Wes Powers at his Lanark Links Par-3.

**Pitching the game to Kids**

By MARK LESLIE

ALMOND, Wis. — Three days after opening Lanark Links on April 4, Wes Powers and his wife Jan had already donated 2,000 free passes to coaches and athletic directors in the area, and had committed Tuesday afternoons to Amherst High School’s fledgling golf team.

"It’s our way of giving back to the community," as well as attracting clients, Wes Powers said. A machine operator since 1990 at Sentry World’s Stevens Point course, Powers said: "They were charging $60 a round and I thought there was a niche for a real affordable short course, which would be appealing to families and new people to the game.”

Filling that niche is Powers’ pitch-and-putt layout that can be played for $5 for adults and $3 for students and senior citizens. Its 18 holes vary in length from 67 to 120 yards, with two sets of tees and complete with 20 sand bunkers and the coup de grace: bentgrass greens.

"The high school team loved our greens. They came through the winter very well," said Powers, adding: “My focal point in building the course was country club-quality greens.”

The course is fully irrigated and has a practice putting green. Now the builder/owner/superintendent, Powers said he built a lot of miniature golf-type features into the course. "We just want families to have fun." He said the greens are a play area for children.

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**Gateway National eyes inner city**

By MARK LESLIE

ST. LOUIS — When Gateway National Golf Links opens May 1, this once-flat, featureless, desolate land will be "like faith: reclamation of a lost soul. This is reclamation of lost property.”

So said Keith Foster, who designed the 18-hole daily-fee course in Madison, Ill., five miles from downtown St. Louis, featuring a links style he calls "a major departure from golf in the Midwest.”

In addition to reclaiming the property, which in the early 1900s was a huge stockyard, Walters Golf Management intends reclamation of human proportions as well. Working with Madison Mayor John Hamm and Urban League President Jim Buford in St. Louis, the company will offer events exposing urban youth to golf, according to Vice President Jeff Smith.

Walters Golf Management, whose President Dennis Walters is a past PGA of America vice president, owns or operates eight golf courses in the St. Louis metropolitan area and "has always had a good working relationship with John Hamm and Jim Buford," said Smith. "Through them, we will make programs available to inner-city youths who otherwise wouldn’t be available because they can’t travel 15 to 20 miles to the county course to participate.”

Walters Golf will "try to carry on the concept that The First Tee is laying the groundwork for,” said Smith, referring to the program which is reaching out to youths and others through golf facilities around the country.

At the same time, superintendent Scott Reynolds, who recently worked at Muirfield Village and New Albany Country Club, is investigating working with Sunshine Mission in St. Louis to develop a program with inner-city men who are trying to rebuild their lives.

Walters Golf will even reclaim caddying by implementing a caddie program, Smith said.

Meanwhile, Foster has designed a track he said "is very much a departure from golf in the Midwest.”

Beginning with a dead-flat 200 acres, he moved about 600,000 cubic yards of earth and "created an environment that is very links-like. Here is St. Louis most golf

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City issues bonds, creates public improvement district to attract course

Graham & Panks see the mutually beneficial aspects of the arrangement. "It's a real win-win situation for all the entities involved," said David Graham, Senior Tour golfer and president of Graham & Panks.

Rowlett Mayor Buddy Wall agreed, saying: "As residential developers, WaterView will enjoy the advantage of adding a golf course to their list of marketable amenities; future home owners get the inherent values of buying in a golf course community; the city and its retailers will enjoy increased revenues from the new homes built and the families that will live and shop locally; and the public in general and the city of Rowlett in particular get a world-class golf course."

Currently under construction, the WaterView Golf Course will be an 18-hole, 7,050-yard course with bentgrass greens and white sand bunkers. Scheduled to open to the public in the fall of 1999, the 220-acre course will also boast a three-hole junior-level course, clubhouse, pro-shop, food/beverage facility, driving range, and putting and chipping practice area. Approximately 1,560 homes will be built over the life of the surrounding residential community.

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