



Vince and Sally Alfonso's Kimberling (Mo.) Golf Course spouts the good news of special offers to golfers.

Kimberling Golf Course hits hot buttons in marketing to the public audience

By MARK LESLIE

KIMBERLING CITY, Mo. — The new owners of Kimberling Golf Course here are taking advantage of the region's fame as the bass-fishing capital of the world and a

bastion of country-Western music.

Vince and Sally Alfonso Jr., former co-owners of The Rail in Springfield, Ill., this year are creating perhaps the first-ever Fishing Scramble as well as "Down

Home" 9-Hole Breakfast, Dinner and Supper scrambles where participants will pay one price and be treated to a meal, nine holes of golf with a cart, and "a lot of fun prizes on the course," said Vince.

Kimberling Golf Course, which the Alfonsos are touting as "the cutest little nine holes in Missouri," sits in the Ozarks on Tablerock Lake, 12 miles southwest of Branson, famous for its myriad clubs established by such music stars as Mel Tillis and Andy Williams. So when they bought the facility last October they decided to play on the area's strengths and "explore how to draw tourists," said Vince.

"It is an option to people going to the theaters," he said. "The scrambles will be the same price as the shows. I think it will be accepted well."

The Alfonsos will also draw on their course's strength — its length. Others might see the 2,300-yard, nine-hole track as too short. Alfonso, a PGA Class A teaching pro, says it is perfect

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— Vince Alfonso Jr.

for creation of a unique short-game practice facility.

"We plan to develop our short-game ('Is It Mind over Matter or What?') training schools," Alfonso said. "We think this lends itself beautifully to that."

"The course will provide lots of challenges. We have a full-service kitchen and large spaces for meeting and dining rooms, and a swimming pool. So a one-day school can provide breakfast, nine holes of golf, video analysis, and work on the short game."

"It will be different from traditional schools because it won't be a range environment. It will be a playing and training environment. Golfers will learn different techniques that I teach ... and get a clear picture of chipping. I think that's why it will work. The short game is well over half the game."

The Alfonsos have already experimented successfully with using the Cayman (or modified distance) golf ball on the course for parent-child events in which the parent uses the Cayman ball and the child a regulation ball.

"That is a great equalizer," Vince Alfonso said. "If a parent can hit the ball 220 yards off the tee, they hit the Cayman 130 to 140 yards. I think it chips and putts like a real ball."



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