

BRIEFS



CORCORAN TO MANAGE WIDOWS WALK

SCITUATE, Mass. — The town has selected Corcoran Jennison Hospital-ity (CJH) to manage Widow's Walk Golf Course, an 18-hole, daily-fee facility designed by Michael Hurdzan and scheduled to open by July 1997. CJH also manages Ocean Edge Resort and Golf Club on Cape Cod and Glen Ellen Country Club in Millis.



Heather Siegel



James Bailey

NGCOA APPOINTS PAIR

MT PLEASANT, S.C. — The National Golf Course Owners Association has named James Bailey director of membership and sponsorship and Heather Siegel communications director. Bailey was formerly vice president of marketing for CNA Insurance Companies in Chicago. In his new position he will focus on member recruitment and retention, chapter development and member benefits. Siegel has been with the association for a year. She will create and edit industry-specific publications, focus on media relations and serve as associate editor of the association's monthly publication, *Golf Business*.

KSL FAIRWAYS ADDS TO PORTFOLIO

KSL Fairways has acquired two new courses, Tantallon Country Club in Ft. Washington, Md., and Willow Run Golf Club in Pewaukee, Wis. Tantallon is KSL Fairway's fifth course in the Washington area. Willow Run is located just 15 minutes from downtown Milwaukee.

CASPER NAMES NEW DIRECTORS

VIENNA, Va. — Billy Casper Golf Management has named new directors of golf at two of its facilities. Bill May — formerly of Tee and Tee Golfland in Portland, Maine and Bath (Maine) Country Club — is now at Kennebec Heights Country Club in Augusta, Maine. Thomas Beidleman — formerly of Cattail Creek Country Club in Glenwood Md. — has joined the soon-to-open Links at Caledon in Mount Airy, Md.

ARIZ FIRMS TEAM UP IN DENVER

DENVER — Troon Golf Management and Suncrown Development have joined forces to build Castle Pines North Golf Club in south suburban Denver. The same team developed and operated Troon North Golf Club in Scottsdale, Ariz. Tom Weiskopf will design the facility.

Maryland family battles elements, government to keep course going

By PETER BLAIS

The Shields family has been in the Maryland golf business for 55 years. Family members have seen their courses wither in the heat, drown under heavy rains, become overgrown when fathers and brothers were away at war and unable to care for them.

Despite the worst Mother Nature and foreign dictators could throw at them, the Shields always brought their courses back into play. But John Shields isn't sure whether his family and other private course operators can overcome their newest adversary, the government.

Short on funds and long on hope that golf is the answer to their financial woes, local and state governments have become major golf course developers. With free land, no taxes, and the ability to subsidize operations that fall below projections, government-owned facilities start with a tremendous advantage over private course operators like the Shields, owners of Glenn Dale (Md.) Golf Club and Twin Shields Golf Course in nearby Dunkirk.

"It's welfare golf and it makes it very hard on the private sector," Shields said. "With all the munis coming on line, we [United States] could end up with more courses than we need and private, daily-fee operators could get squeezed out. The only choice our family may eventually have is to turn our land into house lots."

That prospect unnerves Shields, whose father, Ray, and uncle, Roy, moved from Ohio to Maryland in the mid-1930s. The twin brothers worked at East Potomac

Park for the Loeffler family, operators of East Potomac and other courses, including Annapolis Country Club.

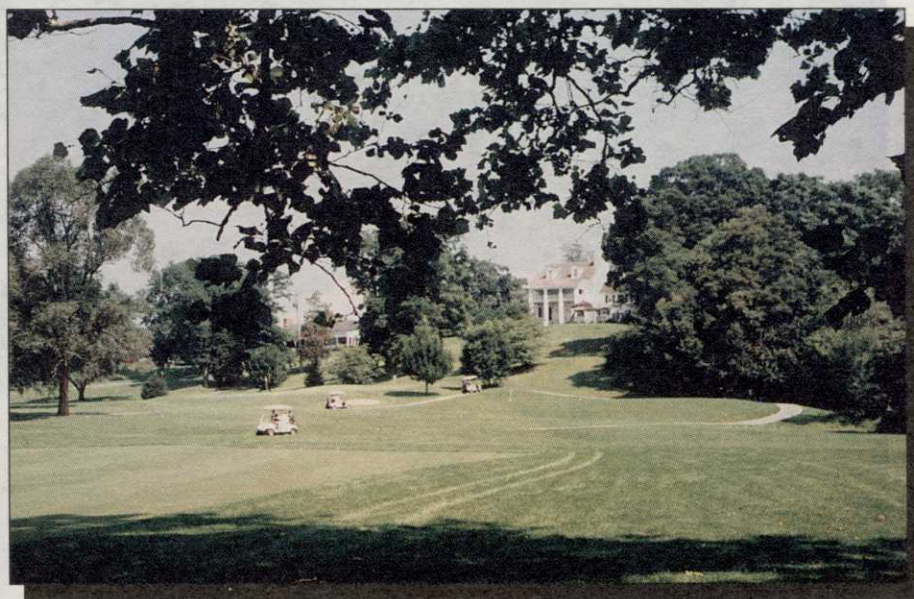
Ray and Roy bought the Annapolis club in 1941, but were shortly thereafter called into the service in World War II. With no one available to maintain Annapolis Roads, weeds and small saplings took over. When the hostilities ended, the two returned and began the work of reclaiming the neglected facility. Older brother Bob (who later became head superintendent at nearby Woodmont Country Club in Rockville) helped restore the course.

The Shields sold Annapolis CC in 1958, but not before a brief, four-year fling operating White Flint Golf Club from 1950-54 and acquiring the property to build Glenn Dale Golf Club in 1957. Ray and Roy later designed and built Twin Shields Golf Club in Dunkirk, which opened in 1969.

Ray died in 1980 and John, a graduate of the University of Maryland's associate turfgrass program, returned home to help his mother, Hinky Shields, manage Glenn Dale. Ray's surviving brother, Roy, took over full-time operation of Twin Shields, leaving Glenn Dale to John and his family. John, brother Jeff and sister Pam Jasper bought Glenn Dale from their mother in 1984. (Roy, 80, his daughter Karen and head pro of 20 years John Dodson operate Twin Shields.)

Glenn Dale underwent some major changes beginning in 1984. The family redesigned the course and reconstructed all the tees. They planted 1,000 additional

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The Shields family has operated Glenn Dale (Md.) Country Club for almost 40 years.

California writers ass'n honors American Golf Corp.'s Price

PEBBLE BEACH, Ca. — American Golf Corp. Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer David Price has been awarded the California Golf Writers Association's (CGWA) Golden State Award, recognizing the golf operations entrepreneur's contributions to the game of golf in the state of California. The award presentation was made by *San Francisco Chronicle* sports writer Pat Sullivan during the CGWA's Annual Awards Banquet HERE.

Price joins an impressive list of past Golden State Award winners that includes Bing Crosby, Dinah Shore and golf course



David Price

developer Sandy Tatum.

"I am thrilled to be honored by the California Golf Writers Association and to join such a renowned list of past recipients," said Price upon accepting the award. "It is especially gratifying to be recognized in my home state, where American Golf has worked hard to provide golfers with unsurpassed service, value and a high-quality golf experience... In addition to expanding the opportunities for Californians of all levels and backgrounds to learn and play the great game of golf."

Price's outstanding service and contributions to the game began nearly 30 years



MARKETING IDEA OF THE MONTH

Marketing on the 'Net' wave of golf's future

By DEBORAH SANDERS

As a course owner or general manager, you market your course locally and perhaps in national periodicals. But how about marketing in the newest forum, the Internet?

The World Wide Web with its nicely formatted text and its pictures, and often its sound and video clips — and almost always its hypertext links that allow the user to go from the Web site to an E-mail address or to another Web site — are highly attractive features that draw users. That last feature — the immediate transportation to your E-mail address — is probably the most important aspect of marketing on the Web. If you're piggybacking on the Web site of another golfing entity, it enables potential customers to reach you directly and immediately.

You may want to build your own Web page, for an investment. You may want to find your own designer, or you may want to use DesignSite (tm) LLC, which has put together sites for a recording studio, an industrial equipment company, and many law firms.

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Shields family

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trees, installed a new irrigation system, constructed four miles of macadam cart paths, upgraded the clubhouse and renovated the swimming area. The club has since sponsored a local U.S. Open Qualifier, two LPGA Northeastern Championships, and many other events.

The tremendous change in golfer's expectations was one of the major reasons for the upgrade, John said. Television coverage of professional events has led many people to expect Augusta-like conditions at their facilities.

"Twenty years ago we mowed the greens at one height and everything else at a second height," John said. "But with the new mowing equipment, chemicals

and fertilizers we have today, people expect a more finely-tuned product. That's made golf more expensive."

Glenn Dale's green fees are \$23 weekdays and \$27 weekends for unlimited play, fairly reasonable for suburban Washington, D.C. Twin Shields' rates are within a dollar or two of Glenn Dale's, John said. Shields describes Glenn Dale as a "gray collar" facility. "We're sort of a stepping stone for people who eventually end up at a private club," John said. "We'll even help them set up an appointment with the membership committee at any of the nearby private clubs."

That attention to customers is important at the Shields' operations. In fact, the families are re-emphasizing customer service in 1996. "Next to the golf courses, customer service is the most important

thing we have that can set us apart."

The Shields plan to stay in the business into the foreseeable future, but have no plans to acquire additional courses unless members of the next generation want to become involved in the business. All are involved in the club's operation. Hinky handles invoices and billing. Jeff operates the food and beverage operation. Alvin, Pam's husband, is being trained as the landscaper and her daughter, Michele, to take over the office operation. John, a two-term member of the National Golf Course Owners Association board of directors, is in charge of maintenance.

Many management companies have approached the Shields about leasing or buying their operation, John said.

"We've considered it," he added.

"Management companies can save money on many line-item areas that a Mom-and-Pop operation can't. They can centralize and spread costs around different facilities on items like legal, accounting and secretarial fees. They have mass purchasing power that gets them discounts on equipment and supplies we can't touch. They also save taxes by leasing facilities and writing off expenses on a yearly basis that I [as an owner] have to depreciate more slowly."

"They have become very efficient by developing manuals to run each course as a business. But they can have difficulty in making the manual fit each course. Every operation is a little different and you have to be flexible to meet those needs. Sometimes management companies have trouble doing that."

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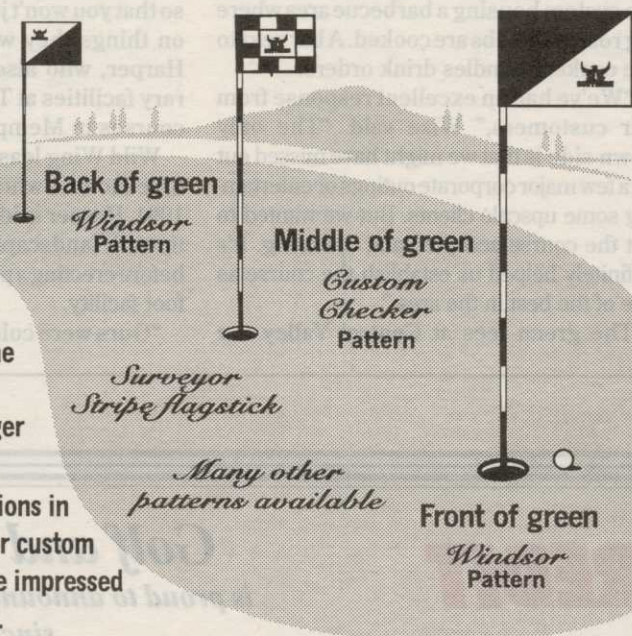
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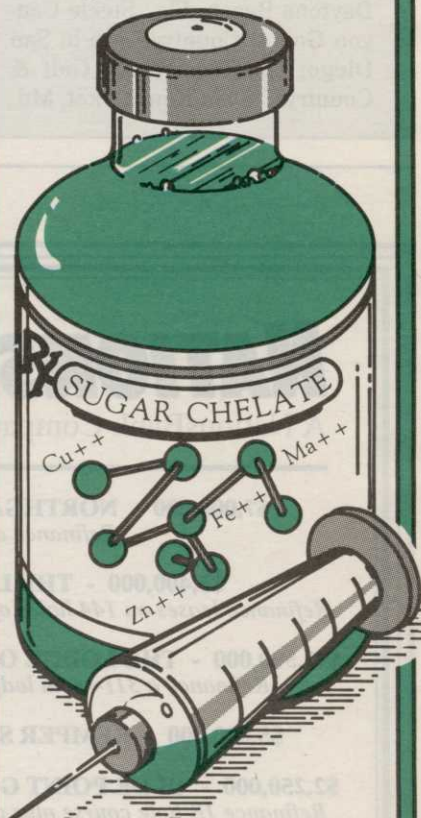
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