

## BRIEFS



### MASON NAMED GM AT DPC CLERMONT

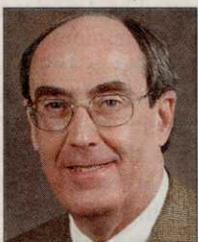
ORLANDO, Fla.— Tom Mason has been named general manager of Diamond Players Club Clermont, a semi-private, 18-hole course that will open soon on the second-highest point in Florida, 20 minutes from Orlando. Diamond Players Club (DPC), which operates Sweetwater Country Club and Wekiva Golf Club, also in the Orlando area, is headed by Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Todd Stottlemire. Mason, a Class A PGA pro and a member of the first class to graduate from the Golf Professional Training Program in San Francisco in 1996, will be responsible for all operations, including regular golf, tournaments and special events, clubhouse facilities and membership programs.



Tom Mason

### DESMOND NAMED GM AT SC RESORT

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — Daniel Desmond has been named general manager of Barefoot Resort, an \$812-million, 2,377-acre resort that will include four, 18-hole courses designed by Greg Norman, Davis Love III, Tom Fazio and Pete Dye. The courses are scheduled to open in early 2000. Desmond will direct all facets of course operations including the grounds keeping staff. He is a former vice president of development with Club Corporation of America and served as director of operations for Western Golf Corporation.



Daniel Desmond

### FINCH TO HEAD FLA. OWNERS' GROUP

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla.— Ray Finch III, president and partner of Emerald Dunes Golf Group in West Palm Beach, Fla., was named president of the Florida Golf Course Owners Association (FGCOA) during the Florida State Conference. Finch replaces Bill Stine, chief operating officer of Meadowbrook Golf Group, who has completed his two-year term as president. Stine will take over as president of the National Golf Course Owners Association in January. The FGCOA has 136 members representing more than 200 courses.

# An arrival statement sets the proper tone

*Editor's note: This is the second of a three-part series on managing the process of creating and nurturing a golf course's visual image, signage, course details and printed graphics.*

By FORREST RICHARDSON

Ask most people when and where a round of golf begins and you're bound to hear, "at the prescribed starting time" and "on the first tee."

This is far from reality. A round of golf is much more than a simple appointment at a single location. Rather, it is an unfolding story.

A round of golf can actually begin weeks in advance of the tee time. And, just as the days leading up to a long-awaited concert might produce anxiety and anticipation, so, too, can an upcoming tee time. Add to this all of the moments which occur just prior to hitting the first drive of the day, and you have the "prelude."

As it relates to the course, and those who need to be concerned with its image and presentation, this "prelude" is one of the most essential aspects of golf course image. It may be more important than the logo or course symbol itself. I have visited many courses where neither the name nor logo was especially good, but the experience driving through the gates and eventually finding my way to the first tee was tremendous.



The arrival at Disney's Bonnet Creek Club is announced by a sophisticated sculpture.

In the first part of this series, I provided several thoughts on developing course names, images and how those elements can be put to efficient and memorable use. These decisions — name, image and overall feel — are intertwined with creating an arrival statement. In this install-

ment, we will focus on the arrival statement and the components which make guests feel they have truly arrived.

Unlike name and visual image, which most golfers have been exposed to before they arrive, the arrival statement can be com-

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## Institute of Golf Management scheduled for early January

JUPITER, Fla.— The National Institute of Golf Management is accepting registrations for its 2000 golf course management seminar Jan. 9-13 at Oglebay Resort and Conference Center in Wheeling, W. Va.

Co-sponsored by the National Golf Foundation and the Continuing Education Department at Oglebay, the program is designed for course owners/operators and other key personnel interested in finding solutions to common problems while also sharpening their business management skills. Now in its 17th year, the program annually attracts

more than 200 registrants.

During the five-day program, participants will have the opportunity to learn from and confer with experts on all aspects of golf facility management. Among the areas covered will be golf shop operations; new player development; course renovation, redesign and maintenance; cost-control systems; food, beverage and range operations; personnel and customer relations; publicity and promotions; golf car economics; rule management and tournament play.

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### A DESERT SANCTUARY

Workers lay sod at the Sanctuary Golf Course at Westworld, SunCor Resort and Golf Management's new 18-hole, daily-fee golf club in Scottsdale, Ariz., scheduled to open Nov. 11. "Sanctuary is the very first Audubon International Signature golf course in the Valley of the Sun," said SunCor Vice President Tom Patrick. The 18-hole course was designed by architect Randy Heckenkemper and built within the city limits and the Bureau of Reclamation storm water retention area. "Sanctuary has done an excellent job of integrating the golf course with the environment," said Mike Smart, director of the Department of Environmental Planning of the Audubon International Institute. "One feature the golf course has incorporated that is beneficial to the entire area is on-site recharge wells that re-purify the runoff water from the golf course and return it to the ground, replenishing the area's natural water source."

## GDSI purchases So. Florida golf course

ORLANDO, Fla.— Golf Development Services Inc. (GDSI) has purchased the golf course at Magnolia Plantation in Lake Mary. GDSI will also manage the course.

Magnolia Plantation is a 496-lot residential complex being developed by Centex Homes. The semi-private, par-72, 18-hole course was designed by Dave Harman and constructed by Golf Course Consultants, Inc. The course is expected to open October 2000.

Headquartered in Orlando, GDSI provides professional management services to public, municipal, daily-fee, semi-private and resort facilities with expertise in operations management; marketing; advertising and public relations; membership; merchandising; agronomy; employee selection, recruitment and training; food and beverage services; and tournament planning and sports event management.

Since 1994, GDSI has managed The Prestige Club, a summer golf membership program in the Central Florida area. GDSI is also responsible for all national golf advertising for the PGA Tour Radio.

## Signs

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pared to the difference between just orbiting the moon and actually setting foot on the moon. While both were exciting, actually walking on the moon's surface was the defining event. **Think of it as a book**

A book is an excellent metaphor for appreciating how a course's arrival is perceived. Books are judged by their covers. While there is not always a correlation between good covers and good content, a book with a good cover will help sell more copies.

A golf course needs a good outer package to help set the stage for what lies ahead. The main entrance and sign represent the golfer's first impression. It needs to be well planned and should communicate the style and ambiance which distinguishes the course from others. Even the most humble municipal or daily-fee courses should create a welcoming entry.

Next, in our book analogy, there may be a series of informative passages one encounters. There may be a brief biography on the author, a word about the publisher, and a flip through the table of contents to see quickly what lies ahead. There is also ritual. Most people need to be in the mood to read. Without being in the mood, many of us enjoy our book less. Perhaps you like to be in a particular recliner; on a plane or a park bench; or in bed with a cup of tea. In golf, what we see and where we go as we make our way from the parking lot, through the clubhouse, to the putting green and onto the first tee, constitutes the arrival experience. It is equivalent to the parts of the book — from cover to the beginning of the very first chapter — that send signals of what may be expected in the story. It involves rituals. Golf is rich with traditions and these need to be properly exploited in developing a good and memorable experience.

Finally, we are presented with that long-awaited first chapter, the very first words. Perhaps it is a sentence that conjures a particular image; "It was a dark and stormy night..." as one familiar example. Quite cliché, but nonetheless, it puts one into a frame of mind about the experience to be acted out. The first chapter of a golf course begins as the first tee is approached and a foursome is presented with a glimpse of the opening fairway, its familiar — or maybe not-so-familiar — course furnishings, ball washer, tee sign, and colored tee markers.

Good design and creativity, mixed with tradition and uniqueness, can make a strong, everlasting statement at the first tee. Whether the design remains understated and quiet or whether goes full force to the level of a themed tee station, the first tee remains the most opportune moment to convey

a lasting memory to guest or potential member. For an existing member or repeat player, the image of the first tee and its treatment will bring back memories of previous rounds. People need starting points.

### Creating an arrival

The first step to developing a positive arrival statement is to write a script. For an existing course, it is necessary to write two scripts. The first is an honest script indicating what is there

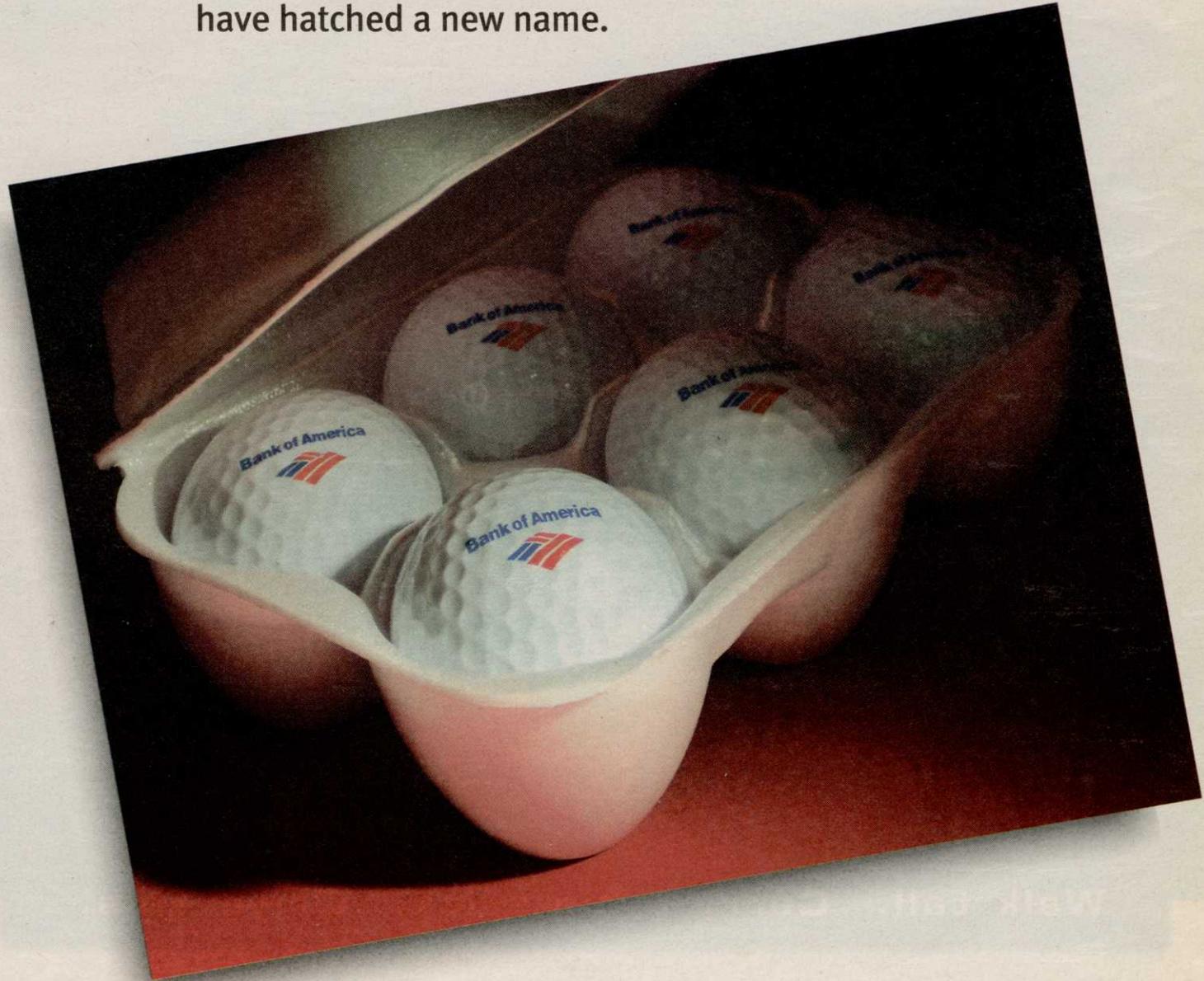
today. The second articulates what the arrival could — and should — become. Should is an important distinction, for it is not usually wise to attempt to write a script for an arrival that will be grossly different from the course itself. The best advice is to be honest and capitalize on what makes the course distinctive. Every course has something distinctive. This is what needs to be

Continued on next page



The leaping coyote emblem is used to frame this club's entrance.

## The smartest lenders in the golf business have hatched a new name.



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**Bank of America**

## Tron hires Glasco as Western U.S. chief

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz.— Tron Golf has appointed Bruce Glasco Western regional assistant vice president to oversee day-to-day operations of Tron facilities in the Western United States. Glasco will also oversee the transition of all properties, as well as be responsible for recruiting facility managers for the company.

Glasco moves to Tron Golf after nearly three years with Hines Development Company Inc. A

former PGA golf professional, Glasco served as assistant project manager at the River Valley Ranch development in Carbondale, Colo. Prior to that, he was director of golf at Maroon Creek in Aspen, Colo.

In anticipation of future growth, Tron Golf made the decision to divide the company's operational responsibilities into two regions: Eastern and Western.

## Signage

Continued from previous page

brought to the surface in this process. The goal to find a voice that suits the course and adopt this tone and feel from the arrival point forward throughout the golfer's round.

Once these scripts are written, it is possible to begin designing the various signage, furnishings, graphics, markers and

looks which, in combination, will produce the arrival experience.

### Checklist

The following represents a chronological checklist of how a typical arrival experience is presented. Each individual aspect, with some involving course image and signage only remotely, together form a sum of parts which can greatly increase a course's perceived value. And perceived value, in many cases, is a direct link to the actual rate at which golfers are willing to pay to play a round of golf.

The Entry: main signage, entry sculpture, walls, fencing, gates, guard houses, landscaping, road signage, parking logistics

The Bag Drop: signage, bag stands, landscaping, shade umbrellas, employees' uniforms, valet podium, signage

The Clubhouse: the entry steps, pathways, signage, merchandise appeal, display cases, overall decor, employees' uniforms, other amenities (food, beverage, etc.)

Checking-in: cart graphics, signage, range ball baskets/bags, scorecards, yardage guides, pin positions, daily course conditions, employees' uniforms.

Warming Up: putting green pins, practice range furnishings, signage, accurate yardage indications

The First Tee: directional signage, starter pavilion, tee signage, hole diagrammatic, waste receptacle, course conditions information, tee markers, positive course policies. ▶

## NGF conference

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The institute offers three seminar programs that run concurrently. There's one for those registrants attending for the first time and another for those returning for their second year. The third is for individuals who've completed the first two. This program is open also to those who, although they may be attending for the first time, meet certain requirements by virtue of their current professional standing and work experience.

All attendees receive five continuing education units (CEUs) from North Carolina State University. In addition, PGA of America members earn three recertification credits for each seminar. Golf Course Superintendents Association of America members receive 1.9 CEUs toward recertification.

Presenters include speakers from the USGA, PGA of America, American Golf Corporation, and the NGF as well as course owners and operators, developers, and golf product manufacturers.

The \$460 registration fee includes instructional materials.

For further information, visit the NGF web site at [www.ngf.org](http://www.ngf.org), or contact the Department of Continuing Education at Oglebay Resort and Conference Center at 800-624-6988, ext. 4019. ▶

GOLF COURSE NEWS



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