

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.



Jill Headley

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 at USA Network's Internet Shopping Network and regional account manager at *Golf For Women* magazine.

CLUBCORP CHOOSES PARVIEW

SARASOTA, Fla. — Dallas-based ClubCorp has chosen ParView Inc. to provide Global Positioning System services to its daily-fee and semi-private divisions.



The ParView system provides golfers with a graphical hole and green overview of each hole, exact distance from the tee to the center of the green, the pin placement, pro tips, electronic scoring, and food and beverage ordering capabilities. The system is currently installed at more than 150 courses throughout the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

CONWAY COMES ABOARD AT BLACK GOLD

YORBA LINDA, Calif. — KemperSports Management has named Chris Conway head golf professional at Black Gold Golf Club, a 6,756-yard, par 72, 18-hole public facility which is owned by the City of Yorba



Linda. The course will be opening this fall. Prior to his appointment at Black Gold Golf Club, Conway was head golf professional at Trophy Lake Golf and Casting in Port Orchard, Wash., near Seattle.

EDITORIAL FOCUS: Speed of Play

From GPS to caddies, solutions abound for improving speed of play

By ANDREW OVERBECK

As golf participation rates remain flat, a number of companies have introduced services aimed at reducing what some experts say is the number one problem with the game today — the amount of time it takes to play 18 holes.

"The two things that will kill the golden goose are speed of play and what it costs to play," said architect Michael Hurdzan. "We have to control those two things."

If the industry continues to build and operate courses that take an average of five hours a round to play, Hurdzan contends, those courses will not only fail, but will also discourage new or occasional golfers from playing more often.

Solutions, ranging from Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to caddie programs to pace of play consultants, are available to help courses improve speed of play.

MANAGEMENT IS THE KEY

According to Bill Yates, head of Pace Manager Systems and the developer of the USGA pace rating system, the key to improving speed of play starts with the management of players.



Bill Yates

"I look at the management of the golf course before player behavior," said Yates, who does three-day evaluations for about a dozen courses per year. "First we do an objective measurement of how long it should take to play the course and then we compare it with how long it is actually taking to play the course."

"We attack every issue: getting players to the first tee efficiently and on-time, loading the course properly so that it is not overcrowded, and making sure that the marshals have the tools they need."

The number one mistake said Yates is not knowing where the players are. "If a group is checked in and the starter doesn't know where they are, then the group is late and your whole day is thrown off because you have to push other groups out early to get them on time," he said. "Then you have screwed up your intervals and overcrowded the course."

Secondary to management is managing player behavior. The key to this is communication, said Yates. "A club can do this any number of ways, caddies, GPS, a time sheet," he said. "The idea is to offer feedback and information that

Continued on page 22

Troon names Morgan, Williamson, Holland and others to key posts

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Though 2001 has shown a slowing economy, especially in the golf and hospitality industries, Troon Golf is continuing its strong forward drive. With the firm now representing nearly 90 golf courses located in 18 states and nine countries, it has announced a slew of top-level promotions to help it keep pace with rapid growth.



Darrell Morgan

- Less than a year after joining the company, Darrell Morgan has moved from area managing director for Northern California to Troon Golf vice presi-

dent for North American operations. 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.

- Relocating from Scotland to assume duties as director of marketing, Rachel Williamson moved from her position as director of sales and marketing for Starwood Hotels & Resorts in Scotland. Her properties included Turnberry Hotel, Golf Courses & Spa, 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
- In the Australia/Pacific division,

Continued on next page

Heritage Golf takes another course private

SAN DIEGO — Heritage Golf Group is planning to take another course private. The golf course owner and operator will be transitioning its Hamilton Mill Golf Club in Dacula, Ga., from a daily-fee course into a private club.

Opened in 1995, Hamilton Mill's 18-hole, par-72 golf course was designed by architect Gene Bates and 1992 Masters Champion and PGA Tour player Fred Couples.

The club is now offering individual, corporate, and family memberships to

those living both inside and outside the Hamilton Mill residential community. During its transition, the club will continue to welcome limited daily-fee play and outings until complete privatization is achieved within the next two to four years.

Heritage Golf Group acquired Hamilton Mill from SMG Development Associates LP in November 2000. The company also owns and operates White Columns Country Club in Alpharetta, Ga., that it took private earlier this year.

Courses curb slow play with strict policies

By ANDREW OVERBECK

With courses across the country struggling with speed of play issues, some facilities are developing innovative, home-grown solutions.

For the Eastmoreland Golf Course in Portland, Ore., the solution to seemingly never-ending five-and-a-half-hour rounds of golf was the implementation of the "Eastmoreland Speed of Play Policy."

The straightforward policy requires all players to finish their round in four hours and thirty-eight minutes. If a group falls behind, the ranger warns them. If they still can't keep pace, the ranger has the power

If a group falls behind, the ranger has the power to force the group to play the next hole from the 150-yard markers.

— Eastmoreland GC's Speed of Play Policy

to force the group to play the next par-4 or par-5 hole from the 150-yard markers. If the group falls behind again, they may either be moved up or removed from the course without a refund. Golfers are required to read the policy and sign a form indicating that they have agreed to abide by the rules.

While the policy sounds harsh, course manager Clark Cumpston said the reaction by most golfers has been overwhelmingly positive.

"People realize that they can now come to Eastmoreland and play here late in the day. Before, people were staying away because they knew the course slowed down in the afternoon," Cumpston said. "Last year we averaged five-hour rounds and would occasionally melt down into five-and-a-half-hour rounds. This year we are doing four-hour-and-forty-minute rounds. It has helped our speed of play more than I thought it would."

Cumpston, who pushes 60,000 rounds through each year, has not had to remove many players from the course.

"We have a difficult, tight course with a lot of water on the back nine," he added. "There are times when people have to be moved, and they are not that happy about it. Everyone thinks they are a fast player and are surprised when they are really not fast."

PACE OF PAPER

Mike Erwin, head golf professional at The Sportsmans Club, a municipal course in Northbrook,

Continued on page 22

Speed of play solutions

Continued from page 20

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.

"It shows squares 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.

TAKE 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 is 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. "Being chased around a course by a ranger and playing 15 minutes faster is less fun than being serviced to the highest degree and playing 15 minutes faster." ■

Speed policies

Continued from page 20

Ill., has developed another simple solution to help speed play.

At the first tee, starters issue each group a pace card that is designed for every tee time of the day and tells the player where they should be on the course at a given time.

"We have it mapped out for all 18

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

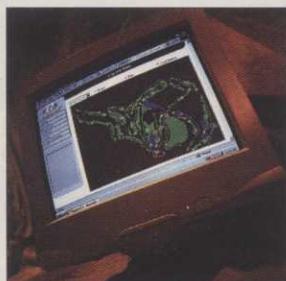


holes and at each tee they can verify that they are on pace with our intervals which are based on a four-hour-and-fifteen-minute round," said Erwin. "This gives the rangers a tool to use and forces the golfers to be accountable."

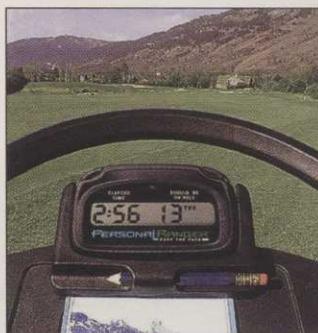
Erwin, which moves 80,000 rounds a year through the 27-hole facility, initially developed the program based on the USGA pace rating system. He said that the course meets its pace goals 85 percent of the time.

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." ■



The ProLink system uses GPS to track carts and group speed.



The Personal Ranger keeps the pace

EVERGREEN™
The Turf Blanket the World Relies On

- Earlier spring green-up
- Faster seed germination
- Deeper root development
- Delays dormancy in fall
- Ideal winter blanket
- Best for quick turf repairs
- Available in any size
- 3 or 7 year warranty covers

CALL TOLL FREE
1-800-387-5808

COVERMASTER™
COVERMASTER™
COVERMASTER™

MASTERS IN THE ART OF SPORTS SURFACE COVERS

WEB: www.covermaster.com
E-MAIL: info@covermaster.com

COVERMASTER INC., REXDALE, ON, M9V 5C3 TEL 416-745-1811 FAX 416-742-6837

This publication gives you good reading, good writing and good arithmetic.

We present the information in our articles clearly, accurately and objectively. That's good writing. Which means good reading.

We present the information in our circulation statement clearly, accurately and objectively. That's good arithmetic.

BPA International helps us provide precise and reliable information to both advertisers and readers.

An independent, not-for-profit organization, BPA International audits our circulation list once a year to make sure it's correct and up to date. The audit makes sure you are who we say you are.

This information enables our advertisers to determine if they are reaching the right people in the right marketplace with the right message.

The audit also benefits you. Because the more a publication and its advertisers know about you, the better they can provide you with articles and advertisements that meet your information needs.

BPA International. Circulation Intelligence for Business & Consumer Media.

270 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, 212-779-3200.

