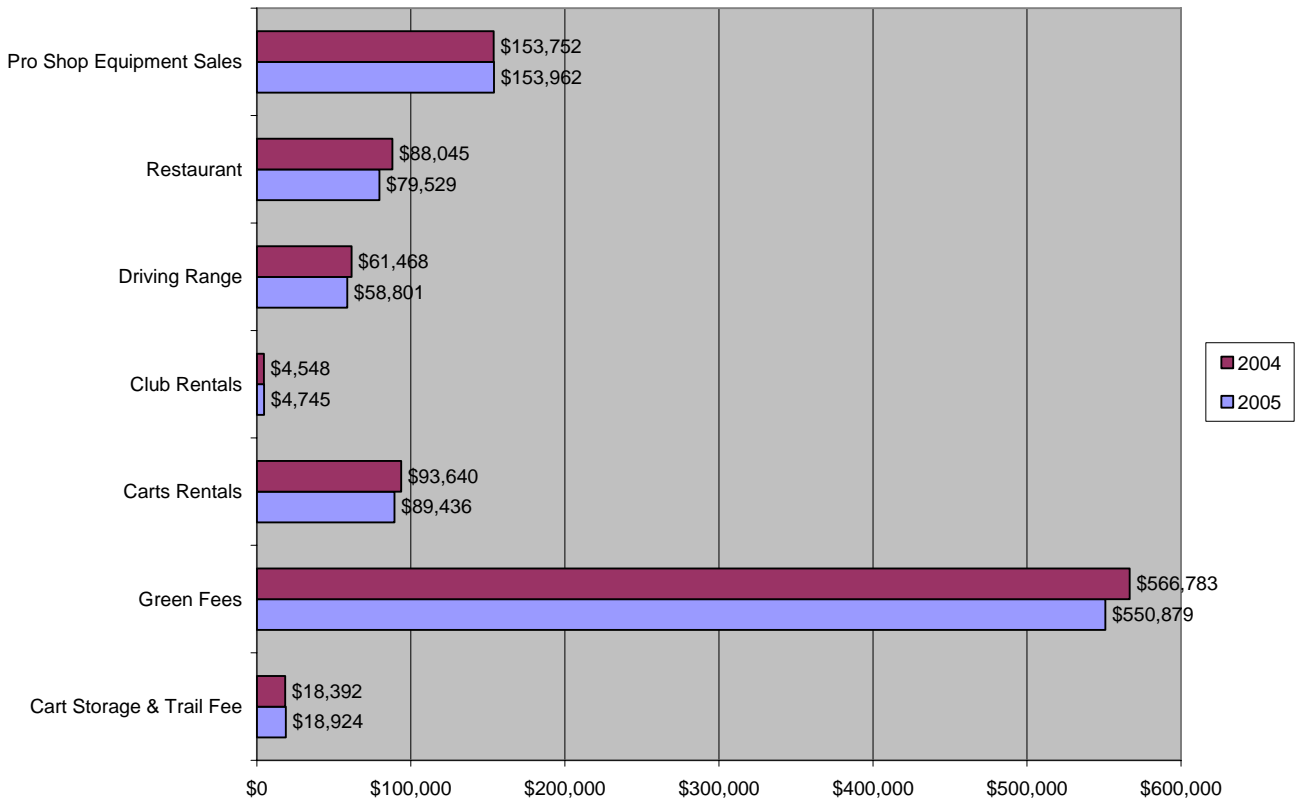


Green Fee Collected by Round Type



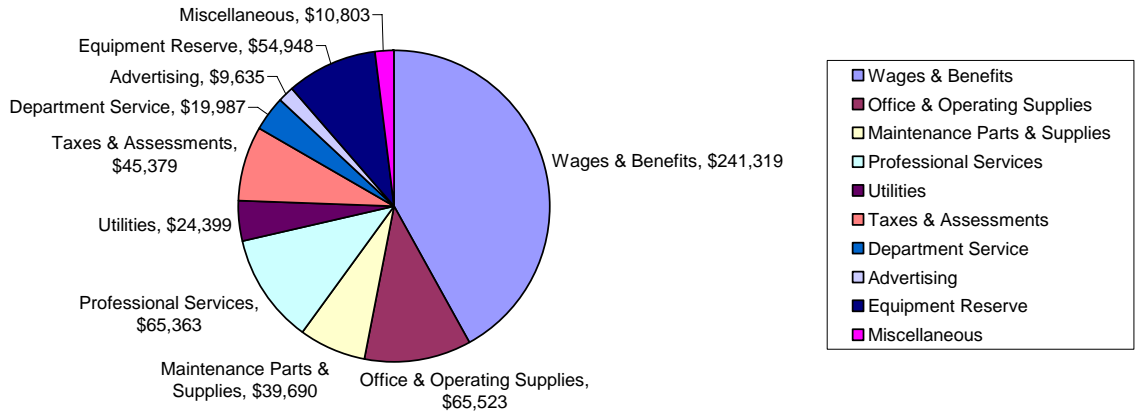
In reviewing all revenues of the golf course for 2005 including those administered under the pro/manager's contract, one finds that the reduction in rounds impacted more than just the green fees although to a lesser degree. The following graph shows the comparison of the last two years.

Gross Receipts



On the expenditure side, the city is only responsible for the cost of maintaining the course and the accompanying structures. The Pro/Manager under contract with the city is responsible for staffing and operations of the clubhouse. The total expenditures for 2005 were \$600,985. This is a 4% increase over 2004. The major expense is for wages/benefits, which calculates out to 40% for 2005. The following graphs represent the areas of expense for each of the last two years. The item identified as debt service relates to the balance owed on the cart path paving project, which took place in 2000. It will be paid off in 2015.

2004 Annual Expenditures



2005 Annual Expenditures

