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pionships and will be the site of the 2008 Ryder Cup, and says the members-only insignia caught on slowly there but eventually became a good seller at that ultra-private Louisville-area course.

The Cardinal Club, which opened in 2001, tracks shop sales by calculating retail revenue per round, a figure that excludes any guest or golf car fees. Hamburger reports a healthy $10 to $12 per round in retail sales. It has a loyal customer base: The Cardinal Club hosts home matches for the University of Louisville men’s and women’s teams and tapped alumni and school boosters for membership. It also accommodates an estimated 3,000 guest golfers per year, many of them University of Louisville fans, either playing with members or attending events. To sell to this loyal audience, the golf shop was purposely sited just inside the front door to the clubhouse, making it a first stop for most who enter.

Hamburger makes his merchandise visible with a variety of techniques. He and his staff assemble frequent themed displays, picking up on such things as springtime’s Kentucky Derby, mid-summer’s Fourth of July or the fall football season. The head pro also rotates apparel on and off discount tables. One table on wheels, offering 20 percent to 40 percent off, is posted just outside of the shop or moved to other high-visibility areas such as the patio between the bar and the putting green.

“There’s a secret: If you want to get rid of it and put it on sale, if you physically move it out of the shop, it’ll sell better than if it’s within the shop,” Sobecki says. “Whether it’s on a rolling cart with hangers that’s outside or on a sales table in the hallway, people’s perception is, ‘This must be on sale.’ You can put it on a rack in the middle of the shop with a sticker that says 20 percent off and it doesn’t get the same kind of response.”

Mike Hill, director of golf services at Angels Crossing Golf Club near Kalamazoo, Mich., drives sales by handwriting special tags for a select few items in stock. The director of golf services at this public course personally inscribes, “Thanks for shopping Angels Crossing,” and then marks the price way down. Those few bargain items — say a $40 shirt going for $12.95 — are

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Our home is always welcome to unique visitors. In fact, in January alone, we had 12,040* of them.

Of course... some were more unique than others.

*Source: WebTrends, January 2005
GOING TO A LOGO

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placed back in the midst of
the rest of the non-sale mer-
chandise. “It’s there to physi-
cally reward someone who’s
actually going through the
merchandise,” Hill says.

“Now I’m starting to get
golfers coming in looking
for those items.”

Hill doesn’t promote
these deals, but word is get-
ing around and more cus-
tomers are digging through
shirts, sweaters and other
goods to find them. “That’s
what I want to happen,” he
says, knowing that the bar-
gain hunters will find other
must-have items while they
hunt for the price breaks.

Hill brought 25 years of
sales and marketing experi-
ence outside of the golf in-
dustry with him when he
signed on with Angels
Crossing, which opened in
May 2004, and placed an
emphasis on service. “We try
to greet everyone immedi-
ately in the golf shop and get
to know as many by name as
possible,” Hill says. “We
offer our assistance but don’t
badger. There’s a fine line
between being helpful and
being oppressive, and we try
not to cross that line.”

Every piece of clothing is
logoed, with the exception of
some rainwear. Balls with
the Angels Crossing insignia
are also popular because the
course — 18 singular holes
on 350 acres — is a destina-
tion for many golfers. De-
spite being constricted by
temporary quarters of 1,500
square feet in what will be-
come a condo unit once a
clubhouse is constructed,
Hill describes his shop busi-
ness as “just starting to
grow.” He doesn’t analyze
sales per round but says 70
percent of revenue is from
soft goods and 30 percent
from hard goods such as
clubs, shoes, balls and bags.

The goal at The Wilds
Golf Club in Prior Lake,
Minn., is to exceed $500,000
each year in golf shop retail
sales. Shad Gordon, who has
been with the top-ranked
public course since it opened
in 1995, worked his way up
from scrubbing golf cars to
head pro before becoming
general manager two years
ago. He says he stopped ana-
lyzing sales on a per-round
basis and now looks at them
month by month. Most slow
days are related to holidays
and lousy weather, he says.
He responds by gearing holi-
day sales to the likes of
Memorial Day, the Fourth
of July and Labor Day. As
an example, The Wilds dis-
counted anything red, white
or blue by 20 percent to 40
percent during the July 4
holiday.

The weather near Min-
nesota’s Twin Cities can be
brutally cold even in spring
and fall, so The Wilds intro-
duced a “Play the Tempera-
ture” promotion, which Gor-
don describes as his biggest
hit. Golfers are charged the
degree-Fahrenheit reading
that is registered a half-hour
before their tee times. On a
28-degree day, for example,
players pay $28 for greens
fees and a car. “When other
courses are not doing any-
thing, we’re full,” Gordon
says, noting that many
golfers take pride in seeing
how low they can go —
temperature-wise, that is.

The promotion has
worked so well that The
Wilds, according to Gordon,
has trademarked “Pay the
Temperature” and “Play the
Temperature” to keep them
as signature offers. Another
club in the Twin Cities area
has countered with “Play the
Dew Point.”

Golf shop sales increase
on those cold days as well, so
it’s a win-win for the club.
Gordon also uses price re-
ductions to jump-start pur-
chases on bad weather days.

Continued on page 76
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"When it's rainy out, put your raingear on sale," he advises. "You're going to sell more if they need it that same day and if you put a little incentive in there to buy it."

The Wilds shop will occasionally offer packages that bundle a free shirt and hat with greens fees. The clothing items are add-ons to encourage rounds during slow times, like Mother's Day or some other holidays. "Other courses are discounting (greens fees)," Gordon says. "We want our full amount and then we'll throw in value-added products."

The typical Wilds golf shop staffer (excluding the assistant golf professionals) is promoted from some entry-level jobs. "You need to get people who are knowledgeable but also who are personable," Gordon says. They receive salaries of $9 to $10 per hour and share in some of the tips. Currently, there are no commissions for sales, but Gordon is considering that for next year.

The process of developing a logo can be serendipitous. At Angels Crossing, the new course's management team was struggling, even with the help of a marketing agency, to find an appropriate image that wouldn't come off as too religious or too Gothic-influenced. Only after one of the agency's employees nearly rear-ended a Pontiac on the roadways — and noticed how the triangular-shaped outside of the Pontiac logo resembled folded wings behind an upright angel — did a properly graceful logo present itself. The result has been a very popular insignia.

At Bethpage, Rehor and Dick Smith were searching for a logo concept and found it one day while looking out the window of the clubhouse. Smith noticed an image of a "caddie boy" carved into the shutter boards, which had been on the building since it was home to the private Lenox Hills Country Club and, even before that, a private residence.

However you arrive at a logo, there's no denying its importance in driving name recognition and sales.

"Before they make a decision on what they think your quality is, they look at the logo," Sobecki says of prospective members, golfers and retail customers. "It has to be consistent with the level that you're trying to attain."

Bruce Allar is a frequent contributor to Golfdom.
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James Singerling
Executive vice president and CEO of CMAA understands the superintendent’s world

Since 1990, James Singerling has been the executive vice president and CEO of the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA), which will join the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) at the 2007 Golf Industry Show. Prior to his CMAA appointment, he was a corporate official in the Robert Trent Jones Sr. golf course design and management companies and served as vice president and general manager of Coral Ridge Country Club in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Singerling has been a CMAA member for more than 21 years and has enjoyed an outstanding 41-year career in the hospitality industry. He is a certified executive chef with the American Culinary Federation and a Certified Club Manager with CMAA. He is also president of The Club Foundation (the private club industry’s charitable arm), served as president of the Team USA Culinary Foundation from 1992 to 1996 and has been honored as an industry leader of the year by the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Michigan State University and Florida State University.

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Having worked with Robert Trent Jones Sr. for nine years during the height of his marvelous career, I have always known of the need for respect and support for the golf course superintendent. The amazing evolution of the profession was generally passed over by the golfing public. However, Mr. Jones loved meeting with the turfgrass and agronomy students from the great programs at Michigan State and Penn State and learning what these young professionals were bringing to the industry. As a manager, I knew I needed peripheral knowledge of the superintendent's world so that I could work to provide the resources needed to generate the conditions on the playing field of golf.

Those resources not only included the budget dollars but also the human resources and equipment. Most of all, it is management's responsibility to assure that the superintendent can have a productive family life, while providing his professional expertise to the golf facility.
Continued from page 79 to always learn something from every person I would meet or work with, no matter what the position. In my 40-plus years in business I can look back and remember something that has been given to me from every life that I have touched. I owe every success I enjoy to those who have surrounded me.

**Golfdom:** Who are the three most influential people in the golf industry and why?

**Singerling:** Robert Trent Jones Sr. and his wonderful wife, lone, would have had the greatest influence on me because they allowed me to share nine years of his life and to learn their true passion for the game of golf. Valderrama Golf Club’s Jaime “Jimmy” Ortiz Patino, who I am privileged to know as a friend for over 20 years. Jimmy should have his picture in the dictionary next to the word “Perfection.” He has never settled for anything less. His impact on bringing the world of golf together will be legend. And Tim Finchem, who has continued to think “out of the box” and to focus on delivering a future for the game of golf. The leadership initiatives of the PGA Tour in taking Dean Beman’s dream of the World Golf Hall of Fame to reality, then empowering the Golf 20/20 initiative to bring every entity and component that wants to be involved in the future of golf and orchestrating a collaborative atmosphere to plan for that future is a remarkable accomplishment.

**Golfdom:** Who is your favorite golfer?

**Singerling:** It would have to be my wife, Molly. Our time together playing or watching the game being played are the happiest moments of my life.

**Golfdom:** If you could have lunch with anyone, who would it be and what would be the first question you would ask?

**Singerling:** It would be with Barbara Bush and I would ask her why she makes her husband putt those “tap-ins” at this stage in his career.

**Golfdom:** What is your favorite movie?

**Singerling:** It would be Mel Gibson’s “The Passion.”

**Golfdom:** What club in your bag do you hit the best?

**Singerling:** My Nike Ignite Driver.