Walters strikes gold in St. Louis golf market
Management firm content to stay put — for now

By PETER BLAIS

Dennis Walters is bullish on the St. Louis marketplace. “Twelve years ago it was probably on the endangered species list, according to the National Golf Foundation,” said Walters, president of St. Louis-based Walters Golf Management. “Since then we’ve opened a number of new facilities. It’s become a very competitive market.”

Walters entered the golf business in 1982 when his father bought Bogeys Hills Golf & Country Club, a Wayne Clark-designed layout in St. Charles, Mo. The course had laid dormant for 25 years. Walters, who was in high school at the time, did some redesign work with his dad (an optometrist), and the course re-opened as a nine-hole layout that year. Bogeys Hills expanded to 18 holes a decade later and went private in 1980. Walters became the club pro.

In the early 1980s, Walters decided to follow in his father’s entrepreneurial footsteps and developed Whitmoor Country Club, a private, 36-hole, Karl Litten design in St. Charles that opened in 1988. That was followed by:
- Missouri Bluffs Golf Club, an 18-hole Tom Fazio layout in St. Charles that opened in 1995 and Golf Digest later ranked the No. 1 public golf course in the state.
- The Links at Dardenne, an 18-hole public course in O’Fallon, and Gateway National Golf Links, an 18-hole Keith Foster design with bentgrass fairways in Madison, Ill., both came on line in 1998.
- The Golf Club of Wentzville (Mo.), an 18-hole public facility

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Environmetal Golf busy in Calif.

CALABASAS, Calif. — Environmental Golf has been busy building several Southern California courses over the past few months.

Westridge Golf Club in La Habra and The Links at River Lakes Ranch in Bakersfield are expected to open in early fall. Both are 18-hole, daily-fee courses and will be operated by Environmental Golf.

The Links at River Lakes Ranch, a Ronald Freem/GolfPlan-designed layout, is in the “grow-and-mow” stage with all holes complete and all of its 12 lakes filled. Construction of the 8,000-square-foot clubhouse is underway with opening scheduled for September.

The back nine at Westridge Golf Club in La Habra is complete. The construction crew is concentrating its efforts on the

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