**MIDDLETOWN, Del. —** Back Creek Golf Club has selected Billy Casper Golf Management (BCGM) to provide complete turnkey management services. BCGM will oversee construction and later operate the course. Construction began recently with a summer 1997 opening anticipated. Steve Newgent, JSN Golf Enterprises, is the builder and David Horn of Architerra PC the designer.

**IRVINE, WESTERN GOLF TEAM UP**

The Irvine Co. has selected Western Golf Properties (WGP) to manage the company's golf operations at its large-scale development projects, beginning with the 18,000-acre Woodlands West project. Construction of the golf course is expected to begin in 1997 with a summer 1998 opening.

**CASA GRANDE, Ariz. —** Casper Golf Management (MGM) has been selected to oversee construction and later operate the Casper Golf Club. MGM, a team of veteran golf course operators with more than 100 years of collective experience, will ensure that the course, scheduled for completion in early 1997, offers a challenging and enjoyable playing experience.

**IRVINE, CALIF. —** The Irvine Co. has selected Western Golf Properties to manage Oak Creek Golf Club here. Oak Creek is scheduled to open for public play in September. Western Golf also manages The Irvine Co.'s Pelican Hill Golf Club, another Tom Fazio design in nearby Newport Beach.

**ORONO, MINN. —** ClubLink Corporation has evolved into a new ownership group with flagship King Valley Golf & Country Club in Ancaster acquired in 1993.

**FAHEY TABBED BY MATRIX**

Cranbury, N.J. — Matrix Hospitality has hired Richard Fahey as general manager of Ashbourne Country Club in Cheltenham, Pa. Fahey is a 25-year veteran of the hospitality industry with nine years of golf club experience. Ashbourne was built in 1922 on the Stetson hat family estate. Matrix took over the facility a year ago.

**LEGAL CORNER**

Beware the insurer seeking reimbursement

By NANCY SMITH

When sports facilities are sued, one of the biggest expenses can be paying for the defense. Even if the case has no merit, a defense attorney can run up a big bill proving just that. Whether it is a country club or sports arena, a successful sports operation can be seen as a deep pocket to recovery.

When the rainy day of litigation arrives, the silver lining in the storm clouds may be an insurance company willing to pay the defense attorney — regardless of whether any judgment on liability is ultimately paid by the insurer. But as sports tycoon Jerry Buss recently learned, the insurance company may come asking for reimbursement for all attorneys' fees.

Buss owns the Los Angeles Laker and Los Angeles Kings. He and his teams are the primary tenants at the Forum sports arena. When Buss had a falling out with his advertising agency, the dispute ended up in Los Angeles County court. Buss was surprised when his insurance company came back to him at the end of the suit and asked for reimbursement of more than $1 million it paid Buss' lawyers.

It all started with the ad agency's suit for breach of contract and other claims stemming from Buss' termination of the agency's exclusive rights to handle advertising for the teams and arena. Ator...
New Dallas management firm formed

DALLAS — A Dallas company co-founded by a former Fort Worth golf pro has linked up with Lincoln Property Co. in a partnership specializing in management, development and design of golf course properties.

Called Lincoln/Brooks-Baine, the venture offers a full range of professional property management and consulting services to the golf industry. The chief executive officer of the partnership is Burt Baine, a member of the PGA of America and a former golf pro at Mir-Vista and Ridge’s country clubs in Fort Worth.

Baine is also a partner in Brooks-Baine, a consulting and management firm he co-founded in 1992. His partner in that company is Mark Brooks, a five-time winner on the PGA Tour. Brooks-Baine Golf and Lincoln are co-partners in the new venture.

President and Chief Executive Officer Bruce Simmonds is the driving force behind ClubLink. Prior to founding the company, Simmonds was involved with fast-growth companies in other fields.

Through his family’s company, A.C. Simmonds and Sons Ltd., he acquired Glenayre Electronics in 1987. Glenayre’s sales grew from $23 million per year to $280 million annually when it was sold in 1990.

The Simmonds’ family also purchased Dynacharge out of bankruptcy in 1982 for $125,000. Simmonds built it into a major supplier of rechargeable batteries in Canada with annual sales of $12 million by the time he sold the firm for $10.5 million in 1985.

Simmonds participated in the acquisition of Cherry Downs in 1989. In 1993, he formed A.C. Simmonds Management Team and took ClubLink (LNK) public with a listing on the Toronto Stock Exchange. The firm was valued at $370 million just prior to going public to 126 with the opening of Lake Joseph in June.

ClubLink markets itself as a network of high-quality clubs for the Toronto marketplace. Members at one club have playing privileges at the others as well. Entrance fees range from $12,500 for the principal member at Cherry Downs to $30,000 at King Valley. Annual dues for principal members start at $2,500 at Lake Joseph and climb to $3,650 at King Valley. These are attractive prices in the Toronto marketplace where entrance fees at Class A private clubs in 1994 averaged from $20,000 to $100,000, averaging $30,000 to $35,000, according to ClubLink figures.

ClubLink generates significant revenues from non-member events and programs. It is one of Toronto’s largest organizers of tournament events, holding 15 percent of the area’s corporate events and roughly a third of the high-end ones by its own estimates.

The company also owns real estate around several of its courses that it plans to develop into residential areas over the next few years.

ClubLink is bullish on the golf market. It estimates the return on cost at a typical ClubLink, 18-hole private club will reach 17 to 35 percent as the course reaches capacity over a three- to five-year period. Those figures are based on 550 principal members, 120 spousal members and 28,000 annual rounds.

The company plans expansions and improvements to its existing facilities. At Cherry Downs, the ClubLink plans to redesign the existing course and has an additional 336 acres where it hopes to construct another 18-hole course and 200 to 250 residential units.

Additional residential development is likely at King Valley and Heron Point, where the company owns management rights. ClubLink is on the lookout for additional properties in the Toronto area, Western Canada and the U.S. Simmonds said. A potential deal to buy Alaqua Country Club in Orlando, Fla., fell through recently when the members exercised their right to buy the club, she said. ClubLink does have reciprocal playing arrangements with Alaqua, however, as well as the Heritage Club in Ocala, Fla., and Starr Pass in Tucson, Ariz.

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