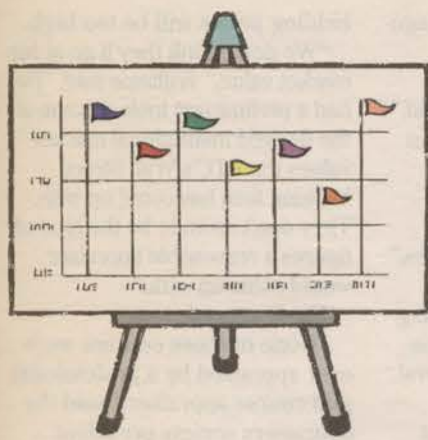


## BRIEFS



## AGC ADDS KEY WEST RESORT

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — American Golf Corp. has acquired Key West (Fla.) Resort Golf Resort. The Key West course is located between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean at the southernmost tip of the United States. The course was constructed in 1923-24. The course was re-designed in the 1980s by Rees Jones.

## HILTON TAKES OVER INNISBROOK

TARPON SPRINGS, Fla. — Hilton Hotels Corp. has announced a new management agreement with Innisbrook, one of the country's premier golf and meeting resorts. Effective April 1, Hilton began managing all operations at the Innisbrook Hilton Resort. Stan Wadsworth, president of Golf Host Resorts, will remain owner of the property.

## NEW MANAGER SET TO REOPEN EMERSON

EMERSON, N.J. — Emerson Golf Club will reopen in early May as a daily-fee public golf course. C.O.P.M./Links Management Corp. will manage the course. C.O.P.M./Links Management Corp. is a public golf course and club management company, owned jointly by North American Golf, Inc. and Club Operations and Property Management. Emerson Golf Club occupies 127 acres in Emerson and Oradell, in Bergen County, N.J. The Emerson facility operated for two years as Bird Hills Golf Club. Rivervale Realty was awarded possession and operation of the course earlier this year in a foreclosure proceeding.

## ARIZ. GOLF MARKETING FIRM FORMED

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Two Phoenix-area marketing executives have formed Communication Links to provide a wide range of marketing communications services to the golf industry. "We think the timing is ideal to start a marketing company specializing solely on the promotion of the golf industry," said David Gilbertson, formerly general manager of Evans Public Relations in Phoenix. Michael Petty is president of Communication Links and former marketing director at Stonecreek Golf Club in Phoenix and Karsten Golf Course at ASU in Tempe, Ariz.

## LAGOON GOLF &amp; RACKET HONORED

*Nikkei Trendy*, the Japanese magazine, has named Hawaii's Lagoon Golf and Racket Club the No. 1 resort in North and South America, Asia and Japan. Japanese-owned Sanctuary Cove Pines in Australia was No. 2. The courses were ranked in terms of a challenging layout, price of golf and the standard of hotels, restaurant and clubhouse.

## Many groups lining up bids on Landmark properties

By PETER BLAIS

Membership groups, management companies, financial businesses, Wall Street investment banking firms, wealthy individuals and many others are supposedly interested in the upcoming auction of former Landmark Land Companies' properties being conducted by The Resolution Trust Corp. July 14 in Dallas.

"From what I hear, it sounds like everybody in the world will be bidding," said Randy Williams, Club Corporation of America's executive vice president of new business. "The RTC has supposedly received over 1,000 inquiries."

The six properties have a book value of \$740 million and include some of the world's premier championship golf courses and resorts. They are Mission Hills Country Club, PGA West, LaQuinta Hotel Golf & Tennis Club and Carmel Valley Ranch, all in California; Palm



The Ocean Course at Kiawah Island is among the former Landmark Land Co. properties that will be on the RTC auction block in mid-July. Membership groups, large corporations and wealthy individuals are all expected to make bids on the legendary golf course properties.

*'From what I hear, it sounds like everybody in the world will be bidding.'*

— Club Corp. of America Vice President Randy Williams

Beach Polo & Country Club in Florida; and Kiawah Island Resort in South Carolina.

RTC will auction off the resorts individually and in groups to try to provide a competitive investment opportunity for both individual and institutional buyers.

Several membership groups at the private clubs are planning strong bids in the hopes of walking away from the auction block with those properties.

"They are the logical purchasers of the private clubs," said Laurenc Hirsh, president of the Society of Golf Course Appraisers.

"They have the most to lose in terms of lifestyle and property values of their adjacent property if a company buys their course. Economically, there may be 400 members to spread the risk and they aren't interested in the course making money. A company would be interested in the course showing a profit, which will affect its bid."

Tom Hill is president of the members' group developing a package for Palm Beach Polo & Country Club. The 45-hole course, polo club and equestrian center, with a total book value of \$54 million, has

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### Marketing Idea of the Month

## Accurate practice range translates into additional course revenues

By PETER BLAIS

*It's a Thursday night and the serious golfer stops by the practice range on the way home from work. He grabs a 7-iron and takes aim at the flag marked 150 yards. Experience tells him he should drop the ball right on top of the flagstick. Instead it falls 10 yards short. Maybe he mishit it. He swings again and the same thing happens. Several balls later frustration starts to build as he begins changing his swing to accommodate the posted distances, whose accuracy he has started to question. The same thing happens as he changes clubs and targets. By the time he reaches the bottom of his ball bucket he realizes his blood pressure has risen more than the quality of his game. He storms back to his car, slams the door and vows never to return to a facility that can't accurately measure the distance from Point A to Point B.*

Robert Guenther believes similar scenarios play themselves out fairly often at practice ranges around the country, costing centers customers and profits.

But it is a fairly simple and inexpensive matter to correct, according to the Hale Irwin Golf Services vice president.

Guenther presented a "cost-effective" means his company now offers for letting golfers know actual distances from tee station to target green. Guenther discussed the company's new service during Idear Nite at February's National Golf Course Owners Association annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

The system is being used at the Hale Irwin Golf Learning Center in St. Louis and "has gotten a lot of positive feedback from golfers."

The company first designed a *Yardage*

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## NCA: Dues deduction repeal to hurt clubs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Gerard F. Hurley, executive vice president of the National Club Association, testified before the House Ways & Means Committee in late March on the Administration's proposal to repeal club dues deductibility and reduce the deduction for business meals.

"While clubs are willing to pay their fair share to help revive the economy and reduce the deficit, we believe the club and hospitality industries and their many employees have been unfairly targeted," Hurley told the committee. "We believe in a strong economy and in investing for the future. The private club community is a part of that future."

"If the deduction for club dues is repealed and business-meals and entertaining deductibility is reduced to 50 percent, the financial impact on club employees, mid-level executives, small business, club members and the economy will be just the opposite. Not only would the economic viability of club employers be threatened, such action could cost jobs."

NCA estimates that 68,000 full-time positions would be threatened in the club community if the changes to deductibility are passed. The loss in payroll taxes would be approximately \$140 million per year. This does not consider the tens of thousands of part-time jobs and related payroll taxes

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## American mgt. companies see Asian market in different light

By PETER BLAIS

The two giants among American golf course management companies view the Asian market in totally different lights.

"From our perspective we have a very lucrative market here [North America], so why defuse our focus," said Joe Guerra of American Golf Corp.

"There are a number of Asian companies that are doing a good job there already."

Club Corporation of America has an opposing outlook.

"We think Asia represents a big potential market for our services," said Jerry Dickenson, chairman of Club Corporation of America's Club Resorts Group.

"There is an emerging interest for golf in Asia. We see a lot of opportunity in China, especially along the South Coast and Hong Kong. The area has billions of dollars of office buildings and hotels, just the type of market we are looking for."

The fact that most Asian facilities are private may help explain why the companies view the region so differently. AGC has made its stake primarily in the public course sector. CCA, while it is the nation's second largest manager of public facilities through its GolfCorp. subsidiary, is primarily known as a private club operator.

CCA made some inroads in the

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## Irwin practice facility

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Card that shows the entire practice range, each tee station and target green locations. Greens are identified by different colored flags, allowing the golfer to easily match up the target green with the corresponding colored flag drawn on the *Yardage Card*.

Below each flag on the card is the exact distance from the middle of the tee box at that specific station to the target green. The pro shop staff informs golfers how far in back or in front of the center

line the stations are located that particular day. The golfer simply adds or subtracts that many yards from the posted distances to calculate the exact yardage to each target green.

The entire tee area is 24 yards wide, allowing turf about three weeks to recover before stations return to that particular location, Guenther said.

The 630 distances noted on the cards were obtained by using a laser, triangulation of points, and a spreadsheet program.

Guenther's method for determining distances reduced the number of measurements needed to just twice the number of targets. Irwin's Learning Center has nine targets meaning 18 laser-measured distances were needed.

"We used a laser, but that wasn't absolutely necessary. A marked rope would have worked just as well. And any practice facility is bound to have plenty of rope around," Guenther said.

The card is laminated to protect it from the elements and affixed to the bag stand at each station. Laminating costs were about \$1 per card.

Irwin is offering to produce the cards for any practice range or golf course nationwide. Site visits aren't necessary. Local staff can measure distances and forward them to Guenther, who inputs the information into the WordPerfect software and produces the *Yardage Cards* on an HP LaserJet printer.

"The cards are only as accurate as the information provided, though," Guenther cautioned.

The Hale Irwin Learning Center is the only facility using the cards thus far. Guenther said several course owners have approached him since the NGCOA

conference about reproducing the cards for their ranges.

While he has not determined a price, he expects it to be "fairly inexpensive."

While figures aren't available that would document the cards' effects on profits, Guenther points to the positive response from golfers and the early success of the St. Louis Learning Center as evidence that the cards help.

"The center opened in July 1992," he noted. "Two other ranges are within a mile and we have more than held our own against them. The cards have provided us with a competitive edge."

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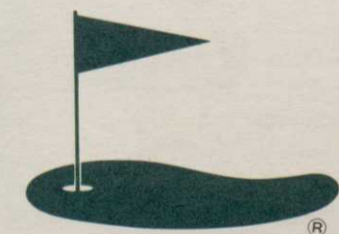
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## Panel hopes to make golf more accessible to disabled players

CLEMSON, S.C. — Clemson University and Indiana University have taken the lead in formatting a national task force to make golf more accessible to the disabled.

The National Forum on Accessible Golf, a panel of disabled golfers and representatives of the golf industry, was established to identify major issues and concerns as they relate to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); explore and articulate specific solutions to these issues and concerns; and develop strategies and deadlines for addressing these issues.

"I think everyone involved is getting a fresh perspective from this group," said Dr. Larry Allen, head of Clemson's Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management Department, one of the organizers of the task force. "The golf industry representatives get an up-close look at the challenges faced by disabled golfers, while at the same time they are given the opportunity to share their concerns on the various issues."

The task force was formed at Myrtle Beach at the first meeting of the National Forum on Golf and the Americans with Disabilities Act, co-sponsored by Clemson and the National Center on Accessibility at Indiana University. Disabled golfers from across the country met with representatives of major professional and amateur golf governing bodies.

One of the most prevalent messages of the four-day conference was that disabled golfers are not looking for golf courses built just for disabled individuals.

"Disabled golfers are most concerned with maintaining the integrity of the golf course," Allen said. "Nobody wants a flat, unchallenging golf course, Disabled golfers just want access."

The task force is compiling a report based on recommendations made during the meetings. The report will be sent to the Architecture and Transportation Barriers Compliance Review Board and the U.S. Department of Justice for review.

A second national forum, tentatively scheduled for late August, is also being organized.