Legislation would preserve caddie's independent status

The National Club Association (NCA) announced that key segments of the golf community have sent a unified message to Congress urging lawmakers to pass legislation that would preserve the independent contractor status of caddies.

The letter was signed by 124 groups and organizations including key golf organizations; state and local golf associations; caddie scholarship programs; and a number of golf/country clubs. Sue Wegzyn, NCA executive vice president, stated: "The golf community's response to this issue has been tremendous. The united stance on the caddie legislation should help advance this issue in the months ahead."

Preserving the independent contractor status of caddies is a top legislative priority for the NCA in the 106th Congress. The Caddie Relief Act of 1999, H.R. 19, was introduced earlier this year by Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.) and has garnered bipartisan support in recent months.

NCA also formed the Coalition to Preserve Caddie Programs in 1996. Composed of over 50 state and regional golf associations, caddie scholarship programs, and interested individuals, the coalition has been instrumental in providing critical grass roots support on this issue.

Private clubs seek to become employer of choice

By PETER BLAIS

SAN FRANCISCO — With a few changes, private clubs can become the most attractive employers in their communities, even in today's robust economy, according to Tarun Kapoor, a professor in the school of hotel and restaurant management at California Polytechnic University.

"The private club industry is fighting its own history and tradition," Kapoor told a group during the recent Club Managers Association of America annual conference here. "You haven't tried to build your image within the community, but rather kept that image private."

"You haven't shared who you are for reasons that may have been very valid 10 to 50 years ago, but won't be valid for the next 10 years. There needs to be a philosophical shift in the way you do business."

Successful clubs differentiate themselves in a positive manner from every other club in their community, Kapoor explained, and customer service is the major point of differentiation. So, club managers should focus their energy on their own labor pool to help recruit new hires. Under the Employee Recruitment Incentive Plan, the referring employee receives another $150 if the recruit is hired one month after the new person is hired. The $300 paid the referring employee is much more significant than the $5 paid to keep the new hire to stay on the job for at least six months. And the $300 paid the referring employee is much less than the club would have spent for the newspaper ad.

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Western Golf Properties has assumed management of Red Hawk Ridge Golf Course, an 18-hole, Jim Engh design that held its grand opening this spring in Castle Rock, Colo.

ClubCorp acquires two new courses

Joint development venture with Nicklaus starts to bear fruit

DALLAS—ClubCorp has acquired clubs in Granite Bay, Calif., and Palm City, Fla.

The 530-member Granite Bay Golf Club, located outside Sacramento, was designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr. Built in 1983, the club was acquired from Daniel Reiner, Granite Bay, Ltd.

Built in 1996, Golden Bear Golf Club at Hammock Creek in Palm City, Fla., north of West Palm Beach, was acquired from Jack Nicklaus' Golden Bear International. The course was designed by Nicklaus and his son, Jack Nicklaus II. The semi-private club has a clubhouse, pro shop and dining facilities.

The two acquisitions follow the recent announcement of a joint venture between ClubCorp and Jack Nicklaus’ Golden Bear International to design, build, own and operate as many as three dozen Nicklaus signature courses around the world in the next 10 years. Golden Bear International, owned by the Nicklaus family and based in North Palm Beach, Fla., will design the courses, and Dallas-based ClubCorp will manage the courses and country clubs.

The joint venture has two new clubs under development, the first at BirchRiver in Dahlonega, Ga., and the other at LionsGate in Overland Park, Kan. Other targeted metropolitan areas are Dallas, Las Vegas, Orlando, Palm Springs, Calif., Phoenix, and San Antonio, Texas.

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