



## BRIEFS

### HANSON, HOY NAMED TOP EXECS AT NEW RED SKY RANCH

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. — Jeff Hanson has been named director of golf at Red Sky Ranch, a 36-hole complex under development in the Vail Valley. Since 1999, he has been head pro at the Beaver Creek Golf Club. A 1988 business graduate of the University of Wyoming, which he attended on a full golf scholarship, Hanson has numerous awards and accolades. Also, Susan Hoy has been appointed club manager for Red Sky. She will be handling membership sales as well as management duties at this private operation. A California native, Hoy moved to the Vail Valley in 1995. She has worked at the Arrowhead Alpine Club, the Passport Clubhouse at Golden Peak in Vail, and the Beaver Creek golf facility.



Jeff Hanson



Susan Hoy

### FITZSIMMONS TO HEAD HERITAGE GOLF'S OPERATIONS IN VEGAS, NORTHWEST

SAN DIEGO — Heritage Golf Group, has appointed Jim Fitzsimmons managing director of the Pacific Northwest and Las Vegas properties managed by the company. Based at Angel Park Golf Club in Las Vegas, Fitzsimmons will provide direct support to the general managers of Langdon Farms Golf Club in Aurora, Ore.; Trophy Lake Golf & Casting in Port Orchard, Wash.; Washington National Golf Club in Auburn, Wash.; as well as Angel Park Golf Club and The Legacy Golf Club in Las Vegas. In his new position as managing director, he will oversee daily operations and work closely with Heritage Golf Group's Pacific Northwest and Las Vegas general managers on customer service, staff training and development, and the implementation of each club's business plan.



Jim Fitzsimmons

## Agronomic fervor is key to Troon Golf's meteoric rise

By DAVID HUBBARD

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Troon Golf is enjoying explosive growth, fueled by golf course owners and developers around the globe who rely on the firm to provide top-notch management at their facilities.

From a standing start in 1990, the Scottsdale-based firm has built a worldwide portfolio of 80 golf clubs in 16 states and eight countries. A level of play known as "the Troon Golf Experience" is so recognizable that golfers as far away as Perth, Australia, can ask for it by name.



Jeff Spangler

And according to chairman and CEO Dana Garmany, Troon Golf has big plans for growth. "Looking ahead to the next five years, we will continue to target only the finest high-end golf facilities," he said. "By 2005, we also expect to have added New Zealand, South America and continental Europe, and we anticipate over 200 golf courses worldwide under Troon Golf management."

The company's vision to serve the high-end golf market also has attracted sev-

eral international firms as shareholders, including Goldman Sachs, Australia's Macquarie Bank and Greg Norman's Great White Shark Enterprises. And with corporate offices in Australia and Japan as well as Arizona, the company seems well positioned to continue its meteoric trajectory.

### 'PREMIUM-LEVEL' GOLF

So here's the big question: How does Troon do it? How does it provide everything required for a premium-level day of golf and still make it a profitable venture for the owners?

The answer lies partly in a full slate of management services to supervise complex and costly construction, maintenance, and on-going operations from course development to clubhouse dining.

Founded by Garmany with the company flagship, Troon North Golf Club, the original commitment to provide championship conditions every day of the week continues to anchor the Troon Golf culture.



Troon's Ridge Course at Castle Pines North

"We routinely poll guests as they leave our facilities," said Hud Hinton, Troon's president and COO. "More than half of them tell us that above all other amenities, the quality of the golf course is foremost in their minds. Their comments and response drive us to perfect our presentation."

### SCIENCE-BASED AGRONOMY

The agronomic management plan from which Troon Golf developed is essentially the brainchild of Garmany and Jeff Spangler,

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## Evergreen Alliance adds Missouri clubs

IRVING, Texas — Evergreen Alliance Golf Limited (EAGL) has added two golf properties in the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area to its management portfolio, and will add another, currently under construction, upon its completion.

Swope Memorial Golf Course and Minor Park Golf Course, both daily-fee courses which are part of the Kansas City Parks and Recreation District, were added to the EAGL portfolio of management properties. Staley Farms, a new golf course within a residential community north of Kansas City, also will be managed by EAGL.

Swope Memorial features an A. W. Tillinghast design dating back to 1934, although golf has been played on the site since 1906. The course was closed in 1989 for restoration to its original

Tillinghast design, and was re-opened in 1990.

"Swope Memorial was the first public golf course in the area," said Kenneth Krakauer, historian of the Kansas City Golf Association. "A number of Kansas City Opens were played there."

Minor Park, one of the busiest golf courses in town, is popular with players of all ages who enjoy a superb "walking" layout. Featuring wide, well-groomed fairways and large bent greens, it appeals to both novices and more experienced golfers.

Staley Farms, slated to open in late summer, will be an 18-hole, daily-fee golf course. It is being built and will be owned by Golf Services Group Construction Co. of Omaha, Neb., in conjunction with a residential development

## AllGolf builds portfolio to 24 properties

Northbrook, Ill. — AllGolf, a subsidiary of KemperSports Management, has assumed management of seven additional properties, increasing the number of sites under its management to 24 in 15 states.

The seven locations include John F. Kennedy GC in Aurora, Colo.; Overland Park GC in Denver; C.B. Smith in Pembroke, Fla.; Overland Park GC in Overland Park, Kan.; Polaris in Westerville, Ohio; AllGolf at Glen Allen in Glen Allen, Va.; and Landen in Cincinnati.

All seven sites contain driving ranges and miniature golf courses. The Kennedy locale also offers 36 holes of golf, while Overland Park in Colorado features 18 holes, and the Overland Park club in Kansas offers 27.

"As with the initial properties that AllGolf began with, we anticipate a smooth transi-

tion," said Bob Wallace, AllGolf COO. "We have been able to retain and retrain much of the existing staff."

KLAK Golf obtained the properties at a bankruptcy auction held in February to liquidate the remaining assets of Family Golf. AllGolf was formed in October 2000 to manage 17 facilities that KLAK Golf obtained from Family Golf in its initial bankruptcy proceeding. KLAK Golf is a joint venture between Lubert-Adler Real Estate Opportunity Fund of Philadelphia, Klaff Realty LP of Chicago, and KemperSports Management of Northbrook.

AllGolf features a portfolio that includes driving ranges, family fun entertainment centers, golf practice facilities, and affordable executive and regulation golf courses.

## Harne and Stark join forces to launch Summit Golf

By JAY FINEGAN

BRASELTON, Ga. — Bill Horne, former founder and chairman of Club Operations and Property Management, and Kevin Stark, founder and COO of CrisStar Development Group, have teamed up to launch Summit Golf Group.

In the 1990s, Club Operations was the second largest club management company in the country. A sampling of its client list included: Sea Pines Country Club, Hilton Head, S.C.; The Landings Club, Savannah, Ga.; North Ridge Country Club, Raleigh, N.C.; The Club at Nevillewood, Nevillewood, Pa.; and Boca Pointe Country Club, Boca Raton, Fla.

CrisStar Development Group, which has been in business since 1995, is known as one of the top club consulting firms in the industry, specializing in operations management, membership development, equity conversions and long range planning. CrisStar's client list includes: The Country Club of the South, Alpharetta, Ga.; Victoria National Golf Club, Evansville, Ind.; Pablo Creek Golf Club, Jacksonville, Fla.; Barrington Golf Club, Cleveland, Ohio.; and The Boulders Resort, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Bill Horne will serve as chairman of Summit Golf, with Kevin Stark handling the president's role. Jim Tipps, former vice president of golf for Club Operations, will serve as vice chairman. Tina Saville, another veteran of Club Operations, will serve

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## Troon's secret

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senior vice president for science and agronomy.

Spangler joined the company as a Troon North superintendent shortly after the course opened. Through scrupulous research for three years before Troon Golf acquired a second property, he and Garmany established the basic agronomic programs and procedures that would lend brand-level recognition to Troon-managed clubs.

Spangler relied on what he calls "intellectual agronomy," challenging the "old hat" methods he felt veered from good science. "There is little evidence to support the rigidity of many of the maintenance practices we see," Spangler said.

"The foundations of the Troon Golf program are soundly rooted in pure and natural agronomic fundamentals," Spangler added. "Our philosophy is really very simple. We try not to match wits with Mother Nature. We allow our practices to emulate the biological systems already at work in the soil."

### THE TURNBERRY CASE

Early on, it was easy to manage a few properties. But as Troon Golf began to boom, it had to find a way to create some consistency in its course conditioning program.

A case in point is the fabled Scottish golf complex at Turnberry Resort. The Ailsa layout there, on a rockbound coast, was designed after World War II by Mackenzie Ross. In 1997, when golf course manager George Brown heard that Troon Golf would be managing the facility, he was concerned that they would come over and dictate a maintenance standard totally foreign to the treasured Scottish facility.

Spangler assured Brown that Troon Golf would under no circumstance ever try to "Americanize" a golf property as storied as Turnberry. In fact, he regards Brown's agronomic plan as a textbook study that mirrors his own beliefs in sustainable agriculture.

The trademark maintenance program fell into place when Spangler gathered the superintendents from each facility to write the "Troon Golf Minimal Agronomic Stan-

dards," 12 basic concepts that every Troon Golf maintenance staff must implement.

According to Spangler, the plan is universal and applicable to each golf course with only minor tweaking. "At first, they resisted writing down everything that was being done at each property," he recalled. "They thought it would be much too complicated, because they were all coming from different places."

Troon Golf superintendents now meet annually to address and fine-tune their cohesive agronomic program based on their experiences over the previous year. "Basically, we have compiled a data base of agronomic and maintenance information that everyone can utilize," said Spangler.

### IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR

The capability to oversee initial project planning and all phases of construction start to finish is a key component in the Troon Golf operation.

"We managed our first two facilities from the day the construction started, giving us total control over the quality," said Garmany. "Quite often, for the first

year or two of a contract, a client's association with Troon Golf is solely with the construction management team."

Troon Golf launched its construction management arm in 1994 with the second course at Troon North Golf Club, the Pinnacle, followed by Legend Trail Golf Club in Scottsdale.

More courses are calling on Troon for its agronomic and business expertise. In Tokyo, for example, Troon Golf is in place to help struggling golf facilities change their operations to weather economic hard times. Pressured by lenders to do something about declining rounds and falling green fees, course owners and developers are relying on the company's business and training models to turn a profit, without compromising quality.

Garmany is confident that Troon Golf will meet its goals for the next five years by staying focused on the specific needs of upscale golf properties. "If we continue to create extraordinary, manageable golf experiences through agronomy, service, and financial performance, our future is assured," he said. ■



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