

Kemper Sports makes first foray into California market

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — Kemper Sports Management is set to make its mark in the West with a pair of golf properties in the California market. Kemper is part owner and will manage Hidden Valley Golf Club in Riverside when the 18-hole, daily-fee course opens in early 1997. Casey O'Callahan designed and Kajima Construction built the high-desert layout.

Kemper has also been selected to manage a

pair of Palm Desert municipal courses. Mike Hurdzan designed both layouts, the North Course scheduled to open Feb. 1 and the South Course due to come on line a year later. Golf Dimensions is developing the 36-hole project for the city. Prior to these California projects, Kemper's farthest westward penetration was Falcon Ridge in Kansas City, a Craig Schreiner design that will open sometime in 1997.

Man(ager) on street

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offset by salaries paid head superintendents and those overseeing multiple courses.

• **Tommy Witt, GCSAA board member, chairman of GCSAA Career Development Committee and head superintendent at Wynstone Golf Club in Chicago** — Manage-

ment companies may represent a threat to one superintendent and an opportunity to another.

They generally provide more job security, the opportunity to move to another job without leaving the company and benefits that often surpass those at individually-owned golf courses.

But salaries tend to be lower. When a management company enters an area, they tend to pull down or slow salary increases at surrounding courses. And when a management company superintendent is put in charge of several courses, the increased salary often doesn't match the increased responsibility.

Management companies are here to stay, but they still control a small part of the marketplace [an estimated 5 percent of U.S. courses]. Superintendents should view them as another option. The key is to figure out what the upside potential is and then make an intelligent decision.

• **Tim Hiers, head superintendent, Colliers Reserve in Naples, Fla.** — There are places where management companies can be successful, especially in large, multi-hole facilities. However, I believe it could be extremely difficult for a management company to equal the quality output, level of care, constant attention to detail and the overall efficiency of an experienced, qualified and skillful golf course superintendent on his/her home turf.

If management companies continue to emerge, there could be fewer traditional superintendent jobs. However, other opportunities within a management company, such as a consultant, could present themselves.

Depending on the variety of situations and circumstances, a superintendent who continues to demonstrate value to his/her organization through ongoing education, top-quality management, desire to excel, and a balanced personal life, shouldn't be overly concerned.

There will be exceptions to this. But if the superintendent produces a quality product for a competitive amount and communicates it to the necessary powers, that person will probably continue to be a successful individual in this profession.



Tommy Witt



Tim Hiers

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