

DEVELOPMENT

Bali Hai opens in Las Vegas

Continued from page 21

towering palms.

"This golf club will be more than just a place to play golf – it will be a sightseeing adventure unto itself," said Walters. "We have incorporated some very authentic touches into the design of this club that will virtually transport our guests to a tropical paradise."

ISLAND GREEN

Seven acres of water features, including an island green, help foster the atmosphere that Schmidt and Curley strove to create – of being on a South Pacific island. Another touch: transition and out-of-play areas will be accented with Augusta white sand and black volcanic rock outcroppings.

"This is a fun course," said Curley. "We want to give guests an opportunity to loosen up and enjoy the surroundings before we begin challenging their skills. When you're finished, you'll know you've been tested, but it won't beat you to death. It's the kind of golf course you could play day after day and never tire of its charms."

POLYNESIAN CLUBHOUSE

The playing surface will consist of Bermudagrass overseeded with rye everywhere except on the greens, which will be bentgrass.

A stylish, Polynesian-like clubhouse, designed by Hayermagnus Architects, will house the golf shop and Cili, described as an "exquisite" restaurant serving a gourmet menu "with tropical accents" at breakfast, lunch and dinner.

A private dining room overlooks the 16th green. At more than 30,000 square feet, the Bali Hai clubhouse also has an outdoor pavilion and a tropical boutique. ■

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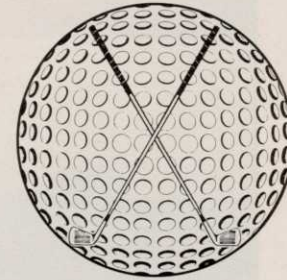
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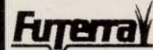
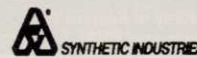
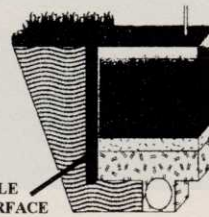
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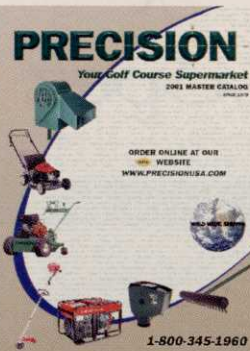
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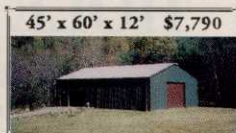
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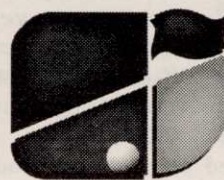
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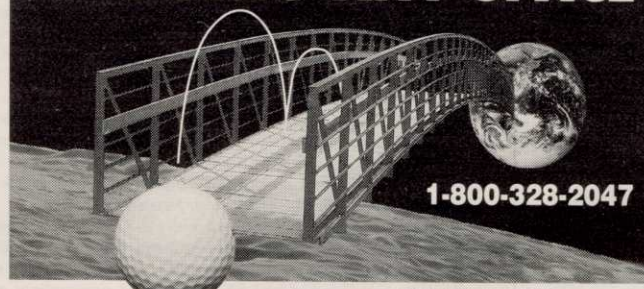


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Adaptive car market ready for Club Car, E-Z-GO

Continued from page 1

"We had been looking at accessibility solutions over the course of the last year and we tested a lot of the vehicles on the market to get an understanding of what the needs and requirements were," said Gary Stough, director of marketing for Club Car. "The SoloRider vehicle was the safest and most stable car out there."

Roger Pretekin, president of SoloRider, began researching the needs of disabled golfers in the early 1990s. The company's first shot at an adaptive golf car was a modified mobility scooter which simply was not stable or powerful enough. After further development, SoloRider rolled out the AteeA, which was specifically designed to tackle golf course terrain.

"The car exceeds ANSI standards and has an independent four-wheel suspension that transfers only six pounds of pressure per square inch," said Pretekin. "It also accommodates a wide variety of handicaps."

The vehicle features ergonomic hand controls, a multi-position, lockable 360-degree swivel seat, rear-wheel manual traction control, regenerative braking, and six-inch ground clearance.

"These are the bare minimums," Pretekin said. "We also developed a standing seat option that raises the player into the standing position where they can execute a shot."



eMotorsports' GolfExpress adaptive golf car on the green

The standard 1-PASS vehicle will retail for \$6,995 and the standing seat option will cost \$2,000. The first shipments of the car will begin this month and Pretekin said his factory is capable of producing 2,000 units a year.

As part of the deal, Club Car will supply SoloRider with sales, marketing, sourcing and engineering assistance. "We have already made alterations to the vehicle," said Stough. "It now has a 36-volt charger and a new transaxle designed like ours that will make it easier to service."

E-Z-GO ALLIES WITH EAGLE

E-Z-GO has entered the market in a similar agreement, forming an alliance with Augusta-based Eagle Parts and Products. In addition to manufacturing golf car accessories, Eagle produces electric shopping buggies.

"More and more courses are becoming aware of accessibility issues," said Ron Skenes, communications manager for E-Z-GO. "Courses will certainly not need 60 of these vehicles, but at some point every golf course will need to have these adaptive cars. This is a good niche market that made sense for us to expand into."

In developing the E-Z-GO product, Eagle started from scratch.

"We began with a clean sheet of paper," said Eagle president Frank Dolan. "We used the same controller technology but we have beefed up the car."

"The trick here is to appeal to fleet sales," he continued. "We are developing a car that will handle the lion's share of disabilities. We are not addressing quadriplegics, but primarily people who are inconvenienced."

As a result, the car will retail for about \$4,000 and focus on the low end of the market. Features on the car include a low center of gravity, three braking systems, a built-in 24-volt charger and a footprint of eight psi. The car will enter production this July.

MARKET REACTION

With the E-Z-GO car in the prototype phase and Club Car producing a higher-end car, other adaptive car manufacturers are convinced that there is still plenty of opportunity in the marketplace.

"I am glad that Club Car and E-Z-GO are in the market. It proves that we are making a legitimate product," said Don Labowsky, president of eMotorsports and maker of the Golf Xpress adaptive golf car. "We are going after 7 million people and I'll

take my chances."

While both E-Z-GO and Club Car have established distribution channels direct to golf courses, both eMotorsports and Mobility Solutions are optimistic, reporting that some Club Car dealers have shown an interest in their vehicles.

"We fit into the low end of the market," said Pike, "Yet we offer a patented anti-tip safety frame, dual throttle controls, regenerative braking and a swivel seat. The car appeals to owners who don't want to spend a lot but need a car that is safe and will not damage the course."

Mobility Solution's Solo Sport retails for \$3,200.

IMPROVING MODELS

Long-time players Fairway Golf Cars (formerly a division of Ortho-Kinetics) and eMotorsports are also working to improve their adaptive car offerings.

"We have spent three years working on the Spirit," said Fairway Golf Cars president Ed Gaffney. "The new car will have more power, a new drive axle, a slip-proof transaxle and a lower center of gravity."

The Spirit will retail for around \$3,995 and will be available in April.

A new model of the GolfXpress is also in the works, based on data and information gathered over the past six years said Labowsky. The car will re-

tail for \$4,495 and feature offset tires with staggered tracking to lessen the car's impact on the turf.

MARKET ACCESS

While the established players have traditionally marketed their products via word-of-mouth and made sales mostly to individual golfers, the challenge now will be to broaden their market appeal and break into fleet sales to golf courses.

This is where both Club Car and E-Z-GO have the advantage.

"Before SoloRider teamed up with Club Car, we had little access to the market and service and distribution were problems," said Pretekin. "Now that is solved. Without our agreement with Club Car, there is no one out there that can properly maintain these vehicles and provide parts. Club Car provides service in every state and they have financing programs that make it very easy for courses to step up and support accessibility by purchasing these cars."

The little guys, however, said they are up to the task. "We have a high quality and high performance golf car," said Jeff Mattheson, director of sales and marketing for Fairway Golf Cars. "They may have the direct and immediate access to accounts, but that is part of our challenge. We have to get out there and let people know that there are alternatives in the market." ■

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