Cordillera Group to rehab Colorado's Crested Butte

By DOUG SAUNDERS

CRESTED BUTTE, Colo. — In a departure from its primary role as a developer, the Cordillera Group has taken on the ambitious task of revitalizing the flagging Crested Butte Golf Club.

The Cordillera Group has transformed itself into a golf management firm after the strong success of its first venture, the Cordillera Resort and Community near Vail. Since its opening in 1992, they have built four courses on the 6,500-acre site as well as creating high-end private clubs near Steamboat Springs, Colo., and Santa Rosa, California. The property at Crested Butte interested the group because of the unique atmosphere of the region and the possibility of incorporating the ski area property as an amenity for its club members around the state.

"We recognized immediately how special this property was and what a great value it represents in comparison to other Colorado ski towns," explained Gerry Engle, CEO of Cordillera Group.

In addition to beefing up the maintenance staff and budget, the firm has made more than $1 million in capital improvements including a major renovation of the clubhouse, an increase in the maintenance shop space, and the renovation and expansion of the driving range. Superintendent Steve Rau and Tim Taagen, director of golf course maintenance for the Cordillera Group, are also working on a series of projects to improve the water features, wetlands, and natural areas on the golf course itself.

WEATHERING TOUGH TIMES

Crested Butte Golf Club was built in 1982 in this ski town located in the southwest corner of the Colorado Rockies. The 7,208-yard course flows over a massive 550-acre site located at 9,000 feet above sea level. Architect Robert Trent Jones Jr. created a course with large fairways and well protected multi-tiered greens.

But like many other projects built in the mid-80's, it suffered from some economic setbacks as the oil economy in neighboring Texas began to slow.

"Through the first ten years I worked here we had several club managers and the instability was felt in constricted budgets for maintenance," said Steve Rau. "For years I worked with a crew of eight men. I would always develop plans for projects that I hoped to do some day, and..."

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Bergstol adds to public golf supply in NY

By ANDREW OVERBECK

NEW CITY, New York — Eric Bergstol's Empire Golf is continuing its roll here in the New York area with the opening of Branton Woods Golf Club in Stormville. The company is also hard at work on two new projects — one right across the Hudson River from New York City in Bayonne, N.J., and another in Westchester County.

The expanding firm now owns and manages seven golf courses.

Textron signs pact with Meadowbrook Golf

AUGusta, Ga. — Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products has signed a five-year contract with Meadowbrook Golf and its subsidiary International Golf Maintenance to be the exclusive provider of golf cars, turf equipment and specialty vehicles at all of Meadowbrook's facilities throughout the United States.

Meadowbrook Golf owns, leases, manages or maintains more than 100 golf facilities throughout the United States. Through its wholly owned subsidiary International Golf Maintenance, the largest agronomic provider in the U.S., Meadowbrook offers its golf properties comprehensive golf course maintenance services.

"With the addition of Meadowbrook," said David Davis, E-Z-GO's director of national accounts, "E-Z-GO now has an exclusive relationship with nine of the top 10 golf course management companies in the world, including American Golf, with more than 320 golf properties worldwide and ClubCorp, with more than 220 properties worldwide. Meadowbrook had previously had an exclusive agreement with Yamaha Golf Cars.