

BRIEFS

KEMPERSPORTS PROMOTES ABELL

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — Kemper Sports Management has announced that Scott Abell, former Kemper Sports regional marketing manager, has been promoted to director, business development. Abell will focus primarily on all new management and acquisition deals for the East Coast region, including the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. He will continue to work out of Ijamsville, Md., although his office will move down the road to Whiskey Creek Golf Club, Kemper Sports' new Ernie Els layout that opened earlier this year.



Scott Abell

CHESHIRE TAKES OVER AT MEMPHIS NAT'L

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Memphis National Golf Club, managed by Arnold Palmer Golf Management, has named Jon Cheshire as its general manager. Cheshire joins the 36-hole private club from Tan Tara Golf Club, an 18-hole Arnold Palmer managed club in western New York. In the midst of a multi-phase upgrade, Memphis National recently refurbished its former South Course — now known as the Champions Course — by adding 18 all-new Bermudagrass greens.

TSC GOLF HIRES BRANKEL

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — TSC Golf Inc. has hired Cheryl Brankel as the head golf professional of Myrtle West Golf Club. Brankel is a LPGA teaching and golf professional and is a member of the PGA of America. Previously, she was head professional at Skyland Pines Golf Club in Canton, Ohio.

KSL NAMES SUGGS

LA QUINTA, Calif. — KSL Recreation Corp. has promoted Sarah Suggs to director of corporate communications. Prior to joining KSL Suggs was executive director for the National Women's Hall of Fame and also served in senior management positions for La Costa Resort and Spa in Carlsbad, Calif. and the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix.

Platinum Golf Properties enters course management fray

By JAY FINEGAN

FOUNTAIN HILLS, Ariz. — Managers from The Golf Club at Eagle Mountain and Augusta Ranch Golf Club have formed a new course management company, Platinum Golf Properties LLC, headquartered here in suburban Phoenix.

The three principals — Jay Pennypacker, Kevin Smith and Tracy Herbst — have 40 years of combined experience in the golf industry. They start with two courses: Eagle Mountain, here in Fountain Hills, and Augusta Ranch, in Mesa, Ariz. The new partners are actively searching for daily-fee facilities to add to their portfolio.

Financial support is being provided by Communities Southwest, developers of Eagle Mountain and Augusta Ranch.

As director of golf operations and acquisitions, Pennypacker is in charge of

daily operations for Platinum's existing facilities. He also will evaluate the opportunities for adding new courses to the portfolio.

A class A member of the PGA and di-



The Golf Club at Eagle Mountain in Fountain Hills, Ariz.

rector of golf for Eagle Mountain and Augusta Ranch since 1999, Pennypacker was a member of the University of Arizona's NCAA championship team in 1992. "We're excited about expanding our portfolio, utilizing the systems and atten-

tion to detail that have proven successful at both facilities," he said.

Kevin Smith, CGCS, serves as director of agronomic services and construction. He'll take charge of new course construction and course maintenance practices. A graduate of Michigan State's turfgrass management program, Smith is a strong proponent of environmentally conscious management. He is currently president of the Cactus & Pine Golf Course Superintendents Association of Arizona.

As director of marketing and business development, Tracy Herbst will take charge of all marketing functions at each Platinum property. She also will explore acquisition targets. Additionally, she is responsible for developing the company's brand identity.

A marketing graduate of the University of Oregon, Herbst logged time in advertising sales for national golf publications before joining the crew at Eagle Mountain in 1996, when the club opened. She will use her

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Heritage Golf Group picking up steam

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SAN DIEGO — Bob Husband's Heritage Golf Group, which was launched last November, is starting to pick up steam. In addition to its acquisition of Talega Golf Club in San Clemente, Calif., the company has appointed former Bank of America executive Don Rhodes to the post of executive vice president, finance. The company also owns and operates Polo Golf and Country Club in northern Atlanta.

After a slower than expected start in 2000, the company is looking to add more courses before the end of the year. "It takes a couple of months to get your feet wet," said Husband, who was the mastermind behind Cobblestone Golf Group, which he sold to Meditrust in 1998. "We have a lot of properties under contract. We will close on another soon and should have five to six courses total by the end of the year."

The hiring of Rhodes, said Husband, will be instrumental in growing the company. "We needed someone on the finance side of the business," he said. "His experience will not only help us access the capital markets and get

the best financing, but his golf background will be an asset to us when we are trying to source deals."

HIGH-END CLUBS

Going forward, Husband's strategy will be to go after high-end golf properties. "There is less price sensitivity in the high-end markets," he said. "My experience has been that the more



Heritage Golf Group's first acquisition: Polo G&CC in Atlanta

money we put into the club and the more responsive we are to membership desires, the more money we make."

Polo Golf and Country Club is a private facility and the Brian Curley/Fred Couples-designed Talega Golf Club which opens in January will be a high-end daily fee course.

In order to improve profit margins,

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Delta Hotels signs management pact with ClubLink

By JAY FINEGAN

KING CITY, Ontario — Under a wide-ranging agreement between ClubLink Corp. and Delta Hotels, Delta will manage ClubLink's four golf resorts in the Muskoka region north of Toronto. The two parties also have agreed for Delta Hotels to build a 250-room hotel and conference center at ClubLink's prestigious Glen Abbey Golf Club in Oakville, Ontario.



John Johnston

In addition, Delta Hotels has purchased a two-year option to acquire the conference center site at ClubLink's 54-hole Rolling Hills Golf Club in Markham, Ontario. Moreover, the arrangement includes a reciprocal marketing arrangement offering Delta Hotel guests preferred access to ClubLink's daily-fee golf courses in Ontario and Quebec. It also provides ClubLink with additional marketing opportunities.

John Johnston, president of Delta Hotels, said it was clear from the early negotiations that "there was a synergy and a compatibility between our two companies, and it's very clear to us that Delta's guests are going to benefit significantly from this partnership."

Delta, headquartered in Toronto, is the largest first-class hotel company in

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SCHAUMBURG, Ill. — In response to the burgeoning popularity of golf and the growing diversity of golf club products, the enterprise risk business unit of Zurich U.S. has introduced a comprehensive insurance program for private and public golf courses.

The new offering from Zurich U.S., a leading commercial property and casualty insurance company, provides property, general liability, workers compensation,

Zurich U.S. launches new golf insurance product

auto and umbrella coverages. Additional enhancements include the sometimes hard-to-find directors and officers liability insurance, environmental protection for courses with underground tanks or built on landfills, and coverage related to pollution, liquor and employment issues.

"Golf is now being played by

26.4 million Americans on 16,365 golf courses across the country," said Sonjia O'Neill, services segment manager for the enterprise risk unit of Zurich U.S.

The new program is designed for public and private 18-hole clubs with green fees of at least \$45. It will be offered initially in 37 states. Policies are underwritten by

Zurich American Insurance Co. or other members of Zurich U.S.

"When we analyzed the risk and exposures of operating a golf club, and studied what was available in terms of coverage, it became clear that it was time to update the traditional insurance plan for today's golf course," O'Neill said. "Not only do we want to offer more

comprehensive coverage, we also needed to bring to our golf course policies the innovative services we use in other areas, including a paperless claims process and round the clock claims reporting.

"Most important," she added, "our clients were generous enough with their time to review our new products at various stages during their development so that we could make refinements that really fit our customers' needs."

Delta, Clublink

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Canada. A wholly owned subsidiary of Canadian Pacific Hotels & Resorts Inc., it operates more than 30 hotels from coast to coast — city-center, airport and resort properties.

With 30 courses in its portfolio, ClubLink is Canada's largest owner, operator and developer of high-quality private golf clubs, daily-fee clubs and resorts that feature golf as their key amenity.

ACTION AT GLEN ABBEY

The new hotel at Glen Abbey will cater primarily to corporate and leisure markets, with an emphasis on events that feature golf as one of the attractions. Plans call it to be built in what is currently the main parking lot. The property will also feature approximately 12,000 square feet of meeting space.

"The development of a hotel and conference center at Glen Abbey will make it more attractive to the corporate market and the travelling golfer," said Bruce Simmonds, ClubLink president and CEO.

Delta Hotels' Johnston said the construction costs will be in the \$50-million range.

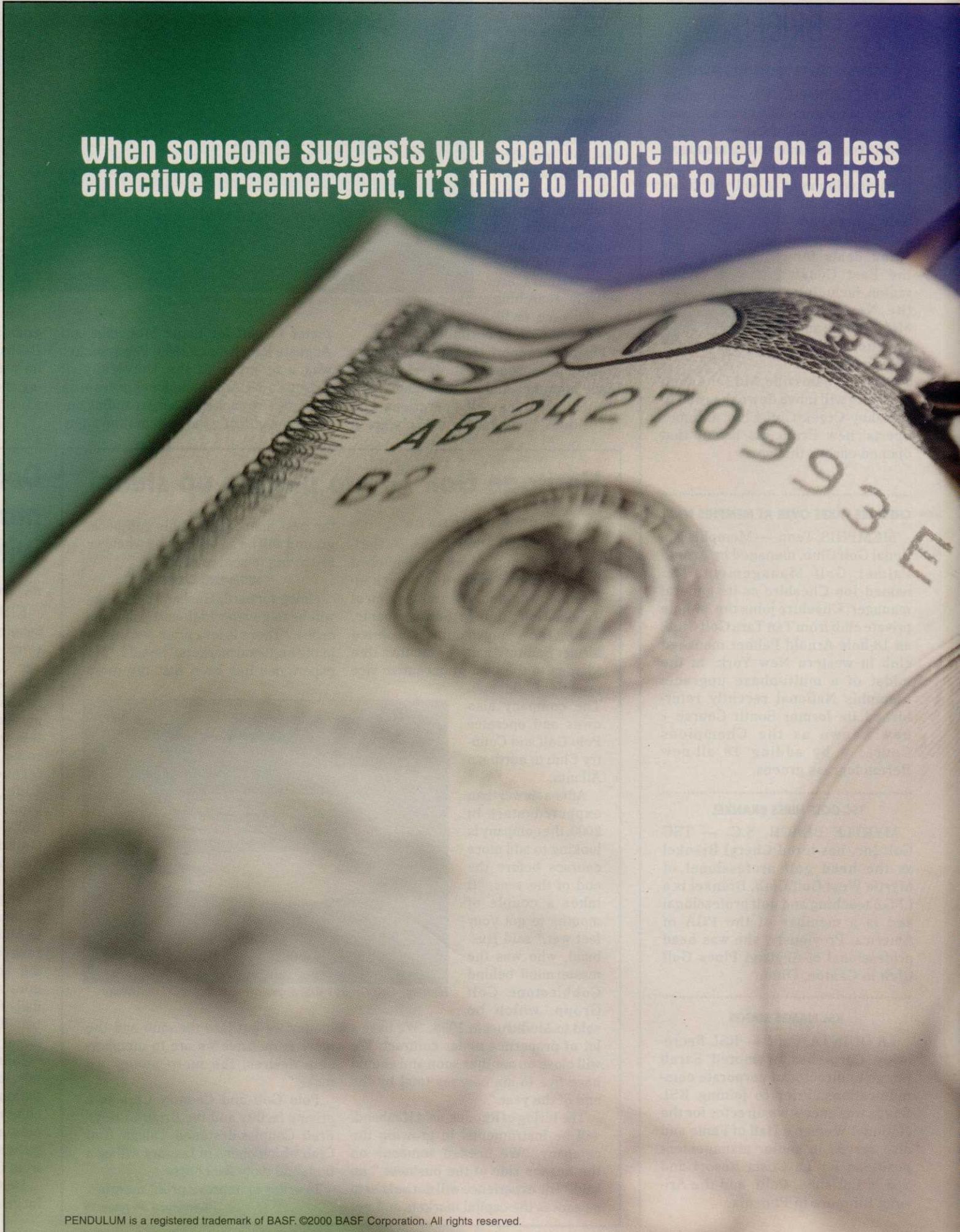
Delta expects to break ground in late 2001 and open the hotel in the spring of 2003.

Starting January 1, Delta will also assume the management of ClubLink's four properties in the Muskoka region. The four are The Resort Villas at The Lake Joseph Club, Sherwood Inn, Grandview Inn and Rocky Crest Golf Resort.

The management contract is for 15 years, with provisions for renewals.

Meanwhile, course construction is primed to accelerate at the Muskoka properties.

Both the Lake Joseph Club and Rocky Crest already feature Thomas McBroom-designed 18-hole golf courses, and land has been acquired for a second regulation layout at Rocky Crest. A Mark O'Meara course under construction at the Grandview Inn is scheduled to open for play in May of 2001. A second 18-hole course co-designed by Nancy Lopez and Curtis Strange is scheduled to commence construction in the fall of 2001 as part of the 45-hole Grandview Golf Club. ■



When someone suggests you spend more money on a less effective preemergent, it's time to hold on to your wallet.