BRIEFS

NGCOA ELECTS OFFICERS

ORLANDO, Fla. — The National Golf Course Owners Association elected its officers during its association's recent annual conference here. Re-elected were Jim Scott of Gull Lake View in Augusta, Mich., president; Bill Rampy of Tree Line Golf Club Inc. in Tomball, Texas, vice president; and Jerry Hollingsworth of Singing Hills Golf Club in El Cajon, Calif., treasurer. Also newly elected to the board of directors were Roy Clark of Mill Creek Golf Club in Newton, N.J., and Bill Stine of Kissimmee (Fla.) Bay Golf Club, secretary.

JAMES E. MCLoughlin

For developing a golf course are: (i) the ability of a sufficient amount of net usable land that is permitable; (ii) credible feasibility analysis; and (iii) adequate funding. Only when all three components are in place can a golf course be developed. Gaining access to qualified land is the easiest of the three tasks. More often than not, the stumbling block is the lack of credible feasibility work, which the industry erroneously takes for granted as an automatically deliverable service.

MARKETING IDEA OF THE MONTH

Charleston adds automated tee time network

BY PETER BLAIS

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Sandwiched between Myrtle Beach and Hilton Head, Charleston is often overlooked as a golf destination. But course owners, lodging providers and civic officials hope their soon-to-be-unveiled central tee time reservation network will change that.

"Golf has grown significantly as visitors look for things to do in the Charleston area," said Kate Darby, director of visitor services for the city. "We hadn't aggressively promoted ourselves as a golf destination until recently. By electronically tying tee times and golf courses together, we hope to increase [tourist] revenues significantly in the Charleston area."

The PAR Golf System network, which is scheduled to come on line in June, is the result of a rigorous, six-month search for a reservation network tailored to the needs of the Charleston area, according to Mike Tinkey of Sports Management Group. Marketing and Management Services, who facilitated the arrangement between PAR and a consortium of course and lodging facility operators as well as the Charleston Area Convention and Visitor Bureau.

The system will provide one-stop shopping for golf and lodging reservations, electronically linking 17 courses and a dozen lodging providers. Getting course

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COMMENTARY

Credible feasibility work rare but key to successful golf course development

BY JAMES E. MCLoughlin

We constantly hear of the need for more golf courses across the country. The often-heard cry is "one new golf course opening a day would not be enough." Accepting the premise, it is surprising the industry has so little for what it takes to develop golf courses on a consistent basis. Consequently, national golf development has been slowed consistently and unnecessarily.

For example, the basic prerequisites for developing a golf course are: (i) the availability of a sufficient amount of net usable land that is permitable; (ii) credible feasibility analysis; and (iii) adequate funding. Only when all three components are in place can a golf course be developed. Gaining access to qualified land is the easiest of the three tasks. More often than not, the stumbling block is the lack of credible feasibility work, which the industry erroneously takes for granted as an automatically deliverable service.

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NEW SMYRNA BEACH, Fla. — Corporate recognition, course credibility and image enhancement were almost immediate, and media attention was “shocking” when Turnbull Bay Golf Course celebrated its first hole-in-one here.

“This helped business immediately, and gave us a good name as a friend in the community,” said Turnbull Bay advertising consultant Bill Deely of DenMar Advertising Associates.

The course developer, Classic Golf of Florida, pulled out all the stops when New Yorker John Clark sand-wedge the ball off the 6th tee and into the cup on the 106-yard hole. A local restaurant donated a $100 bottle of Dom Perignon, shrimp cocktail, linen, crystal — and even a waitress — to the cause. Instructing staff members to seat Mr. Clark and others in his foursome on the 6th green, course designer Gary Wintz proposed a toast to honor Turnbull Bay.

Thirsting for media attention for its new course, Classic Golf got its wish. By early April, the toast and celebration had been covered by the Orlando Sentinel, New Smyrna News Journal, New Smyrna Observer, South Today newspaper, Florida Living magazine and Golfers Dream magazine. Now add Golf Course News.

“We feel it was important to do something special for Mr. Clark,” said managing partner Jim McLeay, “Classic Golf represents the new kids in this community. Our corporate policy is service-oriented and our philosophy is that actions speak louder than words.”

John Clark (far right) is toasted after he turned in the first hole-in-one at new Turnbull Bay Golf Course. Celebrating with him are his wife, Frances, left, and Turnbull course designer Gary Wintz, along with waitresses Alison Boyd.

McLeay

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On-course toast draws media attention to new Fla. layout

On-course toast draws media attention to new Fla. layout

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