

## ClubLink

Continued from page 61

near Greystone and RattleSnake Point. The same family owned the two courses for the past 25 years. Georgetown has an additional 125 acres that could be developed into housing, more golf holes or both.

• Gormley Green Golf Club (36 holes) and Rolling Hills Golf Club (54 holes) are located near ClubLink's Emerald Hills Golf Club and DiamondBack Golf Club. Situated on 650 acres, Simmonds said the combined Gormley Green and Rolling Hills facilities represent the largest golf operation on one piece of land in Canada. ClubLink plans upgrades to at least two of the courses within the next 10 years.

ClubLink, in partnership with GolfSouth, operates another 24 courses in the Southeast and Midwest United States. ClubLink has another four Ontario properties in various stages of development.

Asked if ClubLink intends to expand its Canadian operations outside Ontario, Simmonds replied: "Right now Ontario is the engine of growth in Canada. It is by far the largest province with 36 percent of the Canadian population. It is the country's business, financial and manufacturing center. We like Ontario's political and financial prospects, so we're not too inclined to go elsewhere until we've built a bigger base here."

ClubLink operates private, daily-fee and resort facilities. Over the next five years in Ontario, Simmonds said, the company would like to expand its 10 private facilities to somewhere around 20; its 12 daily-fee operations to roughly 30; and its two resort properties to five. "All together, we'll be looking at 50 to 60 golf courses in Ontario in the next five years," he predicted.

As for other areas of the country the company may consider, ClubLink's president said: "The areas we'd look at would have a strong corporate community. That's our target market, especially on the private side. Golf is exploding in Canada as a means of corporate entertaining and charitable fundraising. We're tapping into the strength of that market."

"Montreal and Calgary are probably the next areas we'd consider," the ClubLink executive said. "Vancouver is a bit of a funny market. It's had an overheated real-estate market for some time. And, frankly, we don't like the politics of British Columbia at the moment. They have a socialist government and they are also somewhat susceptible to the problems of Asia because of the influence of Asia on their economy."

## Brightstone Management in acquisition mode

WILLIS Texas — Brightstone Management is in the buying mode," said David Pate, chief operating officer and director of golf for Brightstone Management, LLC.

Brightstone started in 1996 by Darsheg Chen, president and chief executive officer, with the purchase of Gulf Hill Golf Club and Resort in Ocean Springs, Miss. The company has since bought several courses, mostly in Texas. The company's stated goal is to acquire six to eight courses in the next two years.

In January, 1996, Brightstone purchased Texas National Golf

Club in Willis, which serves as Brightstone's headquarters.

Brightstone acquired Northcliffe Golf and Country Club in Cibolo, Texas in August 1997. The 18-hole course is a Joe Finger design opened in 1978. The goal is to recreate Northcliffe by installing a new irrigation system, sand traps, renovation of the pro shop and clubhouse, a golf teaching facility and eventually a bed and breakfast. Brightstone purchased Rio Colorado Golf Course in Bay City, Texas in December. It is an 18-hole course designed by Gary Player in 1991.

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