Golf course management companies gain popularity in Asian countries

By Bob Spivak

Southeast Asia is particularly attractive for big and small firms

GM of Miami operators see better times ahead

By Mark Leslie

In the 1990s, Southeast Asia is going to be the growth area for all sports. Golf course design, development and management could represent huge dollars.

IMG President Mark McCormack

Australian Golf Management Services is directed by Greg Smith, who runs a five-person office in Singapore.

"We do," he said, "in put people in place, then walk in and manage the operation.

Management companies' involvement varies. IMG's Settle noted his company works as a consultant, assisting with everything from agronomics and back-up support to full management of the entire facility.

"We will provide a general manager, course superintendent and head professional/director of golf," he said.

Tracy Kennedy is national marketing coordinator for Arnold Palmer Golf Course Management Co., an IMG subsidiary that also manages golf properties. Kennedy stresses total involvement.

"We work with the clients developing market plans. We will even provide the scorecards for the course and handle their press releases," she said.

With a multitude of cultures, religions, ethics and nationalities in the region, there are differences in how business is conducted.

"Sigh, "The mushrooming of golf, experienced people are scarce," particularly in course maintenance and overall management. "There are just different ways of doing things. Procedures are not as they are in the West."

Continued on page 30

LinksCorp shoots for 20 courses

CHICAGO -- Two leading golf management executives have teamed up with three Midwest venture capital firms to form LinksCorp, an equity-based company that hopes to acquire and manage up to 20 golf courses over the next five years throughout the United States.

LinksCorp, headquartered in Northfield, Ill., was formed by a first-time golfer, Lakeside Country Club in Atlanta, Ga.

Combining forces in this venture are Ben Blake, LinksCorp's chief executive officer, George Rauch, Jr. as president and chief financial officer, and their financial supporters -- Batterton, Johnson & Wang Venture Partners and William Blayr Venture Partners, both of Chicago, and Northwest Venture Partners, L.P. of Minneapolis.

"With the lack of equity in the marketplace today, coupled with the availability of quality golf courses for sale, we believe LinksCorp is in an excellent position to reach its growth goals while building a golf company comprised of well-managed and fun-to-play facilities," said Blake.

Continued on page 32

Civil Rights Act could affect clubs

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Civil Rights Act of 1991 is considered the most far-reaching bill enacted into law during the second session of the 102nd Congress. Its impact on employment discrimination is considerable, although tax-exempt, bona fide private clubs are exempt.

In an article written for the January/February 1992 issue of Club Director, the National Club Association counsel G. John Tysse noted in part:

"The language in Title VII that exempts private clubs from its coverage has not changed. A bona fide private membership club that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code is considered a private club that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. In an article written for the January/February 1992 issue of Club Director, the National Club Association counsel G. John Tysse noted in part: The act amends two existing federal laws: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 against discrimination in employment by private employers against people on the basis of their race, sex, national origin, color, religion or disability.

The language in Title VII that exempts private clubs from its coverage has not changed. A bona fide private membership club that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code is considered a private club that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.