Cobblestone Buys Hills at Lakeway

AUSTIN, Texas — Cobblestone Golf Group has acquired the Hills at Lakeway from The Hillwood Co., a real estate development firm operated by Ross Perot Jr. The complex includes three golf courses, The Academy of Golf and The World of Tennis. The Hills at Lakeway represents Cobblestone’s largest single acquisition. Del Mar, California-based Cobblestone operates 19 courses throughout the country.

MARTTY INVADES ATLANTA

ATLANTA — Marty Golf Management has signed a management consulting agreement to oversee course marketing and grand opening phases of The Heritage Club for developer Maurice Whyte. Construction has begun and plans are for the Mike Young-designed, 18-hole course to open in November, said President Thomas Martty.

LA EXTENDS GOLFCORP LEASE

DIAMOND BAR, Calif. — Los Angeles County has agreed to a 15-year extension of GolfCorp’s management agreement at Diamond Bar Golf Course. The Club Corporation International subsidiary has operated the county-owned, 18-hole, daily-fee facility since 1987. More than $1.4 million in course improvements are underway, including a renovated driving range and new irrigation system.

BRIEFS

MARKETING IDEA OF THE MONTH

The incentive is profits in the incentive business

By PETER BLAIS

Rewarding productive employees on travel vacations has been one of the most successful methods for corporations to keep their best workers.

Warmer locales such as Florida, Southern California, Hawaii and the Caribbean have been the traditional destinations to which companies have sent their best sales people, department heads who come in under budget or supervisors with strong safety records.

In increasingly, golf courses, particularly in Northern areas, are beginning to see corporate incentive travel as a way to fill rounds at their facilities and are tapping into the lucrative $5.2 billion market (Society of Incentive Travel Executives figure).

“Corporate incentive packages make up 15 to 20 percent of our rounds,” said Shanty Creek (Mich.) Director of Marketing Barry Godwin. “The incentive travel business at Bellaire, Mich., complex has been growing steadily in recent years, Godwin said. Attracted by the nationally ranked Legend Course as well as the Northern Michigan resort’s other three layouts, corporations are increasingly looking at the area’s golf packages as a way to reward their best employees.

Incentive groups average about 50 people with average stays of two nights/three days, Godwin reported.

The Club was fortunate to land Hague, Mackenzie said. The committee refined its technique and was better prepared when it hired Knaggs three years ago, he added. While there is no standard operating procedure for hiring a course manager, Mackenzie recounted Hazeltine’s guidelines during the International Conference and Show.

• Appoint a chairman of the search committee. The green chairman is often the person selected. The most important thing, however, is that it be someone with sufficient time to devote to the search.

• Establish a selection committee of three to six people. Members should be familiar with golf, club facilities, budgetary process and superintendent responsibilities. A woman and a financial expert should be part of the committee. Members should have eight to 10 weeks to devote to the search.

• Develop a detailed job description. This allows the committee to focus on its needs and applicants to know what will be expected. The GCSAA, association chapters, U.S. Golf Association and other clubs can help formulate a job description.

• In addition to lines of authority, salary and budget size, other items on the job description might include club expectations regarding the superintendent’s participation in professional associations, educating interns, dealing with local government boards and enrolling in classes.

• Establish a compensation package that

Shanty Creek Golf Course has successfully catered to the corporate incentive travel market.

Official says clubs take insufficient time selecting course superintendent

By PETER BLAIS

SAN FRANCISCO — The superintendent is in charge of the primary asset at many clubs. And yet, few clubs take sufficient care in selecting the most important individual on the payroll, according to Reed Mackenzie, past president of Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn.

"The most important thing a club can do is analyze its own situation and decide what it wants from its superintendent," said Mackenzie, who has been part of the Hazeltine search committee for two superintendents, Chris Hague and his successor, Patty Knaggs.

No books or pamphlets were available to instruct the Hazeltine greens committee how to begin the search process when its superintendent abruptly quit back in 1985 just prior to the U.S. Senior Open.

The club was fortunate to land Hague, Mackenzie said. The committee refined its technique and was better prepared when it hired Knaggs three years ago, he added. While there is no standard operating procedure for hiring a course manager, Mackenzie recounted Hazeltine’s guidelines during the International Conference and Show.

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Incentive packages are typically discounted an average of 15 to 20 percent below the normal rate.

Some can be scheduled into slower times of the year, although most

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Jones elected pres. of Nat'l Club Assn.

WASHINGTON — Hugh Jones was elected president of the National Club Association during the organization’s recent annual meeting in Charleston, S.C. Jones was partner-in-charge of the audit department in the Orlando office of KPMG Peat Marwick until retiring in 1991. He is a consultant to agri-businesses and not-for-profit organizations and a member and past president of the Country Club of Orlando.

A National Club Association member since 1990, Jones had previously served as treasurer. He succeeds James Masier, vice chairman of the board of ClubCorp International, as the association’s president.

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NAG NAMES RIPPEY PRESIDENT

LOMBARD, Ill. — Michael Rippey has been named president of North American Golf Corp. (a division of American Golf Corp.) has received a long-term operating lease for Oak Park Golf & Country Club in Nicotins, located approximately 20 minutes from Sacramento. The private, 18-hole layout is tentatively scheduled to open early next year.

AGCC SIGNS THE SACRAMENTO

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — American Golf Country Clubs (a division of American Golf Corp.) has received a long-term operating lease for Oak Park Golf & Country Club in Nicotins, located approximately 20 minutes from Sacramento. The private, 18-hole layout is tentatively scheduled to open early next year.

NAG manages seven courses, primarily in the Midwest.

Golf Course News

Nation’s first public course marks centennial

NEW YORK CITY — Van Cortlandt Golf Course in the Bronx, the first public course to be built in the United States, will commemorate its 100th birthday with a week-long celebration beginning July 5. Van Cortlandt Golf Corp. (AGC) has operated the course for the city since 1992. "American Golf is proud to play a part in the recent history of this storied public course, which has served as both an invaluable recreational asset to the city of New York and a pioneering force in public golf course development for an unprecedented 100 years," said AGC President and Golf Operations Kevin Roberts.

Van Cortlandt was originally designed as a nine-hole layout by T. McLure Peters at a cost of $3525 and opened in July 1895. Four years later, Thomas Bendelow remodeled the course and added the second nine holes. Bendelow later became general manager at Cortlandt and instituted the first-ever system of reserving tee times during peak periods.

The clubhouse, built in 1902, is still used. In fact the locker room, complete with wooden lockers, was featured in a scene from the movie "Wall Street" starring Michael Douglas.

Jones elected pres. of Nat'l Club Assn.
Celebrities target of NYC charity effort

RANDALLS ISLAND, N.Y. Four New York City personalities became the target of flying golf balls this spring when Randall's Island Golf and Family Entertainment Center unveiled 8-foot targets bearing the caricatures of David Letterman, Madonna, George Steinbrenner and Donald Trump. The caricatures were part of a day-long fundraiser May 7 in which the public was invited to " Aim for the Stars" with a portion of fees benefitting local junior golf programs.

"The caricatures represent four of the city's most beloved and controversial residents, and we thought it would be a big hit to give local residents the chance to get out some good-humored aggression while raising funds for a worthy cause," said General Manager Rob Halaboy of American Golf Corp. operates the Randall's Island facility.

Selecting a super

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includes salary, insurance, club privileges, vehicle and/or housing allowance.

- Identify candidates. If the job is advertised nationally, expect many applicants. Hasbrouck advertised nationally in 1982 and received 250 resumes. Just searching locally, Hazeltine advertised nationally in 1982 and received 250 resumes. Salary expectations, educational backgrounds, and conducting phone interviews with these individuals. A conference call with all members of the selection committee present works well at this stage. Following the phone interview, each committee member rates the candidates on a scale of 1 to 10.

- Shorten this group down to three to five finalists. If possible, have a selection committee member visit each finalist's club for a tour and inspection. Invite each finalist to visit with club staff to get a feel for the operation and prepare for the interview.

- Finalists should meet with one to three selection committee members at a time rather than the full committee all at once. Candidates should spend 80 percent of the time and the interviewers no more than 20 percent. During the interview, selection committee members should avoid first impressions and what if questions; compare the candidates to the job description rather than to each other; use open-ended rather than yes/no questions; and provide a candidate a chance to ask questions.

- Once the committee reaches a consensus, make an offer to the top candidate. Don't tell the other candidates until the first choice officially accepts the position since no one wants to know they were actually the second or third choice.

- The most important funded is not to drop everything once a superintendent is hired. Mackenzie recommended concen-