

Briefs

University courses among best in U.S.

By Peter Blais

MADISON, Wis. — Last month's opening of University Ridge brought to 40 the number of university-owned-and-operated golf courses in the United States.

Developed as a top-notch resort course, the Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed facility is located on 225 acres of rolling hills, meadows and woodlands at the University of Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin Foundation picked up the entire \$5.5-million tab from private donations.

"It's a very good course. The front nine is pretty much out in the open and the back nine wanders through the woods. I expect it will host the NCAA national championship some day," said Jones, designer of Poppy Hills Golf Club in Monterey, Calif., site of last month's NCAA national tournament.

"They built University Ridge with the idea of its becoming *the* course in Wisconsin," said National Golf Foundation Publications Editor Earl Collings. "It should make a name for itself."

Many schools have "name" courses. Yale and Stanford universities and the University of New Mexico had courses rated in *Golf Digest's* Top 100 until "The Great Purge of 1977," as architecture editor Ron Whitten characterizes the three's fall from grace that year.



Karsten Golf Course at Arizona State Univ. is one of 40 university owned and operated courses in the U.S.

"They had all fallen into disrepair," remembered Whitten.

Still, they are excellent courses, added Whitten, as are Eisenhower Golf Course at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Seven Oaks Golf Course at Colgate University and Karsten

Golf Course at Arizona State University.

Just a notch below them, Whitten said, are courses at the University of Illinois, University of Missouri, Ohio State University, University of Michigan, Iowa State University

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Golf ticket taps corporate sports entertainment budget

By Peter Blais

MERRIMACK, N.H. — A New Hampshire company is marketing a ticket that corporations can distribute to clients who could then exchange them for a free round of golf at courses nationwide.

Corporate Sports Incentives is selling the Universal Golf Ticket to national corporations in the hope they will give them to their best customers just as they distribute baseball, basketball, football and hockey tickets.

CSI contends the golf ticket is more valuable than a sports event pass because the golf ticket can be used anytime at many locations, as opposed to the sports ticket that can be used only at a certain date and place. The golf ticket resembles a credit card and can be embossed with the giver's company logo to help the client remember where he got it.

"For the first time, the golf industry can obtain its fair share of corporate funds allocated to entertainment budgets," said company founder Jonathan Adams.

CSI's goal is to sign up 3,000 courses within the next two years. Fifty, mostly in the Northeast, were on board in early June.

"Our major effort right now is to contact and sign up more courses," Adams said.

It costs courses nothing to join and the tickets are not discounted. A course will be reimbursed within 10 days at 100 percent of its published price when tickets are presented for a round of golf.

The program is patterned after CSI's Universal Ski Ticket. Corporations buy the ski ticket for \$42 apiece. It can be exchanged for a free lift ticket at 240 of the country's 300 major ski resorts. Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Hires, Seagrams, General Foods, Nestles', Carnation and Campbell Soups are among the companies that have distributed Universal Ski Tickets to their favored clients over the past five years.

The Universal Golf Ticket works somewhat differently. The price of the \$42 ski ticket was

determined by the lift ticket rate at the most expensive of CSI's participating ski resorts.

With greens fees varying from \$5 to almost \$200 in the United States, a different method was needed. Corporations buy the Universal Golf Ticket for \$32 apiece. Adams anticipates one ticket will be good for a round of golf at 80 percent of the courses joining the program. But some courses require two, three or more tickets, depending on their greens fees.

For example, one ticket is good for 18 holes at Hyannis Golf Club in Massachusetts. Two tickets are needed for 18 holes and a cart at Copper Mountain Resort in Colorado. Three tickets fetch 18 holes and a cart at the Balsams Grand Hotel Resort in New Hampshire.

"If we ever sign on Pebble Beach, it might take something like six tickets," Adams said.

While CSI expects most of the tax-deductible Universal Golf Tickets will be distributed by executives to clients, Adams said they will likely be used as rewards in company sales incentive programs for employees and as gifts for relatives and friends.

"We've sold a lot of ski tickets at Christmastime as stocking stuffers," he said.

CSI has already sold its first load of golf tickets to a corporate customer. Adams expects sales to accelerate, especially as more courses sign up for the program.

More courses will join the program as it gains credibility, he said. Ski areas with golf courses, because of their familiarity with the Universal Ski Ticket, have been among the first to enlist for the golf program, Adams added.

"My only question as a golf course manager would be 'How do I know if I'll be paid if I accept this ticket?' We've got a solid, five-year history with the ski areas. In fact, the ski areas have a greater exposure than golf courses. Killington (Vt.) runs through something like 16,000 skiers a day. A golf course, at most, is only going to have some-

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Royal Golf & Tennis develops innovative training program

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Some innovative career training programs developed by Royal Golf & Tennis, Ltd., in conjunction with local educational institutions, may prove to be trend-setters in the resort operations industry.

Continuing its active role in training and development of its employees, Royal Golf & Tennis has added to its usual in-house seminars by collaborating with Hilton Head-area educators to create a series of training programs designed specifically for the resort industry. Other resort operators are even taking advantage of the training curriculum.

The first step was the development of a two-part Grounds Maintenance Program. Working with the Technical College of the Lowcountry and the Beaufort-Jasper Career Education Center, Royal Golf & Tennis developed the curriculum for Turf Management, designed for golf maintenance senior or supervisory staff; and Horticulture, designed for general landscape staff.

"We first looked at golf maintenance training because it's such a big part of what we do," said Margaret Vaughan, director of human resources for Royal Golf & Tennis, which manages and operates all resort amenities, including 81 holes of golf and 36 tennis courts, at Hilton Head's Port Royal and Shipyard Plantations.

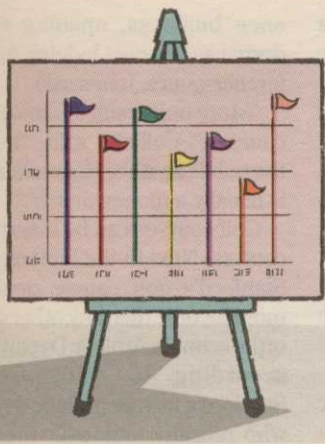
"Our goal is to help people develop themselves so that they — and the operation — are the best they can be."

Jack Kolb, instructor for the Turf Management course, said, "The main thrust of the course is to give students the 'whys' — not to tell them how to cut the greens. We also hit safety real hard."

During 15 two-hour sessions, the Turf Management course covers tractor safety, equipment and tool safety, human relations skills, plant pest control, plant nutrients and turf management techniques.

Royal Golf & Tennis pays the tuition fees for

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MICH. OWNERS FORM CHAPTER

Michigan golf course owners have formed a chapter of the National Golf Course Owners Association.

President Jim Scott, owner and operator of four courses including Gull Lake View Golf Club and Resort in Augusta, said owners "will now have a better opportunity to share information and work toward solving mutual problems. We also have plans to promote the game of golf in our state. As a state chapter we are looking forward to a close relationship with the national association."

Vice president is Bill Howard of Sasketoon Golf Club in Alto, and secretary/treasurer is John Dodge of Timber Ridge Golf Club in East Lansing.

Mike Hughes, executive director of the NGCOA, said creating organizations in each state is important so owners can easily work together on mutually important issues.

"With the legislative and regulatory pressures coming to bear on the golf business, everyone should realize the need to act on both the national and state level," Hughes said.

Hughes said the Charleston, S.C.-based NGCOA has nearly tripled the number of member courses in the last eight months and now includes 900.

VA. COMPANY BUYS THE RESERVE

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. — Owners of The Reserve Golf & Tennis Club have signed a letter of intent to sell the facilities to a Virginia-based company. The new owners plan to build a second 18-hole championship course.

Michael Dillman, executive vice president of The Reserve Estates Development, said only the golf and tennis club portion of the 2,690-acre residential development will be sold to The Golf Group, of Leesburg, Va.

Currently, club membership is restricted to residents of The Reserve. Dillman said that policy may change. Still being negotiated, he said, is whether one of the Reserve Golf Courses will become semi-private.

Day-to-day management will be turned over to Landmark Club Management Co., Landmark manages The Palm Beach Polo Club, among others.

CLUB ARTWORK AVAILABLE

BRIDGEPORT, Pa. — Country Club Editions is making available limited edition commissioned art exclusively to golf and country clubs.

Clubs pick a scene, supply photographs or a video, and Country Club Editions will have paintings done by award-winning artists.

Country Club Editions was formed by Bill Vare, a golf enthusiast and former tournament chairman for Manufacturer's Country Club in suburban Philadelphia.