LEEK APPOINTED TO OWNERS BOARD
MT. PLEASANT, S.C. — Meriam Leek has accepted a nomination to become a member of the National Golf Course Owners Association board of directors. She is the owner and chief executive officer of Old Channel Trail Golf Course near Grand Rapids, Mich., and an amateur golf champion who made the 36-hole cut in three straight U.S. Women's Opens.

LASALLE BUYS MARRIOTT COURSE
NEW YORK—LaSalle Partners Inc. has acquired the Marriott Scaview Resort in Galloway, N.J., on behalf of an investment partnership. Marriott International, Inc. will continue to manage the resort and its two courses under an existing management agreement. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed. Plans are underway to invest over $5 million to restore the resort. The hotel's golf courses will also receive significant renovation capital. Work is commencing to restore the Bay Course to architect Donald Ross's original course design. This acquisition brings LaSalle's hotel portfolio to 16 upscale and luxury full-service hotels, with over $170 million invested in 1997.

COBBLESTONE RETAINS DL&J
DEL MAR, Calif. — Cobblestone Golf Group, Inc. has retained Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette to assist the board of directors in evaluating its strategy for Environmental Industries Inc., a leading finance and site-development contractor. Cobblestone has built more than 400 courses since 1954. Donald Ross' original design is one of Environmental's most significant contracts.

MARTY TAKES OVER MISS. STATE TRACK

BRIEFS

Management firm sees rosy future in ownership
By Peter Blais
GOLETA, Calif. — The Dec. 7 opening of Glen Annie Golf Club here marks a new direction for Environmental Golf course ownership. The Calabassas, Calif.-based firm is a subsidiary of 4,000-employee Environmental Industries Inc., a leading national landscape, nursery, maintenance and site-development contractor.

The first planned build/own course is Indian Trails Golf Club, a 28-year-old course located between Kerns and Greenville, N.C., a 90-minute car ride south of Raleigh. The ownership at Indian Trails is a tight-knit group. Brooks is the superintendent and his wife, Margaret, is the administrator. Partner Ed Wheeler was the pro before and after the purchase.

N.C. super realizes career dream
By Peter Blais
GRIFTON, N.C. — Brad Brooks, 39, recently realized the dream of many golf course superintendents, to own his own course.

Wheeler’s wife, Debra Bryant, is a certified public accountant and serves as controller. Together they are the four equal stockholders and “provide the synergy that we think is special,” Brooks said.

Palmer adds to mgt. portfolio
ORLANDO, Fla. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management has signed an agreement with Paloma Golf Group, acquiring four golf courses in the process — two in Buffalo, N.Y., and single courses in New Jersey and Oregon.

“arction. Fortunately, they had to obtain little financing and purchased the course from a construction company whose owners were ready to sell the facility. Brooks group negotiated a price and had a sufficient down payment to get a loan.

“It isn’t as complicated as you would think it is,” said Brooks, who took the GCSAA course on owning a golf facility and availed himself of National Golf Foundation reports on course ownership. “Ninety percent of the work you have to do to please a bank is just legwork and number crunching. There is no secret formula you have to know. If you can

Brassie realigns organization
TAMPA, Fla. — Brassie Golf Corp.’s Joseph R. Cellura, chairman and chief executive officer, announced that the company has completed its downsizing and restructure program that began July 1, 1997. Brassie owns and operates golf courses and holds certain golf-related development, licensing, and marketing rights internationally.

Outstanding issues relating to previous management have been resolved, including the resignations from William Horne and Lance McNeil from the board of directors.

Clifford Bagnall, chief operating officer and chief financial officer of the company, has been named vice chairman of the board of directors.

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Environmental Golf
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management and ownership. Dingman said the goal of Environmental Golf is to continue concentrating on building and maintaining courses and look at ownership deals as they arise. "Our goal is to do two to three [build and own] situations a year," he added.

Environmental Golf provides specialized maintenance for private and public courses. It has maintenance-only contracts with the following facilities:

- Arizona
  - Estrella Mountain Golf Course (GC), Goodyear
- California
  - Alhambra Municipal GC, Alhambra
  - Bernardo Heights Country Club (CC), San Diego
  - Canyon Lake CC, Canyon Lake
  - Creekside GC, Modesto
  - DeBell GC, Burbank
  - Diamond Oaks GC, Roseville
  - Dryden Park GC, Modesto
  - Silver Lakes CC, Helendale
  - Tracy Golf & CC, Tracy
  - Woodcreek Golf Club, Roseville
- Georgia
  - Cross Creek Golf Club, Atlanta
- Michigan
  - Lakes of Taylor, Taylor
- North Carolina
  - Birkdale GC, Huntersville
- South Carolina
  - Oyster Reef Golf Club, Hilton Head

While Environmental Golf has offered maintenance-only contracts for two decades, it will also offer full-service management arrangements beginning this year.

Asked what would distinguish Environmental Golf from other management firms, Dingman replied: "Probably our overall resources. We have numerous facilities across the United States, which allows us to maintain courses anywhere geographically. Because of those resources and 2,000 employees on the maintenance side, it allows us to have regional experts, horticulturists, agronomists, extremely high-level people. That probably gives us a technology edge and an ability, through technology, to manage labor and quality."

Environmental Golf's fee schedule is "extremely competitive" with other management firms, Dingman said. "That's still a primary concern of every owner. The quality and other issues are important, but price is still a driving factor."

"Every deal is different," he continued. "We do things from straight management for a fee to packages where we go in and take over all the employees and buy all the equipment to provide owners with some additional capital at the time we take over the program."

General Manager of Golf Maintenance Alex Marshall heads the golf maintenance division from his Orlando, Fla., office. Dingman leads the overall course management division from Calabassas.

Vegas' Rio casino opens its own course

LAS VEGAS — Rio Hotel & Casino Inc. announced that its subsidiary, Rio Development Company Inc., has opened the Rio Secco Golf Club.

Located in Henderson, approximately 15 minutes south of the Rio Suite Hotel & Casino, the Rio Secco Golf Club is an 18-hole course designed by Rees Jones. The limited-play course will have at least 15 minutes between tee times, to provide an enjoyable experience for all players.

President James A. Barrett, Jr. said, "The Rio Secco Golf Club was developed by us as an additional amenity for customers of the Rio, a destination resort."

The fee for Rio customers will be $190 per round, and for others $300 per round.