

BRIEFS



BRASSIE APPOINTS THREE

TAMPA, Fla. — Brassie Golf Corp. recently made three new appointments. Janet Mulroy will become director of membership marketing with Kristen Thomas and Kim Fox the new directors of business development. Brassie and its Hale Irwin Golf Design division acquire, design, construct and operate courses throughout the United States.

ISS NAMES HICKMAN VP

TAMPA, Fla. — ISS Landscape Management Services golf division recently named Paul Hickman vice president. Before joining ISS, Hickman spent 22 years at the Grenelefe Resort in Haines City, Fla. Grenelefe's West course was rated Florida's No. 1 course six times by *Golf Week*. Hickman will be responsible for the overall operation of the golf division. ISS maintains 225 holes of golf across Florida.



Paul Hickman

GIBSON JOINS HERITAGE

INDIANAPOLIS — Heritage Golf Management has named James Gibson director of operations. Gibson will oversee the Indianapolis-based firm's four Indiana courses. Gibson spent 19 years at Chemlawn Services Corp. and brings extensive experience in internal corporate operations, including business planning and organization, personnel training and customer service.

KOLL, COBBLESTONE INK DEAL

ESCONDIDO, Calif. — Koll Real Estate Group recently sold Rancho San Pasqual Golf Club to Cobblestone Golf Group for \$6 million. Formerly known as Eagle Crest, the public course will be the centerpiece of KREG's 872-acre Rancho San Pasqual gated residential community. Cobblestone will build a clubhouse once home construction begins.

LEBAY LANDS AT PUTNAM CC

MAHOPAC, N.Y. — Wes LeBay, a 20-year hospitality industry veteran, has been named the new general manager of Putnam Country Club here. An expansion of the club's current 18-hole course, upgrading the dining facilities and the construction of 200 homes on adjacent property are among the future plans.



Wes LeBay

Just what are Legends made of? The Youngs

Myrtle Beach company moves on Williamsburg and perhaps other Southeastern points

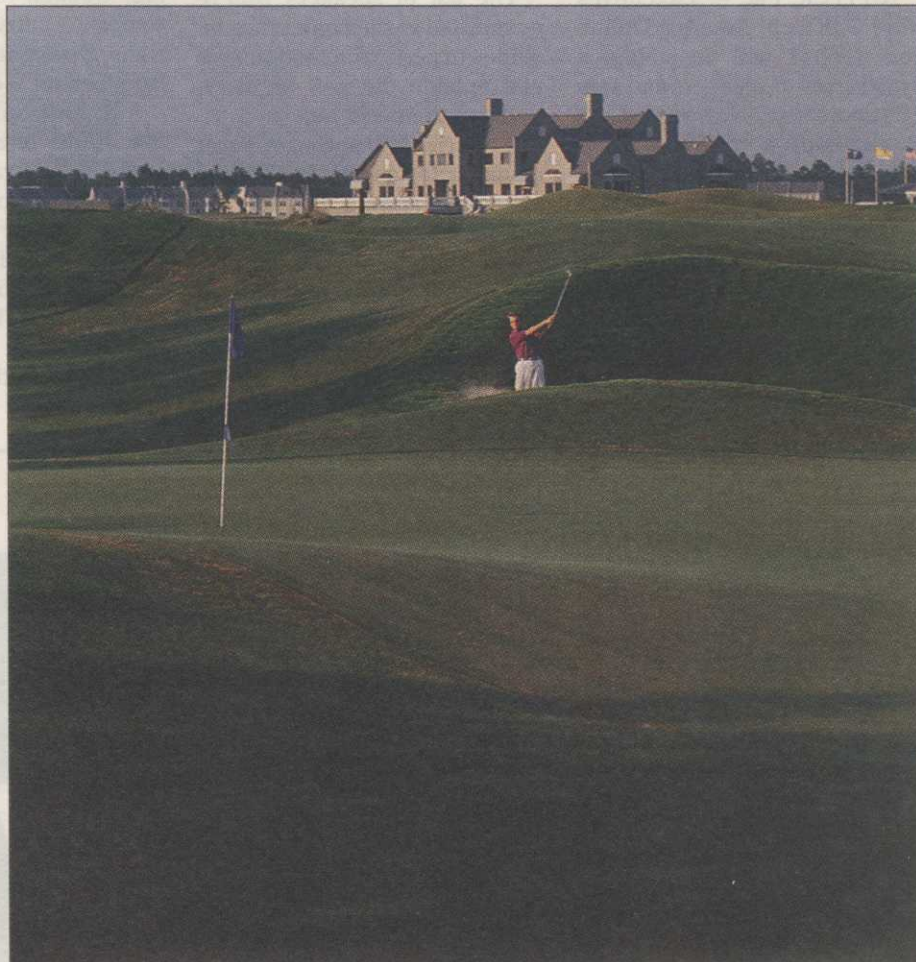
By PETER BLAIS

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — A "visionary" is how Danny Young describes his dad, Larry, president of The Legends Group, one of the major course operators in the Myrtle Beach and Williamsburg, Va., markets.

"There were no upscale courses in Myrtle Beach in the late 1970s," said Danny, vice president of operations. "The Surf Club and Arcadian Shores were nice. But they weren't as good as those in Pinehurst and Hilton Head. Myrtle Beach had a strong hotel base and Dad saw an opportunity. Golfers were coming to Myrtle Beach and he figured they'd drive a little farther to play a great course. He was right."

Added Chief Operating Officer Brad Blair: "We feel there are some additional options for us in Virginia [where Young recently opened two new courses near Williamsburg]. The golf package business hasn't been exploited in that market near as well as it could. And we're looking at other options up and down the coast."

Young first tested his theory in 1980 that Myrtle Beach golfers would travel a little farther to play a better course when he opened Dan Maples-designed Marsh Harbour in Calabash, N.C., just over the South Carolina border. The



The Moorland course is part of The Legends complex near Myrtle Beach, the Youngs' stronghold.

course won numerous accolades from golfers and golf magazines. Young followed that in 1983 with Maples-designed Oyster Bay in Sunset Beach, N.C., and three years later added the

Heritage Club, also a Maples design, near Pawley's Island, S.C. All received positive reviews.

Young wasn't done. Between 1990

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KSL Fairways names Affeldt to lead public golf management firm

MANASSAS, Va. — KSL Fairways has promoted Eric Affeldt to president and chief executive officer.



Eric Affeldt

Affeldt joined KSL Fairways in 1993 as vice president of acquisitions. He was then promoted to Northern regional director of operations in 1994 and president, chief operating officer last August. Since Affeldt joined KSLF, the company has grown from 11 to 26 courses, with a similar percentage growth in revenues and profits.

Affeldt succeeds Charles Staples, who is leaving the Virginia-based company to pursue other interests.

"Eric has proven his leadership skills in a variety of capacities since joining," said KSL Recreation President Michael Shannon.

"We are extremely grateful for Charlie's many contributions and wish him all the best in his new endeavors."

KSL Fairways' 26 courses are scattered throughout Florida, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

Buying programs growing in popularity

By J. BARRY MOTHES

The group buying craze is sweeping the golf industry — and the newest target is superintendents.

Earlier this summer, a group called the National Turf Cooperative, Inc. (NTC) near Baltimore announced plans to sign up at least 250 members for discounts on seeds, fertilizers and other golf course maintenance goods from manufacturers and suppliers.

Now, VGM Golf, an Iowa-based buying group that has been operating mostly in golf equipment and pro shop supplies for golf pros and owners the past two years, is looking seriously into expanding its services to seeds, fertilizer and possibly even golf course maintenance equipment like mowers and aerators.

"We want to be able to help the whole golf course," said Kent Dirks, vice president of marketing for VGM Golf, "not just the pro shop."

The people behind VGM Golf are hardly strangers to group buying. Its parent company, VGM Associates, is the largest player of its kind in the home medical equipment field. VGM — the name derives from the initials of founder Van G. Miller — has more than 2,000 clients in the home medical equipment field and 11 years of experience.

The 2-year-old VGM Golf was started with the idea of going after independent golf professionals and golf course owners to offer them discounts on hard and soft golf equipment so they could compete with off-site discount retail golf shops. Golf professionals and golf course owners have seen their share of pro shop

VGM Golf currently has about 800 members in the U.S. and works with 60 participating manufacturers and vendors.



equipment sales drop significantly in recent years due to off-course discount shops. It's been estimated that 75 percent of golf merchandise is currently sold off-course.

Dirks said VGM Golf currently has about 800 members in the U.S. and works with 60 participating manufacturers and vendors, from Active Gloves and Cross Creek clothing to H&B Powerbilt, Maxfli, Munsingwear, Spalding, Imperial Headwear and Wilson. The members range from course owners and individual

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IGM continues Southeastern push

LAKELAND, Fla. — International Golf Management, Inc. has been retained to provide professional golf course maintenance services on a contractual basis for two county-owned and operated golf courses at Sandridge Golf Club in Vero Beach, Fla., and the nine-hole executive course at Leisure Lakes Golf Course in Lake Placid, Fla.

Under the agreement with Sandridge, IGM will provide turnkey golf course maintenance services for the club's two 18-hole, par-72 courses — The Dunes and The Lakes, both of which were designed by Ron Garl of Lakeland, built by Guettler & Sons and owned and operated by Indian River County. The 7,000-yard Dunes course opened in 1986, while the 6,300-yard Lakes course opened in 1992.

Maintenance at both courses will be handled by IGM staff working under the direction of Scott Campbell, IGM's resident superintendent assigned to Sandridge, and Jim Wells, CGCS, IGM's Central Florida regional manager. Hank Vroman is the club manager. Bob Komarinetz is golf pro and director of golf.

At Leisure Lakes, IGM will handle mowing, irrigation, integrated pest management and equipment maintenance for the course at the Leisure Lakes Resort along the shoreline of Lake June. The resort is owned by Avatar Properties. Chuck Faremouth is club manager.

Headquartered in Lakeland, IGM specializes in contracted golf course maintenance services for private, semi-private,

public and municipal golf courses. IGM currently provides golf course maintenance services for 22 courses in Florida and elsewhere in the southeast.

In other news, two IGM officials have been named to the Industry Advisory Committee of Lake City Community College in Lake City, Fla.

Scott Zakany, CGCS, vice president and general manager of IGM, and Jimmy Witt, CGCS, IGM's regional manager for southeast Florida, were named to the committee. Witt directs a 60-member IGM staff which provides golf course maintenance for five championship courses at Palm-Aire Spa & Resort in Pompano Beach, Fla.

The Industry Advisory Committee established general guidelines and curriculum for Lake City Community College, one of the nation's leading schools specializing in preparing students for careers in the golf course management/maintenance field.

IGM has also awarded Derek Vaughn of Wildwood, Fla., a full scholarship to pursue his studies in course management at Lake City Community College.

"Derek has expressed a strong interest in a golf course management career and has demonstrated abilities in this field by being accepted into the Lake City Community College program," Zakany said. "We are very pleased to be helping him reach his career goal by awarding him an IGM scholarship."

Vaughn will begin his studies in the fall semester, which begins Aug. 15.

The Legends Group

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and 1992 he constructed The Legends in Myrtle Beach, a three-course complex that became the headquarters for the growing Young empire. Tom Doak designed the Parkland and Heathland layouts and P.B. Dye the Moorland track. The two-mile, tree-lined drive leading up to the massive Scottish-looking Legends clubhouse adds to the feeling that this is something a cut above the average Myrtle Beach fare.

But Young still wasn't finished. Believing Myrtle Beach was nearing capacity, he looked northward to Williamsburg. He struck a deal with the Chesapeake Corp., a paper company and major landowner. Chesapeake's real-estate subsidiary, Delmarva Corp., won a bidding war to build the state's only thoroughbred horseracing track in New Kent, halfway between Williamsburg and Richmond. Chesapeake plans to build as many as eight courses in the area and chose Young as its partner. The first two, The Legends at New Kent and The Legends at Stonehouse, opened this summer and are expected to contend for best new course of the year honors in many publications. Former Tom Fazio associate Mike Strantz designed both.

"It's going to take a few years to get these the way we want them," said Danny, who supervises course construction for The Legends Group and was in charge of building all Legends' properties except Marsh Harbour ("My Dad did that one."). "We want them to be perfect and then we'll look at building more. We have some big

plans. We can't comment on them yet, but they'll take us outside Williamsburg and Myrtle Beach."

Greens fees at the six South Carolina courses range from \$37 to \$83 with cart, depending on the time of year. The six layouts host more than 300,000 rounds annually, Blair said.

While each of The Legends Group courses has its own superintendent and head pro, overall management for the eight facilities is headquartered at the Myrtle Beach Legends complex.

"The marketing, personnel, financial, accounting and reservation functions are all done through our office here in Myrtle Beach," explained Blair. "Each course is an individual profit center but has a portion of its operation charged against our overall overhead budget. We have a real-estate and hotel management operation based here as well."

"It's very efficient," Danny Young said. "Having eight courses gives us some tremendous advantages in terms of buying power. We've aligned ourselves with John Deere and O.M. Scott Fertilizer, for instance."

In addition to the Youngs and Blair, other key executives include Director of Maintenance David Sapp, Director of Agronomy Terry Buchen and Chief Financial Officer Al Hooks.

"We have the capacity within our management structure to take on another three to four courses without overburdening our existing administrative staff," Blair said. "We'd prefer to build, own and operate our own courses. That's not to say we wouldn't do a management deal, or lease a facility if the situation were right. But the highest and best use of our resources is to build, own and operate our own facilities."

Group buying

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golf professionals to about 15 management companies.

"The initial stage was pro shop merchandise," said Dirks, "that's where the public sees the difference in pricing most. But we're looking to diversify out and catch the market."

While the number of buying groups is rising, there is also a growing number of specialized services offered.

VGM offers fax-on-demand service. It serves up fresh lists of excess inventory and discount equipment to members. VGM Golf members can dial a toll-free number, enter their membership number and get a direct, updated fax with equipment information. VGM runs several services with the fax program — a "Connecting Link" fax-exchange for golf professionals looking to buy or sell inventory, a "Want List" for members looking for rare or hard-to-find items, and a "Manufacturers Special" list that covers closeouts on items like golf gloves and other equipment that in the past would automatically get scooped up by off-course discount shops.

"It's like immediate gratification," said Dirks. He said the information on the fax lists is updated every other week.

We want to get everybody that's in the green grass industry and collage them together to improve the buying power of all the members. That's the only way you can compete against the Nevada Bob's.'

**- Kent Dirks,
VGM vice president of
marketing**

With the emergence of groups like the National Turf Cooperative and VGM Golf, groups like the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and its "Smart Buy" buying program and American Golf and even smaller, regional buying groups no longer have the field to themselves.

But Dirks said that even though there is some competition, he believes there may soon be more cooperation among buying groups.

"We want to get everybody that's in the green grass industry and collage them together to improve the buying power of all the members," he said. "That's the only way you can compete against the Nevada Bob's."

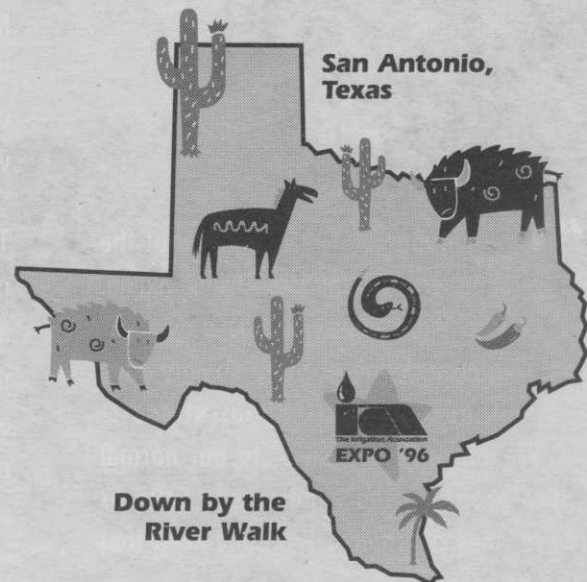
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