

BRIEFS



TEXTRON ADDS LEWIS TO FINANCE UNIT

ATLANTA—Textron Financial Corp. (TFC) announced it has added a fourth correspondent to its Golf Finance Division. Greg Lewis, president of Golf Capital LLC, will serve as TFC's exclusive agent in the Northeast U.S. Lewis will market and originate commercial real estate and golf loans from Maryland to Maine. TFC is a subsidiary of Textron, Inc., an \$11.5 billion multinational company. TFC's golf finance unit is a leader in providing first mortgage financing for golf properties, and recently became the industry's first billion-dollar lender.

MYRTLE BEACH COURSES GET WIRED

DALLAS—SportsWare Technologies has launched the Myrtle Beach Golf News web site [www.myrtlebeachgolfnews.com](http://www.myrtlebeachgolfnews.com). The site will focus on golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area and will provide participating courses with a vehicle to communicate with local golfers as well as traveling golfers across the country.

Courses will be able to post golf course information, sell tee times 24 hours a day and post specials on items such as merchandise, lessons, tee times and corporate outings. They will also have the ability to sell travel packages and build customer databases. In addition to the marketing tools, courses with an enhanced listing will be able to directly control the flow of content on their site.

Marsh, Orion target golf courses with new food service venture

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MT. STERLING, Ky. — Orion Food Systems, in collaboration with U.S. Senior Tour player, golf course architect and owner Graham Marsh, has developed a turnkey franchise food service operation geared specifically toward golf courses. The first Graham's Grill outlet opened here June 5 at Old Silo Golf Club, Marsh's first U.S. design. Two other locations will open this summer and Orion

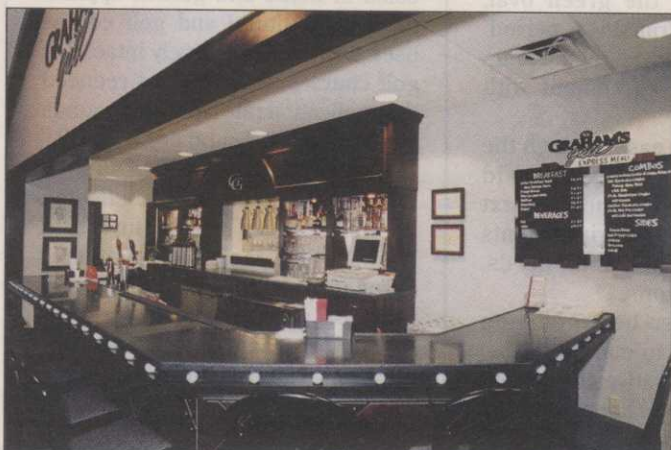
officials expect to have 15 to 20 in place by the end of the year.

The Graham's Grill concept was formed when Marsh, who plays each year in an Orion golf charity event, convinced the company that an opportunity existed to provide simple, yet high-quality food service to golf courses.

"Food and beverage in golf is difficult to do," said Marsh. "Most courses are stuck between a snack bar and a banquet facility and cannot get the right balance."

Orion has designed a food service system that is easily customized and requires minimal training and staff.

"The financial benefits are going to come in a couple key areas," said Tad Anderson, brand manager for Graham's Grill. "The flash bake technol-



The first Graham's Grill at the Old Silo Golf Club in Mt. Sterling, Ky.

Continued on page 29

Book4golf.com, NGCOA sign pact

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and Book4golf.com Corporation have announced an agreement in which Book4golf.com will join the Smart Buy Network, the NGCOA's group purchasing program, as its exclusive Internet tee-time reservation system and electronic tee-sheet provider.



The three-year relationship will enable the more than 4,000 NGCOA member courses to benefit from the services offered by the golf industry's leading Internet-based tee-time reservation network.

As part of the agreement, NGCOA chapters will receive incentives to encourage members to utilize the Book4golf.com network. Additionally, a percentage of the booking fees made at NGCOA member

Continued on page 29

Troon Golf joins Cabo del Sol team

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Troon Golf has been hired to manage the Ocean Course at Cabo del Sol, an 18-hole, Jack Nicklaus-designed layout in Los Cabos, Mexico.

In the next 18 months, the project owners plan to invest approximately \$25 million in the construction of a second golf course, golf clubhouse, residential lots and associated infrastructure.

Open since 1994, the Ocean Course, referred to as the 'Pebble Beach of Baja,' features seven holes on the water with views of ocean, mountain and desert terrain. Construction of the Tom Weiskopf course, the second of three golf courses planned for Cabo del Sol, is scheduled to break ground this summer and open in late 2001.

Survivalink partners with Softspikes

MINNEAPOLIS—Survivalink Corp. has announced a strategic partnership with SoftSpikes, Inc., to sell its FirstSave Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to golf clubs and resorts. AEDs are portable devices that deliver an electric shock to the heart to halt sudden cardiac arrest.

"We selected Survivalink's FirstSave because of its ease of use and the impressive clinical data from its STAR biphasic wave form," said Jon Hyman, chief executive officer of Softspikes. In lab testing, Survivalink's AED revived victims 100 percent of the time.

Sudden cardiac arrest claims more than 350,000 lives in the United States outside the hospital annually, and golf courses have been identified as one of the top five places outside the home where people suffer sudden cardiac arrest.



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# Graham's Grill

Continued from page 23

ogy means that you don't need a grill, griddle or range. All of the food items are preprogrammed into a touch pad so you get consistent results and don't need to have a professional chef on staff."

Orion will customize each site, help with installation and train the staff. From there an Orion representative will visit the location every two to three weeks. Grill configurations start at \$60,000 to \$80,000 for the low-end express walk up counter, and run to \$150,000 to \$200,000 for the banquet service version. All food, except fresh items, must be ordered from Orion.

The express portion of the grill set up at Old Silo is working out well for General Manager Bill Bals.

"The turn is problematic. If you can get the golfers out the door faster, that helps you get that four-and-a-half hour round," said Bals. "With the express grill, we can have golfers through the turn in five to 10 minutes."

Labor and cost savings are potential benefits, according to Ron Heinz, General Manager for Fort Worth, Texas-based Fore Star Golf at Sonoma Ranch Golf Club in Las Cruces, N.M., who is going to open a Graham's Grill franchise in August.

"If your cook quits, you are stuck. This doesn't require a chef," he said. "And once every 21 days someone comes in and rotates inventory. Perhaps this will help us eliminate higher paid food and beverage managers."

If everything goes well at Sonoma Ranch, Heinz plans on switching the other nine Fore Star-managed courses over to Graham's Grill franchises.

Sioux Falls, S.D.-based Orion Food Systems, which has more than 1,500 outlets worldwide, has district managers throughout the country and will service Graham's Grill franchises through its existing network of warehouses. ↑

# Book4golf, NGCOA

Continued from page 23

courses will go back to the course. Book4golf.com will get the opportunity to participate in regional and state chapter field days and multi-course management meetings, as well as be included in member prospect packages.

Book4golf.com also will be listed on the NGCOA web site, and NGCOA member courses will receive special broadcast faxes regarding Book4golf.com and Smart Buy Network promotional opportunities.

"The Internet is becoming increasingly important to golfers and golf course operator," said Mike Hughes, NGCOA's executive director. "This agreement enables our 4,000 members to take full advantage of the benefits offered by the Internet and Book4golf.com's Web-based products and services."

The agreement will enable Book4golf.com to bring more courses online for golfing consumers nationwide, adding to the nearly 1,000 courses it currently has under contract.

"NGCOA constituents now have the leadership and guidance they have sought in the online, tee-time reservation arena," said Dan Drolet, executive vice president of Book4golf.com. ↑

# Golf Course Marketplace

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