

O.B. Sports names Roberts director

AURORA, Ore. — O.B. Sports has named C.A. Roberts III director of business development. Roberts spent the past six years as director of development for the Atlanta-based American Junior Golf Association.

In his new role, Roberts will promote O.B. Sports on a national basis and

seek new opportunities for growth.

O.B. Sports is a course development, design, and operations company specializing in upscale public/resort facilities in the Western United States. Among its properties are Angel Park in Las Vegas and Langdon Farms in Portland, Ore.



C.A. Roberts

O.B. Sports

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1997, were designed by former partners Bob Cupp and John Fought. Fought, a U.S. Amateur champion and two-time winner on the PGA Tour, recently merged his design practice with O.B. Sports, giving the company the ability to bring a course from the visionary to the fully operational stage.

"We strive to do the whole thing — design, build and operate a golf facility," Vincent said. "We're not into buying or managing distressed properties like the many consolidators out there. We pre-

fer to start from ground zero and build something, rather than inherit someone else's problems."

O.B. Sports' other properties are Angel Park and The Legacy in Las Vegas, Stevinson Ranch in Modesto, Calif., and Langdon Farms in Portland. Fought designed Langdon Farms and The Reserve. O.B. had construction supervision responsibilities at The Legacy and Stevinson Ranch and the firm has performed some revisions at Angel Park. The company owns Angel Park, Langdon Farms and The Legacy while it manages The Reserve and Stevinson Ranch.

"We'd like to strike a 50-50 bal-

ance between ownership and management contracts," Vincent said.

After a brief fling on the PGA Tour in 1968-69, Vincent and Director of New Operations Bob Marshall (the B in O.B. Sports) founded the firm in 1972. Among the courses the company has been involved with are Edgewood and Incline Village in Lake Tahoe, Calif.; Torrey Pines in San Diego; Teton Pines in Jackson Hole, Wyo.; and Toana Vista Golf Course in Wendover, Md.

In addition to its existing, five-course portfolio, O.B. has another half-dozen projects in various stages of planning. It hopes to officially announce a handful within the next 12 to 18 months.

"We've stuck to our guns about staying near the city in each case," Vincent said. "For example, it's been eight years on the three sites we're working on in Seattle. We could have done projects 60 to 90 minutes outside the city long ago. But that's not the way we want to operate. Staying close to strong demographic areas is important.

"If you are prudent about selecting your market area, there's still room for many more courses to be built. But it's getting so difficult to get permitting, and land costs are so high, that the temptation is to look outside the cities. Those developers are taking a big chance that development will eventually follow them out to those areas. But if it doesn't, they are in big trouble."

O.B. Sports seeks a theme at its courses. Langdon Farms, for instance, carries an agricultural motif throughout the operation. The archway over the entrance resembles that over a Western farm with a sign reading "Public Only." The snack bar is a mock feed store; driving range stalls look like stables; the administration offices are located in a farmhouse. The cart path along the eighth hole passes through a 1918 barn and shots to the green may actually pass over the structure.

The Reserve will feature its own vineyards with a winery theme throughout the property. The chateau-style clubhouse will have a wine-tasting station at the concierge desk promoting The Reserve's own private label.

In addition to bringing resort-type golf to the city, the other thing that distinguishes O.B. Sports from other management firms is its emphasis on golf and the golfer, Vincent said. All of O.B.'s top executives are accomplished players. Vincent and Fought are both former PGA Tour players. Director of Operations Ed Francese, Chief Financial Officer Jamie Cook, Southwest Agronomic Director Ed Hodnett, Northwest Agronomic Director Billy Campbell, investment banker Peter Kooman and Marshall are all low-handicap or scratch players.

"We know what the golfer is looking for," Vincent said. "If a facility doesn't work from a golfing sense, we aren't interested. We won't use housing to subsidize golf."

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