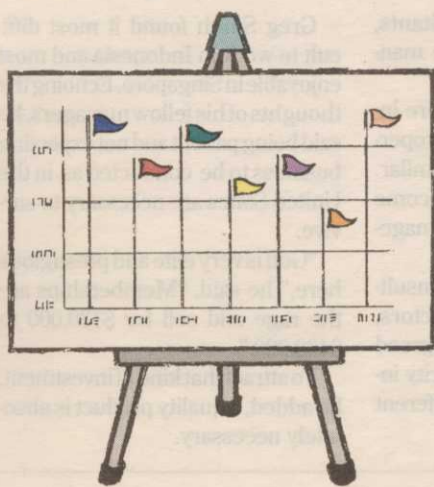


Briefs



NGF NAMES CONTROLLER

JUPITER, Fla. — Gloria Ortega Rex has been named controller for the National Golf Foundation.

Prior to joining the NGF, Rex worked 10 years in corporate and public accounting. Most recently, she worked for First Federal of the Palm Beaches in West Palm Beach, Fla., where she was assistant vice president and assistant controller.

She also served three years as a senior auditor with the accounting firm Coopers and Lybrand in West Palm Beach.

Rex is a member of the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting from the University of Florida. She is completing her MBA with a concentration in finance at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

MARRIOTT TO MANAGE IPSWICH CC

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Ipswich Limited Partnership has named Marriott Golf to manage Ipswich Country Club near Boston. It is the 17th facility in Marriott's golf management portfolio.

Under terms of the agreement, Marriott Golf is responsible for managing all phases of the operation, including membership activities, golf, merchandising, turf management, food and beverage facilities and catering.

Ipswich Country Club is set on 350 acres of wooded landscape 35 minutes from Boston on the North Shore. It boasts a 57,000-square-foot clubhouse reminiscent of a country estate and an 18-hole Robert Trent Jones Sr.-designed championship golf course. The facility also offers an outdoor swimming pool, fitness center, sauna and tennis.

Rob Bartley, formerly head golf professional at Marriott's Golf Club at Wind Watch on Long Island, has been named director of golf.

HOOD OPENS MYRTLE BEACH BRANCH

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — Hood Management Group, a Raleigh, N.C., real estate firm has opened a branch here specializing in consulting and recruitment services for country clubs.

Owner Gary Skirry opened the office in October to deal with managers and executive chefs at country clubs.

"In today's fiercely competitive market, burdened with bankruptcies, low margins, impossible financing and fickle consumers, realizing a return on an investment is increasingly difficult," Skirry said.

Referring to HMG's executive search services, he said his extensive background in the hospitality field gives him a firsthand understanding of the industry's needs.

Golf course management companies gain popularity in Asian countries

Southeast Asia is particularly attractive for big and small firms

By Bob Spiwak

Starting from ground zero in golf course and property development experience, many Asian developers are hiring management companies to run their operations.

International Marketing Group, created in 1960 by Mark McCormack, is one of the largest working in the area.

"In the 1990s, Southeast Asia is going to be the growth area for all sports. Golf course design, development and management could represent huge dollars," McCormack said.

In the last three years, IMG has opened offices in Sydney, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Singapore, under the umbrella of IMG Resort Management. Heading the operation is Fred Settle, vice president of operations, Asia-Pacific.

Smaller management companies also exist. The Paradise Bay Golf Resort in Singapore is managed by Avtar Sighu. In addition to the course, his management responsibilities include 500 villas and 100 apartments.

Sighu said most Singapore-area clubs are self managed and rarely hire outside firms.



In the 1990s, Southeast Asia is going to be the growth area for all sports. Golf course design, development and management could represent huge dollars.'

— IMG President Mark McCormack

Australian Golf Management Services is directed by Greg Smith, who runs a five-person office in Singapore.

"What we do," he said, "is put people in place, then walk in and manage the operation.

Management companies' involvement varies. IMG's Settle noted his company works as a consultant, assisting with everything from agronomics and back-up support to full management of the entire facility.

"We will provide a general manager, course superintendent and head professional/director of golf," he said.

Tracy Kennedy is national marketing coordinator for Arnold Palmer Golf Course Management Co., an IMG subsidiary that

also manages golf properties. Kennedy stresses total involvement.

"We work with the clients developing marketing plans. We will even provide the score cards for the course and handle their press releases," she said.

With a multitude of cultures, religions, ethics and nationalities in the region, there are differences in how business is conducted.

Said Sighu: "With the mushrooming of golf, experienced people are scarce," particularly in course maintenance and overall management. "There are just different ways of doing things. Procedures are not as they are in the West."

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GC of Miami operators see better times ahead

By Mark Leslie

The Persian Gulf War, bad local economic conditions, terrible springtime weather and unprecedented competition combined for a bad 1991 that has drawn local media fire against PGA Tour-operated Golf Club of Miami. But Dade County officials defend the PGA Tour operators, and both are optimistic the 54-hole facility has turned the corner toward profit-making times.

"Things have already turned," said Metro Dade County Administrative Assistant for Finance Dick Slocum. "The parking lot is packed."

Gary Dee, director of operations for PGA Tour Public Golf Inc., said: "While 1991 operating results were less than anticipated, we

think in 1992 things will continue to get better for us."

Dee and Slocum point to a combination of factors causing the facility to fall short of PGA Tour projections when it signed a management contract with Dade County in 1988.

The two Robert Trent Jones-designed golf courses — far from their superior condition in the days when Arnold Palmer was the professional and Jackie Gleason a member — had to be restored, including all new greens and tees. The clubhouse had partially burned down and many members had found other clubs. And the facility faced multiple other short- and long-term obstacles when neighbors asked Dade County to buy it to prevent a subdivision being built.

Dade, which successfully operates five other courses, bought the facility in 1988 and hired a manager to create a "type of mini-Doral complex," Slocum said. The residents were excited about that notion, especially after PGA Tour was hired and built the third 18-hole course.

"Whereas the county doesn't operate country club-type facilities, we said that if we could attract a hotel to the site we would require the hotel operator to sell memberships to the community. And we said we would provide a clubhouse," Slocum said.

"South Florida hasn't built a major golf hotel-resort since the early 1960s when Doral came on line. Convention planners and tourist

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LinksCorp shoots for 20 courses

CHICAGO — Two leading golf management executives have teamed up with three Midwest venture capital firms to form LinksCorp, an equity-based company that hopes to acquire and manage up to 20 golf courses over the next five years throughout the United States.

LinksCorp, headquartered in Northfield, Ill., also acquired its first golf course, Lakeside Country Club in Atlanta, Ga.

Combining forces in this venture are Ben Blake, LinksCorp's chief executive officer, George R. Hanlon Jr., its president and chief financial officer, and their financial supporters — Batterson, Johnson & Wang Venture Partners and William Blair Venture Partners, both of Chicago, and Norwest Venture Partners, L.P. of Minneapolis.

"With the lack of equity in the marketplace today, coupled with the availability of quality golf courses for sale, we believe LinksCorp is in an excellent position to reach its growth goals while building a golf company comprised of well-managed and fun-to-play facilities," said Blake.

"One of our primary goals in forming LinksCorp was to establish a strong capital base to ensure our long-term viability," said Hanlon, founder of Southern Golf Management Group of Jacksonville, Fla. "The association with our venture capital partners has positioned us well and provides us with the financial strength needed to take advantage of current market conditions in the golf arena."

Prior to launching LinksCorp, Blake was executive vice president at Northbrook-based Kemper Sports Management, responsible for all golf operations including Kemper Lakes. Blake, a member of the PGA of America, also has experience in tournament management as co-executive director of the 1989 PGA Championship and executive director of the LPGA Women's Kemper Open.

As owner of Southern Golf, Hanlon developed Rivers Edge Golf Course in Atlanta, and Oak Hills in Columbia, S.C. Prior to founding Southern, he was chief financial officer and executive vice president of Stokes-O'Steen Communities, Inc., a golf course community

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Civil Rights Act could affect clubs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Civil Rights Act of 1991 is considered the most far-reaching bill enacted into law during the second session of the 102nd Congress. Its impact on employment discrimination is considerable, although tax-exempt, bona fide private clubs are exempt.

In an article written for the January/February 1992 issue of *Club Director*, the National Club Association counsel G. John Tyssie noted in part:

The act amends two existing federal laws: Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the recently enacted Americans with Disabilities Act. Those two laws prohibit discrimination by private employers against people on the basis of their race, sex, national origin, color, religion or disability.

The language in Title VII that exempts private clubs from its coverage has not changed. A bona fide private membership club that is exempt from taxation under Sec-

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Mgt. firms say S'east Asia will be future hot spot

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Added Sighu: "In this (Singapore) area, there is more flexibility. In Thailand or Indonesia, there are a lot of socially higher-level people," and visitors' expectations vary from country to country.

Smith agrees lack of experience is a problem.

"The local people have a lack of construction experience...in building golf courses. The future big industry here will be the restoration and renovation of golf courses," he said.

"Different strokes for different folks," added Settle. "You have to expect major problems when you are dealing with different cultures and protocols. In fairness, we have to remember this when working in this part of the world."

Kennedy said the Palmer Co., "went through a period of time when people were leery of starting projects from the ground up. It's changing now. But we have to remember we are dealing with different equipment, different time frames, different cultures and protocols."

Settle feels time will rectify the problems as local contractors and managers gain experience.

"It's more of a training process than in the United States," he said. "(In Southeast Asia) They are slower to implement procedures, systems and programs, but it is more of a learning curve."

According to Smith, one way to avoid problems between owner and architect is by insisting a coordinator be on the job to oversee construction. Smith told of a course that did not have a coordinator. The

designer returned and found his specifications were not being followed. One green, in particular, was nowhere near the specifications in the profile. The two could not reach an accommodation and the designer walked off the job.

The designer said the owner had a master plan drawn up. On that basis, he sold memberships. Once the club was sold out, he "cut corners," even to the point of refusing to use clean sand for the greens.

Memberships are the most important consideration for many

properties, Sighu said. Paradise Bay has advertised locally, but not in Japan. The resort will open nine holes this summer and the remaining nine by year's end. Membership sales are a major part of his responsibilities.

In a prepared document, Settle noted: "While there is no 'winning formula' in resort or club development, inspired developers and their talented teams can plan carefully to build successful facilities. The strongest support and best friends to developers in such endeavors

are their economic consultants, master planners and on-site management."

Management companies are involved in a variety of Asian properties. Their problems are similar. Solutions, experts say, will come from experience and good management practices.

For Western designers, consultants, managers and contractors, patience is key. Managers agreed there can be no ethnocentricity involved when dealing with different cultures.

Greg Smith found it most difficult to work in Indonesia and most enjoyable in Singapore. Echoing the thoughts of his fellow managers, he said being patient and not expecting business to be conducted as in the United States are necessary to survive.

"Golf is very elite and prestigious here," he said. "Memberships are the rage and sell for \$130,000 to \$400,000."

To attract that kind of investment, he added, a quality product is absolutely necessary.

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Turtle Creek GC names new GM

ROCKLEDGE, Fla. — David Scull has been appointed the new director of golf and general manager of Turtle Creek Golf Club here.

Robert Holzman, Arnold Palmer Golf Management Co.'s chief operating officer, announced the appointment. Turtle Creek is managed by Palmer. The public facility has a championship 18-hole golf course and award-winning restaurant, The Fairways.

Scull is a Class "A" member of the PGA of America and has been in the golf club industry for 10 years. His most recent position was as golf professional and manager for River's Edge Golf Club in Atlanta, where he directed daily operations, membership sales and marketing. Prior to that, he worked with Summer Beach Resort in Amelia Island, Fla. as a golf professional with management responsibilities.

Scull was awarded a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Texas and has attended PGA business schools over the years.