

Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

Civilized Debate Continues

Congratulations on tackling a difficult and sensitive issue. ("Management Companies: The Civilized Debate Continues," October).

As an administrator of multiple golf course operations, a former CGCS and golf professional, I applaud the articles by Greg Plotner and Joel Jackson. I can't say as much for Mike Hamilton's article. He's in la la land if he thinks the GCSAA, USGA, PGA and CMAA will get together to regulate and accredit management companies.

I'm sure that many of Hamilton's horror stories can be validated. But the whole point concerning management companies has been missed. Any golf course operation that's considering hiring a management company is as lost as a golf ball in tall grass if it doesn't execute extremely thorough due diligence.

Last year, I spoke on the management company issue at the National Public Golf Forum in Palm Springs, Calif., and I presented every aspect of developing a request for proposal and all of the due diligence in terms of investigating a management company's background (there's an extensive checklist). If you can't do it, hire a bonded consultant to perform the evaluation. You can get burned if you don't have your act together.

Any contract with a management company must be closely managed. Hold its feet to the fire in terms of every aspect of performance, including a performance bond. It's not a once-in-a-while contract performance to check. The club must have someone who has the ability to manage the contract.

If Hamilton's horror stories could be investigated, I'll assure

you that the majority were the result of not properly managing the contract. Good management companies are professionals. They know the business and can probably do the job more efficiently in every aspect. It's not about doing it cheaper. It's about doing it better, eliminating a lot of headaches and producing cost savings.

Gene Burress
Golf Operations Director
Brevard County, Fla.

Gone fishin'

As you stated in your October Flagstick column, fishing and golf are cut from the same cloth. Where else can we spend hundreds of dollars on boron-graphite fishing rods, then turn around and purchase the latest titanium metal wood for the equivalent cost?

Where else can you find solitude in the rain while playing golf on a deserted golf course or throwing spinner baits from a bass boat with no one else around? Where else can I find peace and tranquility as I walk my course at sunset with no golfer in sight, enjoying the accomplishments my staff and I have worked so hard for, or climb in the bass boat at sunup wondering what the day of fishing has in store for me?

Yes, I'm also addicted to fishing.

Doug Holcomb
Superintendent
Delta View GC, Pittsburg, Calif.

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Pat Jones at patrick.jones@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.

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