

Golf Partners ready for action

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Pooling the extensive experience of four golf industry veterans, developer and management expert Marvin French has established Golf Partners Worldwide LLC, a firm that will consult and manage golf course projects from start to finish.



Marvin French

Golf Partners has a depth chart that any National Football League team would kill for. The firm includes: business and real estate lawyer Steven Zavodnick, hotel administrator and real estate broker John Miller, Master Greenkeeper and agronomist Gary Grigg, and golf course and association consultant Edward

Gowan.

The company will focus its efforts on managing a golf course project from day one all the way through to opening day. "We would like to find a developer that says 'find the pieces and manage the project through the development process,'" said French.

"We think we can do two to three projects a year," he continued. "We want to do a good job and not get spread too thin. The purpose of forming this company was not to go out, grow like crazy and have a lot of employees. The purpose was to come together and see what we could do in golf."

Once a project opens, Golf Partners' involvement will likely end. "We are willing to help the owner

hire management personnel and put together standard operating procedures, but we don't want to manage long term," said French.

THE RENOVATION MARKET

As new construction is tailing off, French anticipates that the renovation market will begin to expand.

"With all the new product out there, a lot of the product needs help," he said. "There is a lot of renovation potential. There are a

lot of good courses out there that need just a little attention to keep up."

French expects that much of this renovation work can be done in house. Gary Grigg, who has been involved in the construction and grow-in of more than two dozen golf courses, is looking forward to working on these projects. "My role will be as an agronomist

Continued on page 37

TSC Golf

Continued from page 29

However, cost savings is not the only issue.

"As courses are getting closer and closer to each other in terms of playability and high maintenance standards, the gap between high- and low-end courses has narrowed," Childers said. "To survive, customer service has to be a priority. This means that there must be individual training for each segment of the operation, from the bag drop to the pro shop to the first tee."

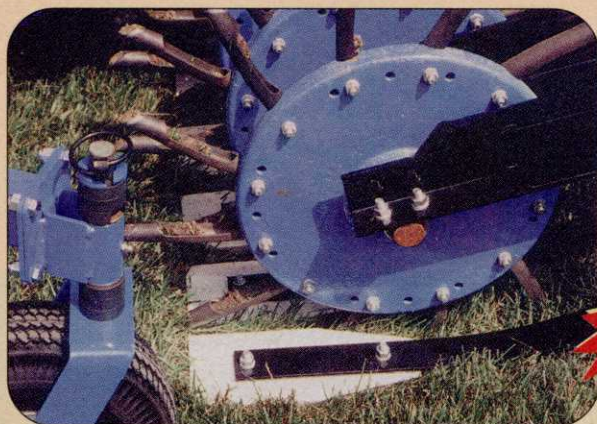
At Rolling Hills, TSC's first move will be to bring course maintenance back up to speed. "We are on a six-month plan to get the agronomic practices back up, improve weed control and purchase better and new equipment," said Childers. In addition, the clubhouse and grounds will get a facelift and the course will get new golf cars. At Myrtle West, clubhouse renovations are planned along with some minor changes on the golf course.

Despite the competition, Childers feels Myrtle Beach is still a strong market. "The increase in the number of accommodations being built in the area, combined with the slow down of courses being built, means that we are in a catch up period and the growth is filling out," he said.

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Outside of Myrtle Beach, TSC is managing three other projects through design and construction. One is in the Dallas area and the other two are in Virginia. Construction at each site is due to begin later this fall or early this spring.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

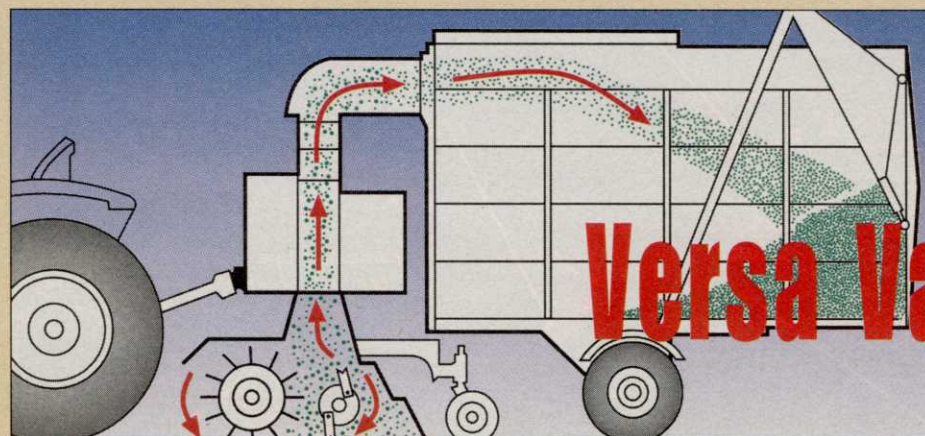


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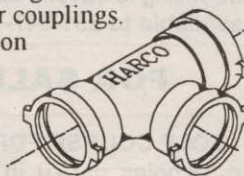
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CALENDAR

OCTOBER

16-18 — Northwest Turfgrass Association's Annual Convention in Oregon. Contact 800-738-1617

NOVEMBER

4-7 — Georgia GCSA Annual Meeting in Savannah. Contact 706-742-2651

6-9 — West Virginia GCSA's Turf Conference and Trade Show 2000 in Morgantown. Contact 304-243-4154

14-16 — The New York State Turfgrass Association's New York Turf and Grounds Exposition in Syracuse. Contact 800-873-8873.

14-16 — Penn State Golf Turf Conference. Contact 814-863-3475.

29-1 — 47th Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show in Denver. Contact 303-770-2220.

DECEMBER

4-7 — The Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show 2000 in Columbus. Contact 888-683-3445.

JANUARY

15-18 — Michigan Turfgrass Conference in Lansing. Contact 517-321-1660.

28-1 — 74th World Conference on Club Management in San Diego. Contact 703-739-9500.

Golf Partners

Continued from page 31

and as a consultant," said Grigg. "Whether it be helping someone build a maintenance facility or helping someone renovate or grow in a golf course. I have always enjoyed that more than golf course maintenance."

As Golf Partners gets off the ground, French rules nothing out. "We will look at anything," he said. "Ownership is a possibility if it is the right situation - none of us wants to be tied to one piece of property."

"As far as new projects go, the strongest market is in the Northeast. An owner that can put a project together up there is going to have a full golf course. We also will be exploring our international contacts and opportunities." ■

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