



BRIEFS

EMERALD GOLF LINKS NAMES NEW GM

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Golf course owner and operator Billy Casper Golf has named Christopher Martin general manager at the Casper-managed Emerald Golf Links, a new 18-hole public course near Atlantic City. Martin is currently managing final preparations for the Stephen Kay-designed course, which is scheduled to open in July. Prior to joining Emerald Links, Martin was general manager at The Bridges Golf Club and Guest Quarters in Abbottstown, Pa., and general manager at the Links at Challedon in Mt. Airy, Md.



Chris Martin

UPLINK SIGNS WITH THREE COURSES

AUSTIN, Texas — UpLink Corp., which provides global positioning system (GPS) technology to golf courses, has signed three more golf courses to use its GPS-based distance measurement, communication and golf course management system. The courses are White Hawk in Crown Point, Ind.; Ogle Bay in Wheeling, W.Va.; and Oakmarsh in Oakdale, Minn. The additions bring to nearly 50 the number of courses currently using the UpLink system. According to Jeff Connally, UpLink's founder and vice president, at the end of June, the company will have signed up more courses in a six-month period than at any other time in its history.



The UpLink system installed in a Club Car golf car.

CRESTLINE TO MANAGE ROCKY GAP LODGE AND GOLF RESORT

MCLEAN, Va. — Crestline Capital Corp. has signed an agreement with the Maryland Economic Development Corp. for Crestline Hotels and Resorts to manage the 218-room Rocky Gap Lodge and Golf Resort in Flintstone, Md. Built in 1998, the property features a resort and a Jack Nicklaus-designed course located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

Troon looks to continue strong growth in 2002

By DEREK RICE

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Troon Golf hopes the momentum it gained during a strong first quarter in which it added 10 new management contracts will carry over into the remainder of 2002, said Dana Garmany Troon's chairman and CEO.

"We're a little bit ahead of where we should be, and we hope we can continue," he said. "We think we'll pretty much do what we've projected in our budget, which is similar to what we did last year and the year before."

The only thing that will stand in the way, Garmany said, is if Troon decides it doesn't have the personnel to take on the project.

"Growing for us is really a matter of growing where we think we have the people to support those jobs," he said. "If we stop growing it will be because we can't staff the jobs or don't have



Dana Garmany

the people to do it."

Garmany said a large part of his company's growth can be attributed to the slow economy.

"For now, things are moving in a good direction and we've seen that the economy moving slower has, if any-

thing, only speeded up the number of requests we've gotten to take a look at deals," he said.

With its management contract at Newport National in Newport, R.I., along with contracts in the Boston and New York areas, Troon is moving into the Northeast, a region where it hasn't had a strong presence. However, Garmany said, the

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CLUBCORP UNVEILS MACQUARIE LINKS

DALLAS — Golf course management company ClubCorp, which has had its share of financial troubles of late, has opened its newest international property, Macquarie Links International Club in Sydney, Australia. The Robin Nelson-designed course is a blend of links-style golf with heathland, or bush, character. The result is a combination of traditional Scottish Courses and Australian sand belt courses, complete with an Outback-themed clubhouse.

Redstone retains Houston flavor

By DEREK RICE

HOUSTON — Two years ago, if you asked Evan Johansen, the new CEO of Redstone Golf Management, where his company would be today, he probably would have told you Redstone would be a national golf course management company. Today, however, that goal is much different, with the company hoping to keep its management contracts close to its Houston home base.

Aside from the five-course Bear Trace, a track of Jack Nicklaus-designed courses in Tennessee, all of the 13 courses the company owns or manages are within a few miles of headquarters, Johansen said.

"We just decided we don't want to be absentee managers and owners," Johansen said. "We're 20 minutes from all our projects—with the exception of the Tennessee properties—so if something comes up and we need to go out and take

a look at a green, our guys can be there in a short period of time. We just feel at this time this is our best strategy."

That strategy appears to be paying off for Redstone, which recently signed a 10-year agreement to host a PGA event, the Shell Houston Open. That opportunity came almost by accident, Johansen said. The PGA and the Houston Golf Association wanted to move the event out of The Woodlands and into the city itself, and had targeted the city-owned Memorial Park. That didn't sit too well with some in the community, who were unwilling to give up their park for the few weeks the tournament would have required.

"As that deal fell through, it became an option for us to host that tournament on one of our courses," Johansen said. "Redstone Golf Club (formerly El Dorado) is where we will host the tournament in

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Acordia expands golf division

By DEREK RICE

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Based on its success in the Northern California market, Acordia Insurance Services has expanded its division dedicated to serving the golf course industry on a nationwide basis.

Because there are so many opportunities for liability at golf courses, owners should be sure they are insured correctly, said Bill Connor, a commercial property and casualty account executive with Acordia.

"Coverage is very complex on a golf course, including pollution liability," Connor said. "Liability lawsuits are tearing people down if they're not covered correctly."

For the last 15 years, Acordia has offered its packages tailored specifically to golf course owners and operators. The company offers flat liability rates with no yearly audit or additional payments.

However, he added, Acordia will not insure everyone.

"Some people aren't going to fit our program based on their claims, kind of like someone's driving record," he said. "We've priced this very competitively, but

Continued on next page

VGM teams with First Tee

By DEREK RICE

WATERLOO, Iowa — VGM Club, a golf buying alliance, has extended complimentary membership and buying power to The First Tee chapters as part of its initiatives to grow the game of golf.

The relationship is beneficial for both parties, said D. Jay Ellis, president of VGM Club.

"They saw an opportunity for their facilities to be able to save money, and we saw an opportunity to be able to contribute to golf for a good cause," he said. "It's a win-win opportunity."

The First Tee is a five-year-old World Golf Foundation initiative dedicated to providing affordable golf access to everyone, especially children, who otherwise might not have an opportunity to play. Each of The First Tee's 85 golf learning facilities will be able to take advantage of VGM Club's relationships with 150 merchants and manufacturers to save money on everything from paper supplies to maintenance contracts, Ellis said.

"Our alliance can save member clubs an average of five to 10 percent on their bottom line if they use us just a little bit," he said. "They can save a lot more if they pay attention to the manufacturers we have relationships with."

Ellis said VGM Club sees growing the game of golf as part of its mission, and the relationship with The First Tee will allow



D. Jay Ellis

Redstone's Houston flavor

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2003 and 2004."

For the remainder of the 10-year agreement, Johansen said, the tournament will be held on a new Rees Jones-designed course that will begin construction in early 2003.



Rees Jones, who designed Redstone's Shadow Hawk Golf Club and Houstonian Golf Club, is designing the future site of the PGA's Shell Houston Open for the company. The course is scheduled to break ground next spring and open in 2005.

"We've got some mitigation issues to sort out between now and then," Johansen said. "There are a few nice wetlands on the property that we need to make sure we're taking care of."

When completed, the facility

will also include a par-three course for junior golf, also designed by Jones.

Johansen said he sees one reason Redstone can afford to remain local is that the Houston golf marketplace presents many opportunities, mainly because of heavy development in recent years.

"There's been an awful lot of golf developed in Houston over the last four or five years," Johansen said. "It was clearly underdeveloped five years ago, when we started our courses, and it's probably been a little bit overdeveloped."

With the exception of the Jones-designed course, Johansen said, Redstone will probably not be doing any development in the near term, although that is something the company may look to in the future.

"Certainly if there's some distressed properties or some third-party management contracts that become available, that's where we see our growth coming from in the next couple of years," he said. "We would love to get back into the development at some point because we enjoy that part of it and we enjoy the relationships we have with some of the architects."

Johansen said, ideally, Redstone will add six to eight courses to its portfolio in the next four or five years. Whether Redstone will take on these courses in an ownership capacity or as a third-party maintenance company remains to be seen, although the company is equally equipped for both, he added. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Troon's growth

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company's slow movement into the region has more to do with the red tape that accompanies any development than anything else.

"If anything it's primarily because the stuff we've been looking at in that region has been development-related," he said.

"We're very happy with what we have and we certainly want to focus on the Northeast as well as the Northwest."

Signs point to a recovery in Troon's group division, Garmany said. Because the division handles corporate bookings, it has been most impacted by the slowing economy.

"My people are telling me that in the third and fourth quar-

ters of this year, our group business is going to be coming back in a big way, so that's a positive sign," he said. "The corporations that we booked a lot of golf with just cut back on what they were doing, which is understandable."

Garmany said the golf course management industry could use some good news on the economic front, particularly be-

cause the news from competitors like American Golf Corp. and ClubCorp has hurt the management industry as a whole.

"It's a shame for us to see the bad news that is out there because it spoils the environment," he said. "You get bankers and financing sources down on golf, so it's very difficult to do different things." ■

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2.0% Combined Sulfur (S)		Leaves	1 1 1
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Copper (Cu)	0.02%	Sc. 1/2"	1 1 1
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