Casper promotes townesome

Alfonso elected to head NGCOA

Illinois course owner heads slate of new officers for golf course owners association

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Martty, who joined BCGM in 1989, senior vice president of operations, has more than 25 years experience in the field of golf management, consultation and promotion. He was a partner in Creative Golf Consultants, a firm that specialized in membership solicitation, promotions and golf operations, and served as management consultant to golf clubs in Kansas, Texas and Louisiana.

Martty has also owned and operated several golf courses, including the Burnt Store Country Club in Baton Rouge, and Oak Knoll Country Club in Hammond, La. He has assisted in the coordination of PGA Business Schools I and II, taught numerous PGA management and leasing seminars, and served on several PGA committees and boards. President of the Louisiana PGA, he also served as secretary and treasurer of the Golf States PGA.

Watkins is originally from Kansas City, Mo. He attended Central Missouri State University, and played golf at the University of Kansas. Watkins has been a PGA professional since 1974, and has served on the board of directors of the Kansas PGA since 1981. He has been a member of the National Golf Club Operators Association since 1983.

Watkins will be responsible for preparing all budgets, overseeing golf course operations, hiring and training maintenance personnel, serving as liaison with course owners and developers, keeping club memberships informed, and improving courses through design and state-of-the-art maintenance and planning. Watkins will also help clubs set up and prepare for tournament conditions.

Georgia firm buys Champion Hills

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — The Branigar Organization, a real estate development company based in Sewall Beach, Ga., plans to buy Champion Hills, an exclusive 525-acre mountain community and private golf club here.

Branigar is a subsidiary of Union Camp Corp. Terms of the sale were not disclosed.

"Based on our learning from national market research and an extensive two-year new project search, we feel that Champion Hills will have tremendous appeal," said Cecil Abarr, president of the Branigar Organization.

Champion Hills community will be limited to approximately 400 total estate homesites and 320 single-family homesites. The sixty-eight homesites were purchased by individuals thus far. The centerpiece of the community is a 6,719-yard, par-71 golf course designed by Hendersonville resident Tom Fazio.

"From the initial planning stage, I felt we had the opportunity to create one of the most outstanding courses and communities in this country," said Fazio. "And Branigar, with whom I've worked before at The Landings on Skidaway Island, is the ideal group to develop the community around the course. As Champion Hills will continue to be my home course and club, I'm very excited about the future here."

Private country club maintenance costs rise 10 percent

Golf course maintenance costs by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Natl avg</th>
<th>East</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Payroll</td>
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Source: Pannell Kerr Forster

"Superintendents are becoming more aware of their budgets and trying to get a better handle on things like repairs," Fears said. "But machinery is so specialized and so expensive, there are limits to how much you can cut there."

Regionally, total golf course maintenance averaged $37,945 per hole (up 10.5 percent) west of the Rockies, the most expensive area in the nation. The Far West was followed by the South at $30,321 (up 10.5 percent), East at $27,991 (up 11.3 percent) and Midwest at $23,529 (up 4.3 percent).

On the income side, country club membership increased 1.4 percent with dues up 7.3 percent. Dues provide 45.8 percent of a club's income, followed by food, 27.4 percent.

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Casper takes over Loch Ledge GC

The firm began leasing the course from the Addiction Recovery Corp. and has agreed to manage it. "We plan to totally upgrade everything from the course to the physical plant," Martty said, "there are already plans for the new phase of the course, including a complete maintenance program, which will include construction of a new clubhouse, cart paths throughout the course, as well as the aesthetics and payability of the course."