KISIMMEE — Kissimmee Bay CC is one of the many Florida courses in IGM's growing portfolio.

IGM in midst of ambitious expansion

By PETER BLAIS

LAKELAND, Fla. — International Golf Management's (IGM) recently signed agreement to maintain Brevard County Florida's three municipal courses enhanced the company's self-proclaimed image as the fastest-growing contractual maintenance organization in the country. The Brevard County deal — which involved Habitat Golf Course (GC) in Valkaria, Spessard Holland GC in Melbourne, and Sykes Creek in Merritt Island — brought the number of IGM-maintained courses to 17, all in Florida. The Lakeland-based firm planned to increase that number to 24 by year's end, according to General Manager Scott Zakany.

"Among our competition, no one has more than 13 or 14 courses," Zakany said. "We're looking to expand into the Southwest United States, Georgia and Florida."

Contractual grounds maintenance has been popular for many years in the commercial real-estate business. But it is just in the past five to 10 years that municipal, public and private golf course operators have begun turning over all aspects of their maintenance operation to outside firms. ISS Golf Services has been one of the most successful contractual maintenance companies. Zakany — a certified golf course superintendent with 18 years of course management experience — worked at ISS for eight years and advanced to vice president, before leaving the Tampa-based firm 18 months ago to start IGM.

"We started as a smaller firm with less overhead," Zakany said. "And we've associated ourselves with some other golf companies that have helped to make us more cost-effective." When a golf facility first approaches IGM, the company initially reviews the club's entire maintenance operation, analyzing expenditures, course condition, manpower allocations, environmental compliance and liability concerns.