BRIEFS

BILLY CASPER GOLF APPOINTS HEADLEY

VIENNA, Va. — Billy Casper Golf has appointed Jill Headley as its director of marketing. Headley will create marketing programs and drive their implementation for several BCG properties. Headley joins Billy Casper Golf from OnePage, Inc., where she directed the software company’s marketing strategy formulation and implementation. Previously she was advertising director where she directed the software company’s marketing strategy formulation and implementation. Prior to his appointment at Black Gold Golf Club in Dacula, Ga., from a daily-fee operation, Darrell Morgan has over 18 years experience, including 13 years with Marriott Golf, and is one of six regional vice presidents reporting to John Easterbrook, Jr., executive vice president for operations. Rachel Williamson moved from her current role as director of sales and marketing at The Sportsmans Club, a Westin Resort, and the Sheraton Grand Hotel Edinburgh. In her new role, Williamson’s primary focus will be to oversee the marketing of the company’s international properties, including 13 years with Marriott Golf, and is one of six regional vice presidents reporting to John Easterbrook, Jr., executive vice president for operations. Rachel Williamson moved from her position as director of sales and marketing for Marriott Golf, and is one of six regional vice presidents reporting to John Easterbrook, Jr., executive vice president for operations.
Speed of play solutions

allows players to know if they are ahead or behind of the target expectation.

Tools, Yates cautioned, are only valuable if they represent sound management policies. “The time has to be achievable and the course still has to be loaded properly or the tools won’t work,” he said.

GPS offers high tech solution

While GPS is certainly an expensive solution, it does offer the most technologically advanced controls available.

ProLink, which is on 182 courses and has a strategic partnership with E-Z-GO, tracks and manages speed of play on a number of different fronts. Through its Web-enabled software, courses can track groups in real time via the course map feature.

“GPS offers GPS with the cart number on them moving around the golf course,” said vice president of sales and marketing, Steve McGrady. “If they are white, that means that they are within the pace of play, yellow means they are five minutes behind, and if they are red it means they are 10 minutes behind the pace of play.”

The system then has the capabilities to either send an instant message to the carts that are behind the pace of play or alert a ranger on the course to head to that area and solve the problem. Messages can also be posted to groups that are playing behind the offending golfers to alert them that there is a speed of play issue.

The play reports function allows managers to proactively solve problems. The function shows a table of the time allocated for each hole and compares it against the actual speed on each hole for a given time of day. This allows managers to track problem holes and make changes to the course to speed up play.

“It could be as simple as changing the pin placement,” said McGrady. “The system can also track where the pins are on each hole on any particular day.”

He estimated that the system saves courses an average of 20 minutes per round.

TAKING THE RANGER WITH YOU

Scott Grundenberg developed the Personal Ranger, a scaled down version of the GPS speed of play element, while working on the early stages of development for a GPS company. The Personal Ranger, which is being used on 40 courses, is simply a clock that attaches to the steering wheel on a golf cart or on a golf bag and constantly shows where the golfer should be on the course.

“We felt that the economics of GPS did not fit the economics of the industry,” said Grundenberg. “This is simple but still extremely effective at improving the overall pace of play by raising the golfer’s level of awareness.”

The clock can be programmed on a course-by-course basis. The system comes with PC-based software that has a spreadsheet program that allows a course to set speed of play targets. The clock can be programmed for 10 different paces to adapt to different events and course conditions.

“These times are set by the starter who uses a Palm Pilot that communicates with the units via infrared,” Grundenberg said. “This allows pace goals to be easily updated throughout the day if so desired.”

The battery-powered system costs between $9,000 to $12,000, depending on the course, and can be leased.

CADDIES ON THE COMEBACK

While caddies are also an expensive proposition, many private and high-end daily-fee clubs are now adding caddie and fore caddie programs to ease pace of play issues.

Michael Granuzzo, the founder of Caddie Master Enterprises that operates at more than 20 courses including Augusta National and Blackwolf Run Resort, said its caddies can shave an average of 15 to 20 minutes off a round of golf.

“Caddies are an effective way to assure a pace of play standard because they get the players to the first tee on time, provide local knowledge, locate balls, fix divots, rake bunkers, repair ball marks and read putts,” Granuzzo said. “This may only save 30 seconds a hole per player, but it adds up.”

The company has more than 50 managers at its facilities, and recruits, trains and manages more than 100 people at an average course.

Caddies can also act as a built-in ranger. “Even with all of this help, the guy might still be a bad golfer. Then the caddie can suggest ‘ready’ golf and remind players of the pace target,” said Granuzzo. “By chasing around a course by a ranger and playing 15 minutes faster is less fun than being served to the highest degree and playing 15 minutes faster.”

To read Eastmoreland GC’s Speed of Play Policy, visit www.golfcoursenews.com

holes and at each tee they can verify that they are on pace with our intervals which are based on a four-hour-and-fifteen-minute round,” said Erwin. “This gives the rangers a tool to use and forces the golfers to be accountable.”

Erwin, which moves 80,000 rounds a year through the 27-hole facility, initially developed the program based on the USGA pace rating system. He said that the course meets its pace goals 85 percent of the time.

Bill Yates, of Pace Manager Systems, recently paid Erwin a visit and helped him lower the maximum allowed time even further.

“We tweaked the system and made the times faster after developing a more detailed pace plan,” Erwin said. “With the program in place, we now average four-hours-and-seven-minutes.”

The pace cards are an effective tool, said Yates. “The delivery system is simple, but the information is complex,” he said. “The information allows for the course to be loaded properly so the times on the card are achievable.”

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