

## BRIEFS



## ALLENBRAND HIRED

CALABASAS, Calif.—Environmental Golf has named Gary Allenbrand to the position of business development manager for West Coast Golf Maintenance Sales. Allenbrand will be responsible for developing business opportunities for the western United States.



Gary Allenbrand

## GOTHAM ADDS PAIR

MIAMI — Gotham Golf Partners (GGP) has added two courses, Fairfax National Golf Club in Centreville, Va., and Links of Challedon in Mt. Airy, Md., giving the firm 16 golf course facilities located throughout the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf Coast states. GGP purchased the two courses from an investor group led by Joseph Meyerhof, III, with NationsCredit financing the acquisition. Fairfax National is a 27-hole, semi-private facility and the Links of Challedon features an 18-hole, daily-fee course.

## TWO FOR UNITED, TOO

NEW YORK — United Golf Group added Lakeside Golf Club and Atlanta International Golf Club to its portfolio at a total cost of \$18 million. The facilities are located in suburban Atlanta, and will be managed by Kemper Sports Management.

## SCHOERKE JOINS FMAC

LOS ANGELES — FMAC has hired Douglas A. Schoerke as marketing vice president for FMAC Golf Finance Group LLC (FGFG). As a marketing vice president, Schoerke identifies financing opportunities and develops relationships with prospective customers in the central Midwest, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions of the United States. Schoerke earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Kansas in 1985 and works out of FMAC's office in Greensboro, N.C.

## CMAA PROMOTES WALLMEYER

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—The Club Managers Association of America has promoted Henry Wallmeyer to manager of Premier Club Services. Wallmeyer will oversee all department programs and develop and implement new programs, products and services.

## AG-UK takes St. Mellion, updates to follow shortly

By TREVOR LEDGER

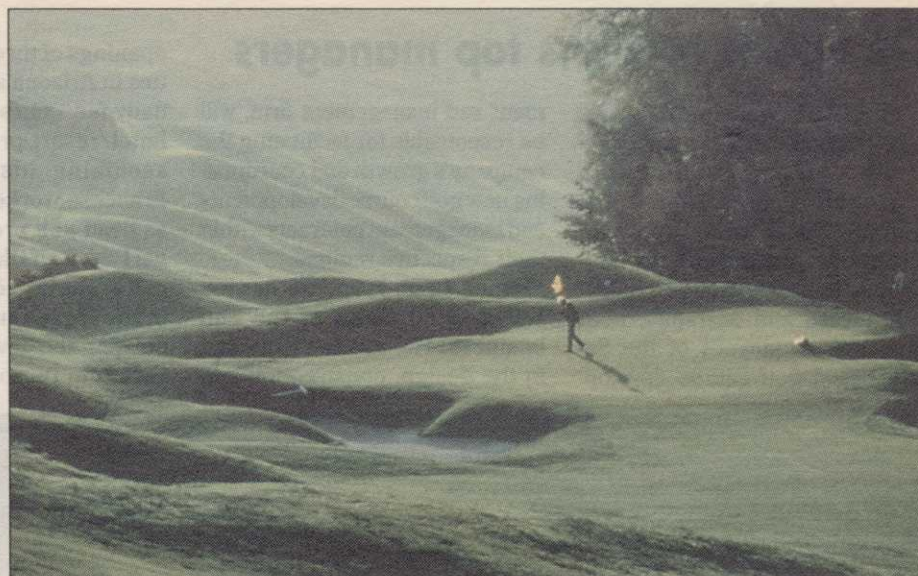
CORNWALL, England — American Golf (UK) Ltd. (AG-UK) has bought the prestigious St. Mellion Golf & Country Club from Martin and Herman Bond.

This is the 12th acquisition for AG-UK and marks the trend of its continued expansion into the United Kingdom golf market.

With AG-UK tripling in size over the last four years and up to seven further purchases planned in the next 10 months, the Santa Monica, Calif.-based parent outfit is feeling bullish.

St. Mellion boasts 36 holes and has hosted a number of Volvo European Tour events. The original 18-hole layout was designed by J. Hamilton-Stutt in 1976 with the additional Jack Nicklaus course opening in 1988.

Initial indications of AG-UK's intentions



The 2nd hole at St. Mellions. AG-UK's latest acquisition.

are promising. Course Manager Robert Brewer confirmed: "It's very positive. Our biggest problem has been the inability of the Nicklaus course to drain adequately. In August we are planning to install improved drainage. Also, we are going to install a new irrigation system on the tees of the Old Course in October."

Also planned is the construction of a new workshop and creation of a new post, that of in-house mechanic.

The mechanic will be responsible, among other things, for the upkeep of a substantial amount of new turf-care machinery, which will be brought in within the next few months.



## LINKSCORP PURCHASES STONEBRIDGE

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—LinksCorp, Inc. has purchased George Cobb-designed Stonebridge Golf Course in Memphis, Tenn. "We've been looking for some time to expand our presence into Memphis," said LinksCorp Chief Executive Officer Ben Blake. "It's a great golf market. And with two properties in Nashville, and the No. 1- and No. 2-rated daily-fee courses in the state in Crossville (Stonehenge Golf Club) and Knoxville (River Islands Golf Club), we are pleased to get a foothold in Memphis." Planned improvements to the course include turf and bunker work as well as enhancements to the clubhouse. Said Tom Lenz, LinksCorp's senior vice president of operations, "We plan to immediately make the improvements to the course and clubhouse while maintaining the high level of service to our customers."

## Clubhaus expands into fitness arena

LONDON — London-based Clubhaus PLC is expanding its interests following a busy year, spending £36.3 million (roughly \$60 million) on acquisitions during 1997.

Nine of 16 golf clubs (all situated in Europe) will have fitness centers attached to them, increasing the facilities available to the 15,000-plus Clubhaus members.

Clubhaus Chairman Robert Bourne was upbeat about the group's activities. "The group is now in a position to consolidate the asset base and to develop other facilities that will complement the golf clubs," he said.

Clubhaus' profits tripled to more than £5 million (\$8 million) in 1997. During the same period, £6 million (\$10 million) was spent on improvements and upgrades throughout the group.

Significant U.K. developments include another 18 holes at Three Rivers Golf Club in Essex, designed by European Golf Design, which opened June 23. Castle Royle Golf Club in Berkshire has been treated to a new clubhouse to replace the converted barn, which has served up until now. The new building will be officially opened Saturday, June 27. The Nizels Golf Club in Kent has undergone signifi-

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## PERSONNEL CORNER

## Hiring necessitates different strokes for different golf folks

By VINCE ALFONSO JR.

Vince Sr.'s philosophy of being a manager is simple: Never ask an employee to do anything you would not do yourself.

He carried that philosophy through his days as owner of his grocery store, Weona #88, to his head professional days at Bella Vista Country Club in Memphis, Tenn. Besides managing his employees, Dad cleaned clubs, fixed golf cars, sold clubs, vacuumed the shop, changed grips, etc., etc., etc.

Uncle Mario shared Dad's philosophy. So, when he left his grocery store, Weona #68, to become the builder and superintendent of Bella Vista, this philosophy and style of management came with him, also. Besides managing his employees, Uncle Mario fixed mowing and irrigation equipment, mowed greens and fairways, planted trees, etc., etc., etc.

Just in case you haven't figured it out on your own, I'm a lot (a whole lot) like Dad and Uncle Mario. I, too, have adopted their philosophy and style of management. I would never ask an employee to do anything I would not do myself.

Now, let's talk about how this particular philosophy and management style affects the hiring practices we use in hiring some of our key people.

You and I know that if you are from the old school, you hire golf professionals and superintendents expecting them to work as you do, hands on. We know they are going

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## NGP ACQUIRES GOLF COURSES IN MINNEAPOLIS

SANTA MONICA, Calif. — National Golf Properties Inc. has acquired Majestic Oaks Golf Club and Woodland Creek Golf Course in Minneapolis for approximately \$12.5 million from a local businessman. National Golf will lease Majestic Oaks and Woodland Creek to American Golf Corp. Majestic Oaks Golf Club consists of two championship, 18-hole courses, a 9-hole executive length course, a driving range and clubhouse capable of accommodating more than 500 guests. Woodland Creek Golf Course offers a 9-hole executive-length course, driving range and clubhouse.

## Alfonso

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to manage employees, but we expect them to be directly involved in doing some of the actual work as well. In other words, we expect to see them in the trenches, daily, with their people.

All of us old schoolers need to face, what for us is, a shocking reality. Some golf professionals and golf course superintendents manage

their people so well, they are never seen doing the work of the people they are managing. Honest. I have seen it with my own eyes.

At my first golf course, for instance, where I was golf professional and general manager, the owner came in one morning and found the superintendent sitting at a table in our snack bar drinking coffee. Well, being a real hands-on guy, he, more or less,

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chewed the super out for taking it easy while his employees were out there working away.

After Mr. X had finished, the superintendent, very calmly, asked the owner to point out any deficiencies on the course or in the budget. The owner could think of none. At this point, the superintendent said, 'You see Mr. X, you are not paying me to hit with the hammer; you are paying me to know where to hit.'

He continued to point out that if Mr. X expected him to actually do the work, he had chosen the wrong man. He was a seasoned veteran and had truly done it all, but he had taken this job to manage the upkeep of the course, not to keep up the course himself.

I encountered an owner once who was upset with his golf professional because he said the professional was never at his shop. After getting all the details, it seems the shop was meeting the owner's financial goals, the staff seemed happy and the customers seemed happy, too. It was the owner who was unhappy.

You see, being a hands-on guy, he felt the professional should be spending more time at the shop. However, the professional's presence at the shop was not spelled out in his employment arrangement and, therefore, I had no choice but to comment that the guy must be a great manager of people because, he was definitely doing the job he was hired to do, whether or not he was there as much as the owner thought he should be.

All of us old-school, hands-on management types have got to realize that there are these wonderful people out there who literally have the ability to motivate, train and manage people in such a way that their presence is not required (nearly as much as we think it should be) to keep things running smoothly. The truth is, if the ink is the right color, and folks are happy, and we didn't spell out how much time they had to be present and accounted for when we hired them, then there really is no problem.

You can pay people to hit with the hammer, or to know where to hit, or to know where to hit and to actually hit. The choice is yours. You simply have to be sure you know the kind of individual you are looking for and spell out your desires clearly before you hire.

I know this very simple truth has helped me be a better employer, and I believe, with all my heart, it will help you, too.



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