

## Fripp Company assumes management of S.C.'s University Club

BLYTHEWOOD, S.C. — The Fripp Co., owner and managing company for Fripp Island Resort and other properties along the South Carolina coast, has assumed control of The University Club here for an undisclosed price.

The Fripp Co. assumed management of the 27-hole property, located near the University of South Carolina, on June 1, adding to the company's portfolio in South Carolina.

Founded in 1993, The University Club has approximately 1,600 members. Recent additions and improvements include a new nine-hole course, opening this summer, a 14,000-square-foot putting green, continuous golf cart paths, clubhouse and pro shop. In addition, the club has a 30-acre, golf practice facility where the men's and women's teams practice.

"We're excited about the purchase of The University Club," said Ken Willis, president

of The Fripp Co., who attended USC and is a longtime Gamecock Club member and supporter. "This course is one of the finest in South Carolina and gives us an opportunity to expand into the growing North Columbia area. Through The Fripp Co.'s golf and property management expertise, we plan to make further improvements to the club while enhancing services for new and existing members."

## Alfonso

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Once our meeting began, it became very clear to me that Paul wanted to work for me. After a very brief exchange of ideals and ideas, I made it very clear to Paul that I wanted him to work for me too.

You see, Paul O'Brien impressed me as a man who never met a stranger, who counted all human beings as special and believed they should be treated accordingly. He respected women and their obvious right to be golfers and therefore believed in treating them equally. Paul impressed me as the most honest, dependable and hardworking guy I had ever met. Remember, I came to all these conclusions in one meeting. This should tell you something about just what a special human being Paul O'Brien is.

Paul was hired and became "Mr. Morning" at The Rail [a Springfield, Ill., course Alfonso co-owned for many years]. Paul was there every morning, five days a week, for 13 years, to greet my early customers. I never once doubted whether each customer greeted and then waited on by Paul O'Brien felt welcome, special and appreciated. Why, to put it in simple terms, having Paul O'Brien work with me was the next best thing to having Uncle Mario or my Dad working with me. I knew without question, Paul represented our values to a tee.

Customers would come back year after year, especially the women, and if Paul wasn't there, they were disappointed. You see, they wanted to see Paul. They wanted to feel his warmth. They wanted to see him flash that Paul O'Brien smile.

In 1995, The Rail was voted the 4th Friendliest Golf Course to Women in the United States of America by the readers of *Golf For Women* magazine. As hard as my wife, Sally, and I, and the rest of our staff, worked on this women in golf issue through the years, I would have to credit Paul O'Brien with making the greatest impression on our women customers.

We were very fortunate to have Paul O'Brien on board. He was good for our customers, good for our employees, and good for our bottom line.

My question to you is quite fundamental. Do you have a Paul O'Brien in your golf organization? Have you felt it would be a waste of labor dollars to have a hand shaker and greeter on the payroll? Take it from me or take it from Sam, find yourself a Paul O'Brien and put him on the payroll, today. It will be money well spent. Remember, sayin' "Hi, glad to see you," and meaning it, just might make the difference.

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