

## UMass mulls adding course management program

AMHERST, Mass. — Already well-respected for its turfgrass management program, the University of Massachusetts is considering creating a golf course/club management curriculum.

Nearly 12 percent of Massachusetts residents play golf at 343 courses across the state. Thirty-five courses are located on Cape Cod, contributing an estimated \$142 million to the economy of that region alone. In addition, three major producers of golf equipment and accesso-

ries — Spalding Sports Worldwide, Acushnet Industries and Reebok International Ltd. — are based in Massachusetts.

According to Robert Halgesen, dean of the College of Food and Natural Resources, such a program would bring together existing courses from various departments with an added emphasis on business issues, to meet the increasing demand for managers that has resulted from rapid growth within the golf industry.

The turfgrass program, which has graduated many course superintendents and other turfgrass professionals, would be a major contributor. "UMass has become a center for turfgrass science in New England," said William Torello, director of the turfgrass management program.

Programs and research in the departments of sport studies and hotel, restaurant and travel administration would also assist in the development of the program, currently under study as part of

the college's long-range plan. Only four golf course/club management programs exist nationwide.

William Sutton, associate professor of sport studies, and Rod Warnick are conducting a major study for the Ladies Professional Golf Association. The survey examines many issues including women's participation in golf, golf merchandise for women, and women's attitudes about golf clothing and merchandise.

Warnick, an associate professor of hotel, restaurant and travel administration, is examining golf

participation throughout the American population.

"Golf was once perceived to be a game for wealthy, older men," he said. "However, research indicates the popularity of the game is reaching a broader cross section of adults. Participation is increasing across all age groups and has more mass market appeal."

Additionally, the UMass chapter of the Club Managers Association has been named the most outstanding student chapter by the National Club Managers Association.

## Brassie, Stanchina settle differences

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ment, and can now utilize these resources on golf course acquisitions with greater potential returns."

Brassie recently merged with Club Operations and Property Management (COPM) to form one of the country's largest management companies.

Stanchina characterized the settlement as, "amicable. We're very happy with the way things turned out." But, regarding the courses, he added: "They may have under performed for Brassie, but they didn't for us. They may have hit a bad time financially. They probably paid a little too much for them [\$15 million]. If they had put in more equity and less debt capital, they may have been in better shape."

McNeill agreed with Stanchina's assessment.

"We're pleased it was settled amiably," said McNeill, who was with COPM prior to the Brassie merger. "It was positive on Warren's side. He sold the properties for \$15 million a year ago and is buying them back for \$11 million. He is also developing the real estate around North Shore which he controls again. The settlement also helped us settle many financial aspects on our side."

"In the process of merging with Brassie, we reviewed their holdings and felt the short-term debt they'd taken on to purchase those properties put a tremendous strain on the company. We felt it was better to return the properties and take the one-time [\$4.1 million] hit. Brassie simply paid a high-end price and with that amount of debt it made it difficult on the whole company."

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Brassie also announced that it has signed three new management contracts — Heritage Links Golf Course (GC) in Gainesville, Fla., Manassas Park GC in Prince William County, Va., and Smokey Mountain (N.C.) Country Club.

"Based on current prospects, we expect to sign at least 10 additional management contracts within the next 60 days," Horne said.

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