

Update on the Florida Golf Council



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There is significant news to report today. The last two months have been extremely eventful on several fronts. I will be sharing them with you for the next few moments.

First, there is the news on the Florida Golf Council. Effective June 1, 1992, Bobby Brantley will not be serving the Florida Golf Council as its executive director in Tallahassee. He has resigned to pursue business opportunities in Colorado.

He will be back in Florida in November and has told the council he would like to continue representing their interest in the state capitol upon his return.

I feel that this is a very appropriate move on his part and also to our benefit as well. During the summer and fall months there is no need to fund a lobbyist. The legislature is not in and we could more wisely spend our money during this period.

I still feel as strongly today as I did yesterday that Mr. Brantley is the man for us. His little hiatus from Florida will do much to give this servant of ours a needed rest and when he returns he will be ready and able once again to defend our industry for us. In the interim, President Jack Mathis will be serving in the role of executive director for the council.

At the board meeting of the Florida Golf Council in June we got another shock. Mr. Ray Finch resigned as chairman of the board effective immediately. It was the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Finch which created the Florida Golf Council. He has been our most ardent supporter and much is owed to this man who was willing to put his money where his convictions were.

The good news here is that Mr. Finch has stated he will continue to do whatever he can to see that the Florida Golf Council remains the productive force it has become.

It is only proper to note that the council in its first two years of operation has won some major victories for the golf industry and it has become evident that this association must be kept strong.

There have been discussions about the next chairman should be. There are several candidates at this time but no one has

been selected or has accepted. This is a very demanding job. The next chairman should be able to communicate effectively within the membership and also relate well to the media and our industry's critics.

One of the major stumbling blocks with the Florida Golf Council is funding. There is talk on the FGC board to merge the council with another association. The FGCSA has been mentioned in this regard, as have the Florida Turfgrass Association, the National Golf Foundation, the Golf Course Owners of America and others.

It really does not matter as to what association the council is merged with as long it is on the state level. All of the above mentioned associations would serve as excellent avenues for the council to operate from. The important thing is to keep the Florida Golf Council a viable entity to represent all golf industry interests.

The Florida Golf Council has become well-known in state political circles. We have gained the respect and attention of the lawmakers and regulators. To move in any direction other than forward with our agenda could be disastrous for the industry. We must make all efforts to ensure this association continues to grow and prosper, to do otherwise would be neglecting our duty to our industry.

The make-up of the new board should be similar to the present one in that all major support groups would be involved. All decisions on the direction and activities of the council would be handled through this board. This is going to occur whether we are the base support or some other entity is.

We have talked for many years of what we need. We have been given this opportunity by Mr. Finch through his visionary efforts. It is time to do what should be done. We have come too far to give up this fight. Our future and our industry's future is in our hands. Let's not rest it while we hold it, but massage and knead and mold it into something that people many years from now can say was a job well done.

This will not be an easy task, but then anything easy to do is never worth much.