

Radio spots

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was how to distribute those rounds. Enter Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald hit on the idea of providing those rounds to a dozen local radio stations. Each station received 10 letters with PGA Golf Club letterhead. The letter entitled the bearer to bring a foursome, free of charge, to The PGA Golf Club the week-end of Dec. 30-31.

The stations, which covered Florida's east coast from Miami to Vero Beach, hyped the opening and distributed the free rounds through a variety of radio contests. While competing stations rarely promote the same event through give-aways, they agreed to do so in this case because the PGA allowed them the freedom to devise their own contests for distributing the rounds, Fitzgerald said.

Some used simple formats such as "Be the fifth caller and win." Others provided some fact about the course (such as its location) prior to the give-away and required winning callers to know that information before receiving the free rounds.

"Most of the stations gave away one foursome every morning," Fitzgerald recalled. "They would hype it during morning drive time right up until the contest. Then they would hype the next day's contest periodically throughout the day. What we ended up with was basically two weeks of free ads on 12 different stations. We could never have afforded that much advertising time."

Course costs were minor. Since the club wasn't planning to open until Jan. 1 for tax reasons, the Dec. 30-31 promotion didn't require it to give away rounds that it would normally have charged for. Each golfer also received a free hat and PGA logo golf ball with the words "First Ball" on the cover.

Staffing was the only major expense, Ciofoletti said.

"It gave us the opportunity to go live with our new staff in a non-paying situation," Ciofoletti said. "It was sort of a dress rehearsal for the real thing. Seeing how well the staff did that weekend gave us a more comfortable feeling when we officially opened for business."

But most importantly, according to PGA of America Senior Director of Operations Marty Kavanaugh, the promotion let people in Southeast Florida know that the PGA of America was in the affordable (\$49 including cart) public golf business.

"We wanted to send a message that the PGA had opened an affordable, championship golf course," Kavanaugh said. "There was a perception that the PGA wasn't interested in public golf. But our mission is to make golf affordable to everyone. This promotion helped deliver that message."

National Golf Foundation offers customized research service

JUPITER, Fla. — The National Golf Foundation (NGF) has introduced a new customized research service that allows members to get information faxed or mailed to them by the end of the next business day.

Called "NGF InfoSearch," the new electronic service offers access to hundreds of trade magazine articles and news items each month. National Golf Foundation library staffers prepare abstracts of these articles and items on an ongoing basis and they are stored under one of more

than 1,000 topical headings.

According to the NGF, its library houses the largest single collection of information on the United States Golf Industry and the business of golf in the world today. It contains more than 18,000 trade magazine and journal articles, research studies, market reports and other pieces of related printed material which the National Golf Foundation has been accumulating over the past three years.

"It's like having your own personal library of golf industry literature ... com-

plete with a professional staff, but without the hassle or expense of maintaining it yourself," said Charles Mayberry, the National Golf Foundation's Director of Library Services, who's been responsible for developing the service.

The NGF's InfoSearch service is a forerunner of bigger developments expected later this year, including an on-line electronic network for the golf industry.

For more information about InfoSearch, National Golf Foundation members can call 1-800-773-6006.

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