



## BRIEFS

### CLUBCORP PROMOTES ELLIS

DALLAS — ClubCorp has named Richard Ellis the new regional vice president for its daily-fee golf clubs. Ellis, who joined the company in 1976, has served in a variety of management and development positions. He has been serving, and will continue to serve, as managing director for the development of the Bear's Best golf courses in Las Vegas and Atlanta.



Richard Ellis

### MASSEI STEPS UP AT PINEHURST

PINEHURST, N.C. — Pinehurst, Inc. has named Matt Massei director of golf. Massei, who has been at Pinehurst since 1991 when he became an assistant golf professional at the No. 7 course, will work closely with the company's executive vice president of golf operations Don Padgett, Sr. As the director of golf, Massei will oversee the operations team as well as the resort's retail division, yield management and golf instruction departments.

### ADELSON NAMED PRESIDENT AND COO

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Steve Adelson has been named president and chief operating officer of Mirabel, one of the newest private club real estate developments here in north Scottsdale. He will be supervising the creation of Mirabel and will direct the development and operations of the club, from construction management and supervision of the architectural component to oversight of the sales and marketing programs. Adelson was a founder of the Raven Golf Clubs in Phoenix and Tucson, Ariz., and played a major role in both of the clubs' developments, as well as helping to establish the conditioning and guest service standards. Mirabel is being developed by San Francisco-based Discovery Land Co.

### RED HAWK GC PROMOTES FAIRBANKS

SPARKS, Nev. — Red Hawk Golf Club has promoted Lane B. Fairbanks to director of operations. In his new position, Fairbanks will oversee the club's golf operations, sales and marketing, event services and future lodging to be built at Red Hawk. He has been with the facility since May of 1997.

## Del Webb signs Troon to manage its Anthem clubs

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PHOENIX, Ariz. — In a move to lure more members and improve profits at its Anthem Phoenix and Las Vegas Country Club communities, developer Del Webb has turned the management reins over to Troon Golf.

In addition to managing the golf courses, restaurants and club operations, Troon Golf will take over the marketing duties for the two clubs. Del Webb, which is a division of Pulte Homes, had previously managed the Anthem clubs in-house. It will continue to manage its Sun City and Revere branded golf courses.

"We feel the Troon relationship will bring us a potential home buyer market audience and club user profile that is aligned with our country club products and brands," said Henry DeLozier, vice president of golf operations for Del Webb.

While DeLozier said the decision was in the works before the economy began to slowdown, he admitted that the two clubs were having profitability problems.

"There were some numbers that we weren't hitting," he said. "We have always been patient country club develop-



The 17th hole at Del Webb's Anthem Country Club in Las Vegas

ers and in the past we were willing to subsidize operating deficits. We now have a greater sense of urgency in accelerating the earning power of our country club operations."

### TROON'S TOOLS

According to Tim Greenwell, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Troon Golf, the private club market has

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## Blinded golfer awarded \$2.1 million

By JOSEPH J. DEVANNEY

CLARKSTON, Mich. — Golfer Derek Autio, who was blinded in one eye after being struck by a golf ball, was recently awarded \$2.1 million by a Michigan jury.

Autio was taking a cart path through the woods towards the 18th hole at Clarkston Creek Golf Club when he was hit by the tee shot of another golfer. He lost an eye in the accident. In his claim, he alleged that the course was negligently designed.

At first glance, a verdict of this magnitude, coupled with the nature of the claim, could leave golf course managers and designers everywhere wondering if they are suddenly

facing potential and unanticipated claims. It appears, however, that both the facts and the law in the Clarkston Creek case are sufficiently unique.

### JURY SAYS ALL THREE ARE TO BLAME

Autio sued both the golf course and the golfer that hit the errant shot. Following a trial, the jury determined that Autio was 40 percent negligent, the club was 55 percent at fault and the other golfer was five percent culpable. The jury also determined that \$2.1 million was the value of Autio's injury, but, with his contributory negligence factored in, the actual amount would be closer to \$850,000.

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### KIERLAND GOLF CLUB TO GET NEW NEIGHBOR

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa is under construction here across from Kierland Golf Club. The Scott Miller-designed 27-hole layout, which has been open for six years, will be the centerpiece of the \$180 million resort development. A new 19,000-square-foot clubhouse will open this spring and the 750-room hotel will open in January 2003. Hotel guests will have first priority in scheduling tee times on the course. Troon Golf manages the golf course and Westin will manage the food and beverage operations.

## Ritz-Carlton on the move in Fla.

NAPLES, Fla. — Ritz-Carlton has added to the splendor here in golf-rich Naples with the opening of the Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort.

Greg Norman's Tiburon Golf Course surrounds the 295-room resort, which opened Jan. 4. The 27-hole layout was carved out of 800 acres of natural Florida foliage and plays firm and fast in the links tradition. The fairways are lined with pine straw, stacked sod wall bunkers and coquina sand waste bunkers. The fairways on the course, which is certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, are maintained at a height of one half inch. The final nine holes of the project will open in November 2002.

In addition, the resort features a Rick Smith Golf Academy, fitness center, outdoor swimming pool, and four lighted tennis courts. Guests will be able to enjoy dining options at the golf resort or at the nearby Ritz-Carlton, Naples.

### A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ritz-Carlton has also stepped into golf community development with the construction of its first Ritz-Carlton Golf Club & Spa in Jupiter.

The 285-acre gated community will feature a Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course, a clubhouse and spa, and three home ownership options. Members will be able to choose from

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## Blinded golfer

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According to attorney John Candela of Livonia, Mich., who represented Clarkston Creek Golf Club, the case is not likely to set a precedent that other clubs should be concerned about.

"This case was very unusual," he said. "It was brought basically on a theory of premises liability, but Mr. Autio presented no expert to trial to show that the course was negligently designed."

"At the close of his case, I put in a motion for a directed verdict, since there had been no proof of any design defect," continued Candela. "That motion was actually granted, but the judge let the case go forward on the theory that there had been a failure by the club to warn visitors."

Candela is planning an appeal, which will include an argument that a failure to warn by the club is irrelevant since there was no showing of a course design defect at all.

As for the other golfer who was sued, he will not have to pay a cent because he was able to get himself dismissed from the case before trial. Under Michigan law, according to Candela, damages could still be proportioned against him by a jury for the purpose of comparative negligence, but he does not have to pay any amount.

In the meantime the club has been sold for reasons unrelated to the lawsuit, but insurance should cover any damages that are upheld by an appeals court. Candela said the course was designed in-house by previous owners several years ago.

"The important thing to remember is that no expert ever said that this course was designed defectively and I don't think other clubs will be impacted by this decision. Each course has its own unique design," he said.

In general, experts would still be necessary in lawsuits to prove any allegations involving defective course layouts. Club managers should be aware, however, that court decisions like the one in this case could occasionally bypass the need for an expert. ■

## Hyatt to open Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort in March

CHESAPEAKE BAY, Md. — The East Coast's newest luxury resort, the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina, will open here March 1.

The first full-service luxury resort on Maryland's eastern shore will feature an 18-hole golf course designed by Keith Foster, an 18,000 square-foot Euro-

pean Spa, a 150-slip marina and over 40,000 square-feet of indoor and outdoor meeting space.

The resort's golf course plays through 150-year-old hardwood groves and finishes in dramatic fashion. The par-3 17th hole requires a 175 yard tee shot over water to a narrow green banked by bunkers and trees and the

18th hole winds along the Choptank River from tee to green. Hyatt has 15 other golf resorts in its U.S. portfolio.

"With more than 50 events pre-booked, we're anxious to open our doors," said general manager Mike Walsh, who came to the resort from the Hyatt Dorado Beach Resort and Country Club

in Puerto Rico.

The resort will draw upon the diverse ecology and recreational opportunities that the Eastern Shore of Maryland offers. Guests will be able to stroll through the 18-acre wildlife preserve, relax poolside in the glass-enclosed arboretum, or charter a fishing boat from the resort's marina.



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