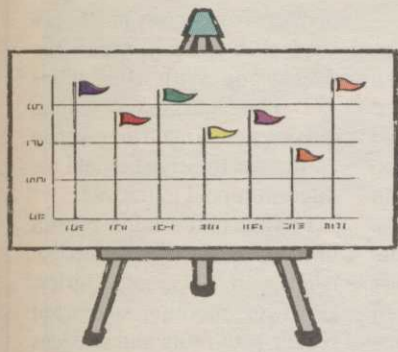


BRIEFS



BROOKS NEW VP AT CAROLINA GOLF

Carolina's Golf Services Inc. has named David Brooks vice president of operations and development and J. William Hamilton vice president of golf operations. Brooks will oversee all construction, development and maintenance activities while Hamilton coordinates pro shop, grill room and clubhouse functions. Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C., Carolina's Golf operates four North Carolina clubs and is building a fifth.

GOLF ENTERPRISES SIGNS 20-YEAR LEASE WITH PARADISE KNOLLS

Golf Enterprises Inc. of Santa Monica, Calif., has signed a 20-year lease agreement to manage Paradise Knolls Golf Course in Riverside. The facility includes a pro shop, clubhouse and restaurant. New concrete cart paths and an upgraded irrigation system are planned. Golf Enterprises manages 24 public and private facilities.

OAK TERRACE CC PURCHASED BY REALEN

PHILADELPHIA — Delaware Valley homebuilder Realen Homes Inc. has purchased Oak Terrace Country Club. The property includes a private, 18-hole course and 178 acres of undeveloped land. Plans are to build nine new holes and rebuild nine of the old 18. The Resolution Trust Corp. had taken over the property and retained Legg Mason Realty Group to sell it.

MERGER REUNITES EX-LANDMARKERS

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. — National Golf Management Co. and Golf Pacific Group have merged under the National Golf name. The new company, which reunites former Landmark employees Buzz Gill, Joe Hough and Tony Campanaro, remains in Indian Wells. National Golf recently signed a consulting agreement with The Field Golf Club (formerly Desert Dunes) in Desert Hot Springs. It also operates Trappers Turn Golf Club in Wisconsin Dells, Wis.

BROWN TO LEAVE INDY CLUB

Former Club Managers Association of America President Kenneth Brown is leaving his executive vice president post at the Indianapolis Athletic Club March 1, and turning his attention full time to golf. Brown is co-owner of Twin Lakes Golf Club in Carmel and Sunset Hills Country Club in Pekin, Ill. He plans to form investor groups to purchase, lease and manage additional golf courses.



Kenneth Brown

Head to Head

Architects (and rounds played) rise to the challenge of "big name" competition

By MARK LESLIE

Notoriety, variety and fierce competition. They are common elements in the seven U.S. cities that boast golf courses designed by the Big Four: Pete Dye, Tom Fazio, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer.

While each designer aims for superiority in this good-natured rivalry, management at each course desires to draw the most golfers to its facility. Yet, instead of being hurt by top-notch competition, golf areas like Hilton Head, Myrtle Beach and Palm Springs thrive because of it.

"The great thing about all these architects is that each has his own unique style. From a marketing standpoint, it would be a great advantage to have a little bit of every-

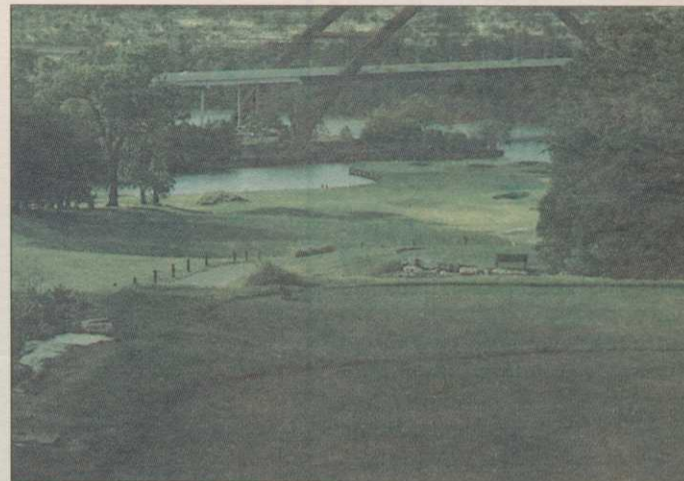
thing. Golfers would enjoy that," said Stever Harker, vice president of marketing for American Golf Corp.

"A client will ask us if we have a problem being five miles from a Fazio course or eight miles from a Nicklaus course," said Palmer design partner Ed Seay. "I say, 'Couldn't you get a piece of property right next door to them?'"

Design a course in a community that sports Dye, Nicklaus and Palmer tracks? "I'd rather do that than anything," agreed Fazio.

"When you come in [a town] behind them, you try to do something new. That's the fun of it," said Dye, adding that he returns to a number of his courses every

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The city of Austin, Texas, can boast an entry from each of golf course architecture's Big Four. They are (clockwise from top left): The Hills of Lakeway designed by Jack Nicklaus; the Austin Country Club by Pete Dye; the Lakeside Course at Barton Creek Resort from Arnold Palmer; and the Barton Creek-Fazio course by Tom Fazio.

Marketing Idea of the Month

Breeding goodwill, new customers; all in the name of a worthy cause

By PETER BLAIS

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Imagine generating \$33,000 in late September from a course that, on its best midsummer day, makes around \$7,500. While you're at it, think about attracting a huge pool of new daily-fee players and gaining invaluable goodwill in your community?

That's what owner/manager Vince Alfonso did Sept. 28, at The Rail golf course. In the process he helped provide Christmas dinner for more than 2,000 needy Springfield families and candy-filled Christmas stockings for 1,900 children.

The Rail, in conjunction with Truck Centers Inc. of Springfield, raised \$33,000 (up 50 percent from a year earlier) at its second annual Friend-In-

Deed Appreciation Day held the last Monday in September. That represents almost 20 percent of the \$177,000 collected by *The State Journal Register's* fund-raising campaign for needy Springfield families.

Alfonso's motives were primarily philanthropic, although the marketing benefits attached are undeniable.

"I look at giving something back to the community as a responsibility," Alfonso said. "God gave us a beautiful piece of property. No one benefits if I can't make a profit. But it is also my responsibility as a conscientious steward to do something more with it than just make money."

"It would be difficult to take that Monday out of our June-July-August season. But

Continued on page 39

LinksCorp buys Missouri club

INDEPENDENCE, Mo. — LinksCorp, a golf course acquisition and management company headquartered in Northfield, Ill., has bought the 18-hole Rockwood Golf Club here.

Ben Blake, president and chief executive officer of LinksCorp, announced that Steve Ewry, 45, will be Rockwood's general manager. Ewry, a PGA member, comes to Rockwood from Kanawha Country Club in Charleston, W.Va. He has more than 20 years experience in the golf business.

LinksCorp plans improvements to the 6,000-yard, par-70 course that plays over 90 acres and also to the 12,000-square-foot clubhouse.

Marketing Idea of the Month

Continued from page 37

September is still beautiful golf weather and has become a prime time for us."

This is how Friend-In-Deed Appreciation Day works. Anyone paying \$150 gets one of the 128 slots in the afternoon shotgun start; \$125 secures one of the equal number of morning tee times; and \$100 gets a round at any future date within the next year. The entry fee allows participants into all festivities, which include breakfast, lunch and din-

ner, a guaranteed-winner drawing for a \$22,000 truck, and tickets for thousands of dollars in additional door prizes contributed by local merchants.

The costs?

The course is tied up for one day and 256 rounds. Carts are included in the entry fee. Based on midsummer rates of \$32 and 250 rounds, that represents about \$7,500 of lost income. Rates are the same though rounds are fewer during the shorter daylight hours of early fall.

If all the \$100 rounds sold out, the course would be obligated to provide another 256 free rounds over the next year. The numbers, so far, have been well below 256. And those taking advantage of the \$100 offer frequently bring friends or clients when they cash in their round, generating additional revenue for The Rail.

Food is another expense. Most is contributed by vendors. The chef also donates his time and talent.

Then there are administrative expenses. Participating businesses in the Friend-In-Deed campaign are required to absorb any cost associated with fundraising efforts, allowing 100 percent of the money raised to be passed on to needy families.

"Administrative costs are the biggest — my secretary's time, paper, promotional materials, flyers. It adds up," Alfonso said.

But it's worth it for the sense of being able to give something back to the community, he added. The *Journal Register* promotes the event, generating publicity and invaluable goodwill for The Rail.

Interestingly, most players came from out of town. Alfonso attributes that to participants viewing the event as a golden opportunity to play somewhere other than their home course and to help a worthy cause. The \$100-150 is also much more than the \$32 local golfers are used to and may scare some off, he added.

Out-of-town participants often return because they liked the course. And those who paid \$100 to play at a future date often bring friends, who pay full freight, to fill out their foursome.

Alfonso said he was very happy with the \$33,000 raised, although it was \$17,000 below his originally stated goal. The afternoon slots sold out, as did most of the morning tee times. But the future rounds at \$100 apiece fell short of projections.

Organizers set the lofty \$50,000 goal after upgrading the \$12,000 truck for the 1991 drawing to a \$22,000 truck in 1992. But the more expensive vehicle didn't seem to make a difference. And participants found it difficult to believe organizers guaranteed someone would win the truck — donated by H. John Hopkins and Larry O'Connor at Truck Center — rather than giving it away only if a participant got a hole-in-one, Alfonso said.

"I wouldn't say we were disappointed we didn't make \$50,000," he said. "Surprised might be a better word. It just shows no matter how good you think an idea is, you have to allow for reasonable growth. We raised \$11,000 more than the previous year. That's pretty darn good. You have to set realistic growth goals."

Figuring past participants represent their best market, The Rail is already mailing promotional materials to those golfers and offering them first shot at preferred tee times. Past players are also being encouraged to sign up three friends. Remaining slots will be opened to the general public in June.



This was the festive scene last Sept. 28, at The Rail golf club in Springfield, Ill.



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