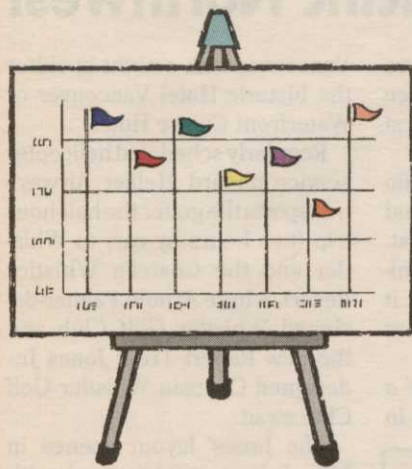


BRIEFS

**LUERSEN TO MANAGE THE WOODLANDS**

THE WOODLANDS, Texas — Tom Luersen has been promoted to managing director of The Woodlands Conference Center and Resort here. In his new position, Luersen is responsible for the overall management and operation of the conference center, including the Tournament Players Course at The Woodlands. Luersen joined The Woodlands in 1991 as director of operations. Prior to that, he served as resident manager at the Kingsmill Resort and Conference Center in Williamsburg, Va.

GREAT AMERICAN RELOCATES

DALLAS — Great American Clubs, Inc. has relocated its corporate offices here, according to President Paul John Daly. Note the new address and phone numbers: Great American Clubs, Inc., 3131 McKinney Ave., Suite 200, Dallas, Texas, 75204; telephone — 214-871-6070; fax — 214-871-3117.

CAMPBELL TO DIRECT GOLF ON LANAI

ISLAND OF LANAI, Hawaii — Gary H. Campbell has been named director of golf here. His responsibilities will include all aspects of administration and operation of the island's two resort courses: The Challenge at Manele (opening in December 1993) and The Experience at Koele. Campbell was most recently senior vice president of operations at Waikoloa Land Company in Kohala Coast.

BRADY TAKES OVER AT LEE'S HILL

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. — GolfSouth and Lee's Hill Partnership, owners of the Lee's Hill Golf Club here, have announced the appointment of Marc Brady as club manager and golf professional. Prior to joining Lee's Hill, Brady was head pro at Killlearn Country Club in Tallahassee, Fla., home of the PGA Sprint Classic.

GPA SECURES TWO CONTRACTS

HORSHAM, Pa. — Golf Property Analysts (GPA) has been retained by Commerce Bank, N.A., to perform a market value appraisal for the Talamore at Oak Terrace Country Club project here. Laurence Hirsh, GPA president, will direct and manage the project. Hirsh, a member of the Society of Golf Appraisers, added that GPA has been retained to provide appraisal services for the proposed Hartefeld National Golf Club in New Garden Township, Chester County, Pa.

NY Audubon to purchase Ocean Course for \$27 million

By HAL PHILLIPS

CHARLESTON, S.C. — With a bid of \$27,000,100, the Audubon Society of New York has entered the golf management business.

The not-for-profit organization based in Selkirk, N.Y., was the high, lone bidder for Pete Dye's Ocean Course on Kiawah Island, which had been developed by the failed Landmark Land Co. Audubon purchased the seaside masterpiece from Resolution Trust Co., the federal agency charged with selling off Landmark's former holdings. Federal bankruptcy court must still approve the sale.

Audubon was able to rustle up the \$27 million through its alliance with two investors: VIT, an arm of Richmond, Va.-based AMF Companies; and Kiawah Resort Associates, the owners of undeveloped residential land on Kiawah Island.

VIT had already purchased the Kiawah Island resort complex — save the Ocean Course — from the RTC in July. Because of the course's environmental sensitivity, the RTC was obligated to allow qualified conservation groups to bid separately on the Ocean Course, as stipulated by the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act.

"It's our belief at N.Y. Audubon that in order to do long-term good, we have to merge environmental ethic with the business world," said N.Y. Audubon President Ron Dodson. "We recognize that we can't run down to the local bank and withdraw \$27 million. It's not unusual for conservation groups to enter

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Kemper sees opportunity in ownership and management

By PETER BLAIS

Common wisdom these days holds that most of the profits are made in managing a golf course, while most of the risk is found in owning one.

That's why it's surprising to hear a management executive, particularly someone with the reputation of Kemper Sports Management's Douglas Schmidt, come down on the side of ownership over management.

"We're into owning, leasing and managing — in that order of preference," said the Northbrook, Ill.-based firm's president and chief operating officer. "With management contracts, if you do a great job, the owners eventually figure they don't need you. If you do a bad job, you don't deserve to be there.

"The only way to succeed is to be mediocre. None of the people here are interested in mediocrity."

Kemper is involved with 19 facilities. It

owns Royal Melbourne in Long Grove, Ill.; Crowfield Golf & Country Club in Goose Creek, S.C.; Pine Forest Country Club in Summerville, S.C.; Golf Club of West Virginia in Parkersburg; Carolina Springs Golf Club in Greenville, S.C.; and Holly Hills Country Club in Frederick, Md.

The company leases Kemper Lakes Golf Club in Long Grove; Patriots Point Links in Mt. Pleasant, S.C.; and the Chicago Park District's six golf courses and two driving ranges.

"We've vastly improved Chicago's properties already," Schmidt said of the lease agreement the company signed in April. Kemper has so far removed many of the asphalt (that's right) tees at many of the courses, professionally edged bunker faces, invested thousands of dollars in lightweight mowing equipment and improved the irrigation system at 18-hole Jackson Park. "We'll look at the

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Dodson, Lesnik to speak at Public Golf '93



A TWO-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO THE NEEDS OF MANAGERS OF PUBLIC GOLF FACILITIES

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Ron Dodson, president of the N.Y. Audubon Society, and Steve Lesnik, president and CEO of Kemper Sports Management, will both speak at Public Golf '93, sponsored by Golf Course News and scheduled for Nov. 14-17, here at Wild Dunes.

Dodson — whose non-profit organization just purchased the Ocean Course on nearby Kiawah Island (see story above) — will discuss Audubon's Cooperative Wildlife Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, which has created bird sanctuaries at 800 golf courses nationwide. The pro-active program, founded in 1990, has proved to be a significant environmental and public relations success.

Lesnik, whose firm manages 19 courses across the country (see story above), will lead a seminar dealing with alternative management strategies. Kemper recently secured the management con-

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**ONGOING ASSISTANCE**

South Florida Golf Academy Director Tom Welz assists student Jeff Priest at The Carolina Club in Margate, Fla. Priest is participating in one of the monthly clinics, sponsored by The Carolina Club and Broward County, that helps physically challenged golfers get back in the game. The clinics are led by teaching professional Frank Fitzsimmons, who is also the Circuit Court coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). "Many clubs around the country have offered one-time clinics for the physically disabled," said Carolina Club spokeswoman Elaine Fitzgerald. "It gets them interested, but then what? We hope we're taking a lead that other golf clubs will follow in offering regular, ongoing clinics."

Publicly traded AGC spinoff acquires first course, Desert Lakes

FORT MOHAVE, Ariz. — National Golf Properties, Inc. (NGP), the publicly traded golf course owner, has acquired Desert Lake Golf Course here.

The property, NGP's first acquisition since its initial public offering in August, was purchased from Desert Lakes Development L.P. for \$3.15 million.

Located a few minutes from Bullhead City, Ariz. and Laughlin, Nev., Desert Lakes is one of just four golf courses in the region. Its amenities include an 18-hole, 6,569-yard course that features two lakes. An aquatic driving range features two island, target greens.

NGP is a self-administered real estate investment trust based in Santa Monica, Calif. President Craig Price also serves as president of Santa Monica, Calif.-based American Golf Corp. (AGC), which operates 153 courses nationwide. The management contract for Desert Lakes has been awarded to AGC.

NGP's portfolio now includes 24 daily-fee, 13 private and 11 resort courses.

With AMF backing, Audubon buys Ocean Course

Continued from page 27

into these types of alliances. We had to recognize the financial partner had a significant interest in making its investment worthwhile."

According to Beverly Armstrong, vice chairman of VIT, the joint venture has not yet decided who will physically manage the course. Dodson added that wholesale management changes are not foreseen.

The Audubon agreement with VIT calls for a two-year develop-

ment moratorium on and around the Ocean Course. During those 24 months, Audubon will conduct a thorough natural resource study to determine what plants and fauna call the site home. The Audubon Society will also continue its ongoing relationship with the United States Golf Association, which is conducting a \$3 million study at Kiawah documenting the environmental effects of golf maintenance practices.

"At the end of the two-year

study period, we'll know better about what will be done at the site, if anything," Dodson explained. "A conservation management plan will then take effect, with goals of protecting this sensitive habitat, preserving the course and creating an environmental handbook for all golf course superintendents."

N.Y. Audubon is no stranger to golf course matters. In 1990, it founded the The Audubon Cooperative Wildlife Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, which

encourages the creation of bird sanctuaries on golf courses. There are 800 superintendents already involved in the program.

"Migratory birds don't recognize state lines and neither do we," Dodson continued. "We already have an involvement in the industry and we recognize the value of golf courses as open space. We've been involved with Pete Dye and the Ocean Course from the beginning."

Three other conservation groups had displayed an interest in the Ocean Course: The Low Country Open Land Trust based here; the North American Land

Trust of Chadds Ford, Pa.; and the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens of Richmond, Va. The latter group had enjoyed the backing of VIT, but the relationship disintegrated in the weeks before the Sept. 14 sale.

"As we got further into the process," Armstrong explained, "there appeared to be a legal problem with whether they [Ginter] could do it or not. We decided to part company and were introduced to the N.Y. Audubon group."

"As it has turned out, it's probably the most natural fit we could have hoped for."

Public Golf '93

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tract for six Chicago Park District courses.

Public Golf '93 is a national two-day conference is designed for managers, owners, operators and developers of public golf facilities — daily fee, resort and municipal.

More than 20 speakers will discuss topics including: Positioning Your Course For Added Value; Marketing, Advertising and Promotion on a Shoestring; and Saving Money on Maintenance. Several sessions will address improving your margins in traditional profit centers, such as food & beverage, pro shop and cart rental.

Recent additions to the speakers program include Tary Kettle, president of Masters Golf Corp., a consulting firm specializing in turning around flagging public golf operations; Elaine Fitzgerald, president of Fitzgerald Productions, a firm specializing in affordable promotion; and Dave Richards, president of Golf Marketing Services.

"I think attendees will find Steve Lesnik, Tary Kettle and Ron Dodson very interesting, informative speakers," said Hal Phillips, *Golf Course News* editor and Public Golf '93 program chair. "Ron has some very progressive ideas regarding the common interests of business and conservation groups."

"Tary's firm deals almost exclusively with unprofitable public golf operations. He plans to discuss what not to do when managing a daily-fee golf operation."

"Steve spoke at Public Golf '92 and we're very pleased to have him back. In addition to providing full-service golf management services, Kemper is involved with public relations, hospitality consulting and professional sports management and promotion. Steve has a big picture approach to management strategy."

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