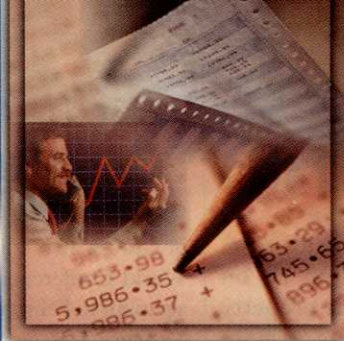


# MANAGEMENT



## BRIEFS

### LAKE WINDSOR INTRODUCES NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM

WINDSOR, Wis. — Lake Windsor Country Club, which is owned by Meadowbrook Golf of ChampionsGate, Fla., recently promoted Mindy Foster to general manager and hired Brian Norton as head professional. Foster has been with the club for 10 years and previously served as assistant general manager at the club. Norton spent the last eight years working at Odana Hills Golf Course in Madison as first assistant golf professional.

### FREEDOM GOLF SIGNS FOREGO FOR WEB SERVICES

HERSHEY, Pa. — Golf course management and consulting firm Freedom Golf Services (FGS) has signed a three-year contract for Internet services with Forego Systems Inc. of Harrisburg. Forego will design and host Web sites for FGS-managed courses, and will also help FGS with search engine optimization.

### DORAL NAMES DIRECTOR OF GOLF

MIAMI, Fla. — Doral Golf Resort and Spa, which recently hosted the PGA Tour's Ford Championship, has named James Devine its new director of golf. Devine brings more than 10 years' experience in golf operations and instruction to his new position at Doral. Prior to joining Doral, Devine served as general manager for Bull Run Golf Club in Virginia.

### WESTBROOK CC NAMES NEW MEMBERSHIP MANAGER

SAVANNAH, Ga. — Vernice Rackett has been named membership director for Westbrook Country Club at Savannah Quarters, a 2,588-acre master-planned community here. Rackett will be responsible for new member enrollment and working with businesses to educate them about the benefits of corporate membership.

## KemperSports comes back to Harding Park

Company also takes over management for three former Gotham Golf Partners courses following lender's foreclosure

By DEREK RICE

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — Two years after bowing out of negotiations with the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission, KemperSports Management has agreed to manage the city's Harding Park Golf Course.

The company also assumed management of three former Gotham Golf Corp.-managed properties for commercial lender ORIX Capital Markets LLC, which reacquired the courses in lieu of foreclosure.

The Harding Park deal culminates a turbulent four years in the course's history, which saw two management companies back out of deals (Arnold Palmer Golf Management was the other one) and several false starts in attempts to give the course a much-needed facelift.

KemperSports pulled out in

2001 because of what it said were unrealistic expectations on the part of the city. According to Steve Skinner, KemperSports president, the city's desire to have the renovation project privately funded made any deal nearly impossible to complete.

"The last time it came up, they wanted a private developer to come in and pay for the improvements, and then lease it from them. But they also wanted resident rates to be very affordable and have 60 percent of the tee times go to residents," Skinner said. "The num-



The old clubhouse at Harding Park will be replaced, but in the meantime, the course will operate out of a temporary facility, according to Steve Skinner of KemperSports Management.

bers never really worked to get private investment in and still have such a favorable rate for the residents."

At that time, KemperSports

CEO Steve Lesnik said his company would consider managing the property if some of the requirements and expectations

Continued on page 15

## Private Club Network collects awards, adds ChampionsGate

By DEREK RICE

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Private Club Network, a reciprocal play network for private country clubs, has signed an agreement with the Meadowbrook Golf-managed ChampionsGate Resort in ChampionsGate, Fla.

Under the agreement, which is the company's second foray into the central Florida market, Private Club Network's more than 30,000 members will receive special pricing at the resort's two courses as a supplemental benefit to their primary reciprocal private club privileges.

Steve Graves founded Private Club Network in 1999, and formally introduced its service in May 2002. The concept for the network developed out of Creative Golf Marketing, which Graves began in 1990 to help clubs grow their membership levels.

In its 13 years in business, Creative Golf Marketing has helped a number of clubs reverse their declining membership trends. One of those clubs is Riverside Golf and Country Club in Portland, Ore., which was able to realize a major turnaround in a very short time.

"In less than 45 days, we went from 448 members—with over 20 of

those on a waiting list awaiting refunds—to full membership at 500," said Bill Johnson, president of Riverside. "Additionally, we cleared the list awaiting refunds and we now have 13 prospects on a waiting list join. All that during an economy in the state with the nation's highest unemployment figure."

In 2002, Creative Golf Marketing generated more than \$15 million in initiation fee and dues income for its clients, Graves said.

The industry is also taking notice

Continued on next page

## Heritage Golf acquires two

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Golf course owner-operator Heritage Golf Group added two courses, Washington National Golf Club in Auburn, Wash., and Trophy Lake Golf and Cast-



Bob Husband

ing in Port Orchard, Wash., to its portfolio last month.

Heritage acquired both courses from Scottsdale, Ariz.-based OB Sports LLC. The additions, which are Heritage's first foray into the Pacific North-

west, bring the company's portfolio of courses to 10. The remaining eight courses are located in California, Georgia and Florida.

Bob Husband, president and CEO of Heritage, said the

two courses were a perfect fit for his company's operational philosophy.

"Both Washington National and Trophy Lake are premium golf properties, and we are

Continued on next page

## Troon adds seven courses in six months

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The first quarter of 2003 has brought a flurry of activity for golf course management company Troon Golf, with the signing of several properties.

At press time, Troon had signed management contracts with four facilities in 2003: The Traditions Club in Bryan, Texas; Gaillarda Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City, Okla.; Corte Bella Golf Club in Phoenix, Ariz.; and TPC Snoqualmie Ridge Golf Club in

Snoqualmie, Wash.

Combined with the addition of three facilities in the fourth quarter of 2002, and it's been a busy six months for Troon.

In addition, the company also kicked off the third year of its Troon Rewards program. The frequency program offers frequent Troon customers benefits as a bonus for their loyalty. Among these rewards are free rounds of golf, bonus miles from Troon's airline partners and discounts on golf and merchandise.

Through the opening of the Mahoney Instruction Club at Talking Stick, Troon's director of education Tim Mahoney founded the new Tim Mahoney Golf Academy. Mahoney's academy will operate under the umbrella of the Troon Golf Institute, and will complement Troon's other golf instruction schools, among them Resort Golf Schools at Legend Trail Golf Club in Scottsdale and Golf Digest Schools located at a number of Troon's properties.

— Derek Rice

## Kemper gives Harding Park a second look

Continued from page 13

were changed.

Skinner said KemperSports suggested the city fund the course publicly, which the city then did, opening the door for KemperSports' return.

"They got some grants to fund it publicly, so now it is a pure management contract from our stand-

point," Skinner said. "It allows them to do what they need to do and control local rates. It's obviously a golf course that's very close to the hearts of many San Francisco golfers over the years. It just got too hard to balance if they had a private investor in there as well."

### TAKING OVER FOR GOTHAM

The three former Gotham Golf

courses KemperSports is managing are Edgewood in the Pines in Drums, Pa., Robin Dale Golf Club in Brandywine, Md., and Lake Arbor Golf Club in Mitchellville, Md. The company also manages another foreclosed property for ORIX in Wisconsin.

Skinner said the courses are great properties that are simply in need of some sprucing up.

"There are tough times at a lot

of places and I think they got caught up in Gotham's other issues elsewhere, so they haven't had the attention, care or financing they need," he said. "We're just getting our feet on the ground there."

Skinner said the three properties are not unique.

"There's a lot of other courses caught up in it, so the uncertainty is not good for the golf courses, or

the golf business in general," he said.

### GRAND RE-OPENING

Harding Park is poised to open this summer, most likely in July, Skinner said. This is just over a year after the facility closed down to undergo what he called a significant renovation.

"It was a complete renovation

*'There's a lot of other courses caught up in [the Gotham deal], so the uncertainty is not good for the golf courses, or the golf business in general.'*

— Steve Skinner

from top to bottom," Skinner said. "They thinned out a lot of trees that had become overgrown, they kept the corridors pretty much the same, did a lot of shaping and rebuilt everything — all the fairways, all the drainage and irrigation."

Skinner said the renovation benefited from the good weather the area has enjoyed since the course closed last year (GCN, June 2002).

"The renovation is complete. It's in grow-in now. They've got a couple of drainage issues that they're correcting now, but the golf course should be ready to go by mid-summer," he said. "The new clubhouse is not up yet, but that construction will begin this summer, so we'll operate out of a temporary facility."

The initial plan was for Harding Park to be added to the PGA Tour's rotation of sites for the annual Tour Championship this year. Skinner said he wasn't sure when that would start now, but that the Tour will be bringing an event to Harding Park in the near future.

"They're negotiating with the Tour, but the Tour is bringing one of its international events, probably starting in 2006 to give us a chance to get the golf course in good shape and get the clubhouse up," Skinner said.

When the course reopens, it will also debut its nine-hole Fleming course, which also went under the knife, as well as a new First Tee facility. Skinner said he wasn't sure what the green fees would be, but city residents will pay significantly less than visitors.

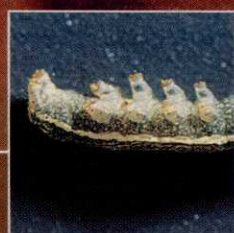
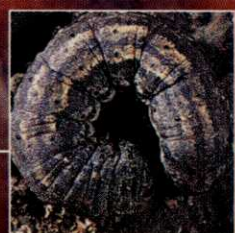
"It's going to be exciting. It is so important to so many people out there in San Francisco, and to see the shape it was in before the renovation was just a shame," he said. "It's really going to be spectacular." ■

## MACH 2 PRESENTS

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