

## Wohlleib sees need to stay competitive

By PETER BLAIS

BREWSTER, Mass. — She'll be there when the much-anticipated Widow's Walk Golf Course in Scituate, Mass., opens in early July and again when the first swings are taken at Olde Scotland Links in nearby Bridgewater a month later.

Lisa Wohlleib, vice president of Corcoran Jennison Hospitality (CJH), is

riding herd on the multiple details involved with unveiling the two new municipal courses to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts golfing community. Meanwhile, the 31-year-old Tulane University graduate continues to fulfill her duties as general manager of Glen Ellen Country Club in Millis and vice president of the Massachusetts-based course management firm, which also operates Ocean Edge Resort on Cape Cod.

"The public golf boom is alive in Massachusetts," Wohlleib said. "But we need to stay competitive. With all the new

courses coming on line, competition is stiff. Widow's Walk and Olde Scotland Links are both positioned as high-end, daily-fee facilities. When the clubhouses open next year, they'll provide an experience to rival any private club."

While doubling her management responsibilities from two to four courses in the space of 30 days may seem daunting, Wohlleib said she and CJH are up to the challenge. Her confidence stems from the success she's enjoyed dur-



Lisa Wohlleib

ing her 10 years with CJH.

Starting as the Ocean Edge pool director during summer break between her junior and senior years, her responsibilities have grown along with the growth of CJH. As vice president, Wohlleib has hired the golf directors at each of the firm's four facilities and is accountable

for all aspects of club administration; including staff training, food and beverage operations, financial management and property development.

"Most of what I know about the hospitality business I've learned as I've gone along," said Wohlleib, who holds bachelor's degrees in psychology and sociology. "That inexperience has sometimes been questioned outside the company, but it's never been a problem internally. If anything, it's been an advantage because it's allowed me to look at everything with an open mind rather than coming at a problem with preconceived notions.

"Finding the most efficient way to solve a problem is the key to a manager's success. It always comes back to basic organization, and providing solid employee training."

Glen Ellen is a good example. The lenders repossessed the Millis, Mass., course in the early 1990s and hired CJH to manage the facility. Wohlleib initiated an aggressive renovation program that helped increase sales by 90 percent over three years.

"Glen Ellen was in a state of disrepair when the bank hired us to manage it and rebuild its value," Wohlleib said. "We pumped some capital into it, improved the management and started an aggressive marketing campaign. We hired Cornish, Silva and Mungeam to reroute the course; installed a new irrigation system; moved 72 trees; purchased new maintenance equipment; changed the maintenance practices that had resulted in small, round greens and restored them to their original shape; rebuilt a green; fixed up the practice area; hired a new PGA pro; upgraded customer service; and put together golf packages that met the needs of our outing clients."

Wohlleib considers corporate outings one of her strengths. Ocean Edge, which includes a hotel/conference center, has long been one of the state's premier outing facilities. Building off the success there, Wohlleib has been able to increase outing revenues at CJH's other facilities.

"We try to keep the planning process and information as simple as possible and post deadlines far enough in advance so our clients can work with them," she said. "Communicating with your clients and generating positive word-of-mouth advertising have greatly increased our outing business."

Operating four golf facilities makes for a busy schedule. But it's one that Wohlleib thoroughly enjoys.

"I think in simple, straightforward terms, the foundation of which is being able to reason logically," she explained of her success. "I'm organized and I follow through in a timely fashion. I am able to develop a vision for a property. I can see in my mind exactly how things will be and I'm able to communicate that information, confident that I'll be able to deliver the product."

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