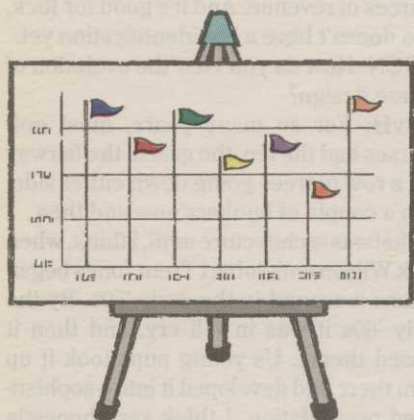


BRIEFS



NATIONAL GOLF COURSE OWNERS ASSOCIATION MOVES OFFICE

CHARLESTON, S.C. — To accommodate its recent growth, the National Golf Course Owners Association has moved its national office across the bridge to Mt. Pleasant. The new NGCOA address is 1461 Center Street Ext., Suite B1, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464. The new phone number is 803-881-9956; fax 803-881-9958. The toll-free number remains 800-933-4262.

CASPER TO BIG APPLE

NEW YORK CITY — New York Health & Racquet Club's HRC Indoor Golf & Country Club has hired Billy Casper Golf Management Inc. to provide management services. BCGM will provide daily club operations, marketing, public relations, programming and membership development services. The club has five golf simulators, 800-square-foot raised putting green, computerized swing analyzers and practice driving nets. New York Health & Racquet Club owns 10 Manhattan health centers with 30,000 members.

CLUB FOUNDATION NAMES BERNHARDT

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Lawrence Bernhardt was recently elected to the Club Managers Association of America's Club Foundation. Bernhardt is chairman of Boca West Country Club in Boca Raton, Fla. and was instrumental in the Boca West community's recently announced \$22 million expansion and renovation program. The Foundation sponsors programs for continuing education and professional development, establishes college courses geared to the club industry, provides research grants for studies dealing with the club industry and awards scholarships to practitioners and students.

PALMER TAKES OVER LA COURSES

ORLANDO, Fla. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management Company has been selected by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, among the largest municipal owner of golf courses in the United States, to operate the Whittier Narrows and Victoria golf courses. The acquisition of the long-term leases are early steps in Palmer Golf's plan to acquire and lease \$50 million of golf facilities.

SCGA RENAMES COURSE

MURRIETA, Calif. — The Southern California Golf Association has renamed the Rancho California Golf Course it purchased this winter from the SCGA Members Club at Rancho California.



Future site of Oak Valley Golf Club, an Arnold Palmer design to be managed by the Carolinas Golf Group

Carolinas Golf Group expands reach in focus area: Southeast

By PETER BLAIS

RALEIGH, N.C. — If you evaluate a young firm's growth by the company it keeps, you'd have to say Carolinas Golf Group (CGG) is a success in the making.

Oak Valley Golf Partners recently signed on CGG to oversee construction and eventually operate a new Arnold Palmer-designed course scheduled to begin construction this fall.

Oak Valley Golf Club will be Palmer's first course in the Winston-Salem area and the fifth project (all located in North Carolina) in CGG's growing stable of upscale, daily-fee golf facilities.

In addition to Oak Valley, CGG owns and/or operates Devils Ridge Golf Club in Holly Springs, The Neuse GC in Clayton, Lochmere GC in Cary and Nags Head Golf Links on the Outer Banks.

A regionally focused company, CGG's goal is to have acquired or leased 10 to 12 golf clubs throughout the Southeast over the next three to five years. The company has no interest in management-only arrangements because of the smaller return on investment than is available with ownership/lease situations, according to company President Stuart Frantz.

"We have a very tight business and geographic focus. And we aren't afraid to take the economic risks associated with ownership," Frantz said.

"Courses we'll look at must have the

potential financial strength to return a reasonable profit. And they must fall within the Washington, D.C.-to-Atlanta area."

Course owners from other parts of the country have approached CGG, Frantz said. But the company is intent on limiting itself to the Southeast.

"Going outside that area would simply stretch us too thin," he explained. "As one of our principals likes to say, 'One of the best fertilizers is the owner's footprints.'"

The ideal situation is to develop

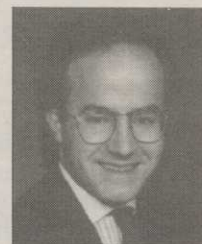
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MARKETING IDEA OF THE MONTH

Find a niche and stick with it, marketer advises

By TIMOTHY GRAYSON

Last week I was having lunch with a friend. He had been the marketing director at a nearby golf course since it opened three years ago. We got to talking about how he had enjoyed creating a new, upscale course from scratch.



Timothy Grayson

"It was a great experience," he said, "but toward the end I was having trouble with some golfers."

Considering they were almost matching the annual number of rounds of the most established courses in the area, I was curious to hear more.

He explained that he had put their message to the market through advertising and promotion. Maybe too well, he thought. They had initially described it as the most challenging championship course in the state. Their television ads showed their wicked eighth hole: A par four that demands an accu-

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LinksCorp purchases Miss. layout

NORTHFIELD, Ill. — LinksCorp has purchased Castlewoods Country Club in Jackson, Miss., the company's third acquisition in less than a month and seventh overall.

"We are very excited about buying a quality facility like Castlewoods, especially with the new nine holes and course renovations recently completed by Golden Bear designs," said Ben Blake, the company's president and chief executive officer.

The new nine brings Castlewoods to 27 holes. The existing 18 will remain open this summer while the new holes

mature. The new nine will open later this summer. Clubhouse renovations are also planned.

Other LinksCorp facilities include Tamarack Golf Club in suburban Chicago, Temple Hills GC in Nashville, Tenn., Rockwood GC near Kansas City, Mo., Glenlakes GC near Gulf Shores, Ala., and Hickory Hill GC in Biloxi, Miss.

LinksCorp is owned by management and three venture capital firms — Batterson, Johnson & Wang; William Blair Venture Partners; and Northwest Venture Capital.



Club Resorts is undertaking extensive renovations at The Homestead

Club Resorts Inc. celebrates its 10th anniversary

Club Resorts Inc., among the nation's largest conference resort owner/operators, is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

"These past 10 years have been incredibly good ones for us compared to the volatile situation in the industry as a whole," said James Hinckley, president of Club Resorts Inc.

The company recently purchased The Homestead in Hot Springs, Va., 10 years after it acquired Pinehurst Resort & Country Club, one of the nation's oldest and best-known golf resorts.

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CGG plans on steady growth in coming years

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clusters of three to five courses, allowing CGG to maximize revenue generation, management expertise and the use of expensive capital equipment, Frantz said.

Lochmere, Devils Ridge and The Neuse give CGG such a cluster in the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill triangle. Oak Valley gives the company a foothold in the Winston-Salem market and Nags Head in the Norfolk, Va./Outer Banks area.

CGG is confident it can meet

'We'd like to develop sort of a farm system with our assistant superintendents and assistant pros advancing to head positions as facilities become available.'

— Stuart Frantz, CGG President

its acquisition goal because of its management team. As a group, team members have 150 years combined business experience, most in the golf business.

Frantz and Chairman Roger

Watson founded the company in 1963. Watson has 26 years experience as a golf professional, director of golf and course owner. He has developed six championship golf courses.

Frantz worked many years in commercial banking. He was senior vice president at Wheat First Securities in Raleigh when he first met Watson, who then owned nearby Wildwood Green Golf Club.

Also on the management team are:

- Vice President/Secretary Donnell 'Buck' Adams, a successful PGA Tour player and head professional at the Country Club of North Carolina since 1963.

- Vice President/Treasurer Richard Urquhart, a certified public accountant and president at the Country Club of North Carolina since 1963.

- Vice President of Golf Operations J. William Hamilton, a long-time head professional, golf director and general manager.

- Vice President of Development and Grounds David Brooks, a golf professional and executive who has been actively involved in construction, development and maintenance of several golf clubs.

Superintendents answer to Brooks and head pros to Hamilton. The two positions are considered equal at CGG facilities, Frantz said.

"We'd like to develop sort of a farm system with our assistant superintendents and assistant pros advancing to head positions as facilities become available," the company president said.

CGG is developing retirement and ongoing training programs for its 110 employees.

Surveys and customer interviews are used to determine what products and services customers want and how the course can be improved.

Keeping employees motivated and promoting positive change are the goals of charts and grades evaluating various aspects of course operations. Updated materials are placed in visible locations weekly, providing immediate feedback.

"We rate the quality of greens, tees, fairways, bunkers, food and beverage service, pro shop and other areas," Frantz explained. "At Devil's Ridge, for instance, most of the Bermudagrass died in the fairways a while ago. Our customers rated us down in that area. Within a week, we had put in 40 truckloads of new sod."



Carolinas Golf Group President Stuart Frantz

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