OB Sports rebounds from mistaken identity

By DEREK RICE

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — In the last two years, OB Sports Golf Management has experienced incredible growth in the number of properties it manages, jumping from five contracts at the beginning of 2001 to 14 at press time. According to C.A. Roberts, OB Sports’ vice president of business development, this growth is the best of any company in the past three years in business.

We’ve achieved our most success, even that we could only hope for in the history of the company just in the last year and a half, which is weird,” Roberts said.

While that would be cause for celebration at any company, it is particularly sweet for OB Sports, which has had to deal with a case of mistaken identity in recent years.

In the mid-90s, OB Sports managed two courses in the Las Vegas area, Angel Park and The Legacy. The owners of those two courses approached OB Sports founder and CEO Orrin Vincent and proposed forming a new company to build and buy more golf courses. The result was OB Sports LLC, which existed from 1993 to 2000. During that time, the company bought several golf courses and built others, all while picking up management contracts along the way, Roberts said.

“We had a nice portfolio of 16 golf courses,” he said.

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Nelson relishes GM position at Half Moon Bay

By DOUG SAUNDERS

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. — The role that women play in the game of golf stepped into the forefront last month with Annika Sorenstam’s appearance at Colonial Country Club in Texas as she competed with the men in a regular PGA Tour event. Her appearance helped to remind the general public that this game, which has certainly been male-dominated for decades, is one that should be shared by all who want to become involved.

But the revolution of women playing a role in shaping the future of golf has been happening quietly over the last 15 years and is definitely a growing trend. It was just seven years ago that Judy Bell served as president of the USGA, the first woman to serve in that capacity, and women make up a large segment of new golfers coming into the game. The trend continues into the front offices of clubs and courses around the country as more women are ascending into managerial positions.

Lyn Nelson, general manager at Half Moon Bay Golf Links, just south of San Francisco, is part of this trend, but certainly not new to the rigors of the job. Nelson has been working in the management end of the golf industry for decades and built others, all while picking up management contracts along the way, Roberts said.

“This is a significant amount of demand in the market today for a lower-priced golf car that still offers the assurance of the Club Car brand,” Crawford said.

“This program helps us address that market with a consistently high-quality product offering that gives our customers great value.”

For the most part, the vehicles that go through the program this year will be electric. They will be sold to either Club Car’s main plant in Augusta or to its custom manufacturing facility in Indio, Calif., to go through the refurbishment process. Club Car now offers customers previously owned and refurbished golfers backed by the Club Car brand.

Under the program, Club Car will take back golf cars coming off lease and send them through a refurbishing process, then sell or lease them to customers at a substantially lower price than a new fleet of cars, said Brian Crawford, vice president of sales, aftermarket.

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