



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

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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

InVista alliance provides marketing tool for owners

By DEREK RICE

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. — The InVista Club World Alliance, an alliance of owners of golf, business, yacht, athletic and spa facilities, has signed a partnership agreement with Strachan Management Ltd. Under the agreement, Strachan will be allowed to market and expand the

InVista Club program in Canada and the northeastern United States.

Under the InVista alliance, 10 to 20 golf course owners are teamed in a local alliance and tied into the worldwide alliance. InVista Club members receive reciprocal playing privileges at private clubs as well as preferred

pricing and advanced booking privileges at daily-fee clubs.

"The alliance was designed for owners to drive members to their facilities," said Jim Hoppenrath, president of InVista Club Inc. "So now you've got a competitive advantage over those guys who aren't a member of this alliance."

The alliance currently comprises 50 member clubs, with 50 more agreements in various stages of negotiation, Hoppenrath said. The goal is to have 1,000 clubs in the alliance, which he said will not add any administrative costs, based on the Web-based nature of the InVista program.

"The key to this is creating a Web-based database to tap into

so that as a member, you can show up at any InVista facility and be verified and know your privileges at that facility within a half-second," he said.

If InVista tried to do this using a traditional call-center model, Hoppenrath said, the costs would quickly become prohibitive.

"With as many as 1,000 members, you could probably manage that, but if you're going to scale up to a million members, which is our goal, it's an administrative nightmare," he said. "You can't hire people fast enough and the cost is going to go through the roof."

A key feature to the InVista plan that should be attractive to club owners, Hoppenrath said, is that they don't have to give up any control at their clubs, and they can continue with business as usual.

"We're not just a third party trying to line our pockets," he said. "We're trying to help these guys gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace today. This is just another tool in their belt to be able to sell."

The major challenge Hoppenrath faces in trying to sell the idea of this alliance is the traditional nature of golf and golf course owners.

"These guys are fiercely independent," he said. "It does take a while to get them to realize they're part of a bigger group. You can break a single pencil, but if you put 50 of them together, you can't break them. They're much stronger together than they are by themselves."

Straight talk.

"We've done our homework. We've looked at all the other magazines serving the golf course industry, and we're advertising with *Golf Course News*. You are **the most professional book in the market**, and it is professionals who will buy our product."

David Sargent
Green Touch Industries

"The **phone has been ringing off the hook** since you did the story on compost tea. Many thanks for the coverage!"

Tina Woolverton
Earthworks

"I 'borrow' our superintendent's copy of *Golf Course News* when it arrives so that I can read it before he does. **It really keeps me up to date** on what's happening in the industry."

Roger Densmore III, Head Golf Professional
Nonesuch River Golf Course

"As soon as I read the article in this month's *Golf Course News* about the IRS allowing the depreciation of greens, **a light went on**. I immediately sent the information out to my potential renovation and new construction clients to make them aware of the new tax advantages."

Andrew Crouch, head of business development,
ASL Golf Course Construction

"*Golf Course News* is my **best source for news** about the golf course industry. I go through it cover to cover as soon as I pull it out of my mailbox. Keep up the good work keeping us informed!"

Eric von Hofen, Director of Agronomy
Calusa Pines Golf Club

"**I am a raving fan of your publication.** Thanks for keeping us in the loop on what's happening in the industry."

Ken Oehlers, Corporate Communications Manager
Arnold Palmer Golf Management

"*Golf Course News* — **a most respectable publication** in an age of creeping meatballism."

Robert Oeschle
Montco Products Corporation

"Thanks for the great story about our renovation project. As always, you guys are **fair and accurate** in your reporting and tell a good story, too."

Ed Esgar, Course Superintendent
Ravisloe Country Club

"You guys work at *Golf Course News*? That magazine has the **freshest news!**"

Scott Anderson, Area Manager
United Horticultural Supply

**The industry's #1 source
for news and information.**

**GOLF COURSE
NEWS**
THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Golf insurance

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you have to fit our program."

Because Acordia was acquired by Wells Fargo Inc. last year, Connor said, it is able to offer its customers more than just insurance.

"We are currently developing relationships with our bankers at Wells Fargo so we can say to the golf course owner, 'You know all that maintenance equipment you lease? I know a few bankers within Wells Fargo you might want to talk with,'" he said. "We won't be too aggressive about it, but if you don't want to shop all over, we have it all." ■

VGM/First Tee

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the company to pursue that.

"We feel The First Tee program is an excellent program. We felt that their goals and accomplishments met our requirements for a partnership or relationship, namely is it good for the game of golf?" he said. "We believe they are in it for the right reasons." ■