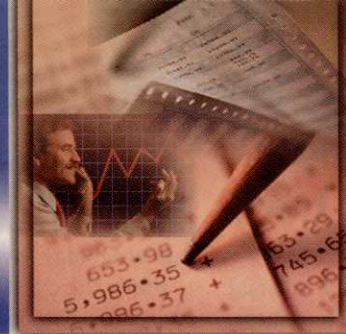


MANAGEMENT



BRIEFS

HERITAGE GETS \$44 MILLION IN REFINANCING

RED BANK, N.J. — GMAC Commercial Mortgage (GMACCM), recently provided \$44 million in interim refinancing for San Diego, Calif.-based Heritage Golf Group. The financing was for three unnamed golf courses, one in California and two in Georgia. The GMACCM Golf Finance Group based in Washington, D.C., arranged the transaction, which follows on the heels of GMACCM's foray into the golf industry by providing \$650 million in financing for the acquisition of National Golf Properties' 253 golf courses earlier this year (GCN, May 2003).

LEGENDS GROUP INSTALLS UPLINK SYSTEMS

AUSTIN, Texas — UpLink Corp. has installed its SmartCourse Profit Generating System at Legends Resorts Group's Moorland, Heathland and Parkland golf courses in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Larry Woodberry, golf operations director for the Legends Group, said UpLink's global positioning-satellite-based management system will allow the courses to realize significant savings by not having to print yardage books. Through UpLink's relationship with on-car scoring and live leaderboard capabilities provider Vision Perfect, Legends will also be able to increase its tournament bookings, Woodberry said.

LIGHTHOUSE SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR SOMERSET GC

ATLANTA — Lighthouse Golf Group has signed an agreement with Somerset Education Foundation to provide complete management solutions for Somerset Golf Club in Locust Grove, Va. The course, originally built in 1996, is in the midst of a renovation of its greens, tees, bunkers and several complete holes. Architect Rick Robbins of Robbins & Associates Inc. of Cary, N.C., is overseeing the renovation being completed by Links Construction of Palm City, Fla.

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 in the company's more than 30 years in business.

"We've achieved our most success ever that I could point to 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-1990s, 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 1995 to 2000. During that time, the company bought several golf courses

and built others, all the 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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OB Sports recently opened The Duke at Rancho El Dorado, one of 14 courses the company manages.

Elcot draws on team's diverse background

By DEREK RICE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Norm Carl, who raised the equity to develop Legends Club of Tennessee for Tom Kite and Bob Cupp's Legend Golf Development Co., has teamed with partners Rick Chukas and Joe Kennedy to form Elcot Golf Inc., a full-service golf management and consulting company.

The three principals come from diverse backgrounds. After raising financing for Legends Club, Carl continued to provide management and consulting services for the club. Chukas is a former partner with Arthur Andersen LLP, where he created a practice specialty area dedicated to the golf industry. Kennedy has more than 25 years of turfcare management experience and has been director of golf at Legends Club since it opened in 1990.

The company also hired Steve Nieman as director of corporate sales. Nieman previously worked for Raycom Sports as tournament director of the LPGA's Aerus Electrolux USA Championship hosted

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Editorial Focus: Golf Cars

Manufacturers tweak current golf car offerings

By DEREK RICE

The 'big three' golf car manufacturers have planned few changes to their main lines for 2003, but that does not mean they are resting on their laurels. Club Car and Yamaha Golf Car (YGC) and E-Z-GO Textron are all bringing new features, services or offerings, designed to make life easier for their customers, to the table.

REFURBISHED CARS

Earlier this year, Club Car, based in Augusta, Ga., made a foray into the used golf car market with its REserve program. Club Car now offers customers previously owned and refurbished golf cars backed by the Club Car brand.

Under the program, Club Car

will take back golf cars coming off lease and send them through



Yamaha has introduced its Genius diagnostic system, which allows courses to configure their golf cars with a Palm Pilot.

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.

"There 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 sent 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

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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 to 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 it 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 seg-



Lyn Nelson

ment 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 is not new to the rigors of the job. Nelson has been working in the management end of the golf industry

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GM enjoys Half Moon Bay opportunity

Continued from previous page

since graduating from San Jose State University in 1982.

"I played collegiate golf at San Jose State with such great players as Patty Sheehan and Julie Inkster. I love playing competitive golf, but I also realized that I didn't have a burning desire to play on the LPGA Tour. While attending school I obtained a degree in marketing and I was fortunate to find a way to blend my love for golf and my education into a career," Nelson explained.

Nelson's first position was as a marketing director for Los Altos Hills Country Club, a private club in Silicon Valley. The development of new private clubs in this affluent region in the '80s led to the need for a marketing effort and Nelson willingly accepted the challenge. She learned to focus on the true assets of her club and market those strengths to prospective members.

During time at Los Altos Hills, Nelson delved into the various facets of the club in order to learn how each functioned. It was through this hands-on approach that she developed an understanding of what was necessary for each department to be successful.

"I approached our head chef to learn about the food service business and he put me to work on weekends so that I could see how things were done. I would spend my time in the kitchen as a prep cook," Nelson said. "I did the same with the bartender, and this experience all helped to give me a better understanding of what is required to make these services a true asset for the club."

Nelson's forays into the kitchen, pro shop, maintenance shop and playing with the membership all contributed to her being appointed as the general manager in 1985.

"I was one of the youngest GMs around and one of the few female GMs in the country then," Nelson said. "But there has been a growing trend of more women coming into management positions nationwide and it is a trend that I think will continue."

Nelson came to Half Moon Bay, which boasts layouts designed by both Arnold Palmer and Arthur Hills, in February of this year after a stint as manager at the University Club in Palo Alto, Calif.

"I was honored when I was appointed to the position here because I feel that this is a unique property that has not reached its full potential. The combination of seaside golf with first class accommodations so near to major population areas is remarkable," Nelson said.

Nelson is responsible for the operation of the golf shop, the restaurant, the marketing of the

golf facility, and with joint purchasing and marketing with the on-site Ritz-Carlton Hotel. This makes the golf complex a daily-fee facility, a destination resort and a homeowners club all in one.

It is a chance for her to put all of her hands-on experience to work, especially in the difficult market the golf industry is in.

"Our challenge is the same that many golf courses face. There are more courses for players to choose from and here in California there are many other recreational choices to compete with. Our effort is to first create a seamless operation in order control costs, and stress service to our guests. I feel that it is important to do the little things so that each person that comes to Half Moon Bay will

walk out with a positive memory of their day," Nelson said.

Nelson said she feels it is important to look at the immediate community in order to grow the value of the course. To that end, she has initiated a \$1 greens fee for junior players after 3 p.m. on weekdays as a way to promote new golfers.

Nelson considers herself a manager first and while she sees different approaches between male

and female managers, she doesn't see any advantage to either.

"Men deal better with the mechanical ends of golf operations while women seem to be more detail-oriented about the finer aspects to the operations," she said. "Both attributes are important. I just continue to work to make my facility the best possible just as any general manager — male or female — would." ■



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