

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Core Golfers on the Rise

The National Golf Foundation's most comprehensive golf participation study unveiled good news for the industry: Core golfers — adults who play at least 8 rounds each year — rose to about 15 million, up from 12.5 million last year.

The results stem from a comprehensive USA Sports Participation Study, a collaboration of the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, Snowsports Industries America, the Outdoor Industry Foundation and NGF.

"This year's study is superior to ones we've done in the past, primarily due to the larger sample size of 60,000," NGF President and CEO Joe Beditz said in a prepared statement. "This larger sample gives us a more detailed view of the American golfer than we have ever had, and we also have better information on other sports and fitness activities that golfers engage in."

The study also identified about 400,000 more junior golfers to total 4.8 million players between age 6 and age 17. The total number of golfers, 28.7 million, is down 2 percent from last year, according to the report.

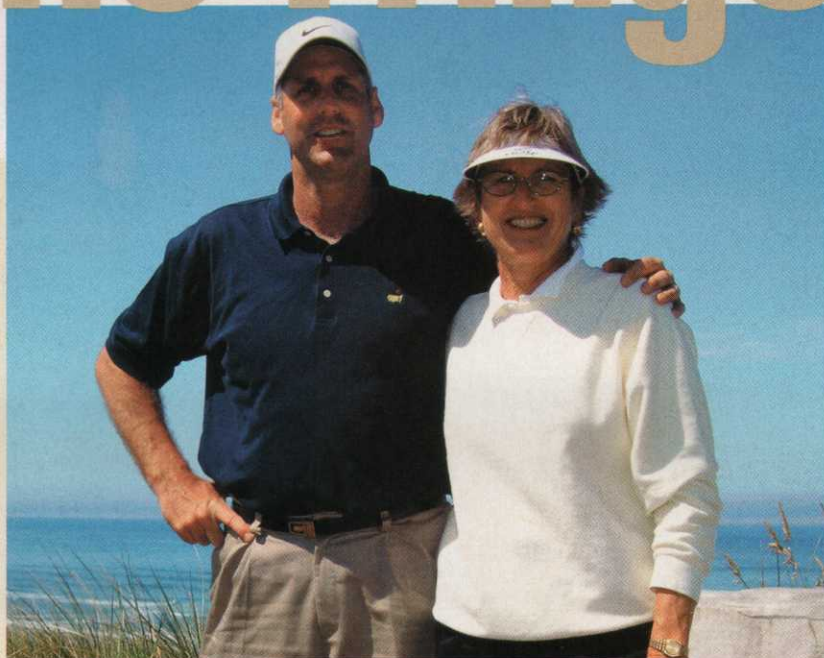
### Petersan Joins Nutramax

Doug Petersan, regarded as one of the nation's top superintendents, has joined Nutramax Laboratories. He provides agronomic advice and guidance for Nutramax customers and distributors in Texas and the Southwest.

"His experience and industry knowledge will be a great asset to our company and to our customers," said George Barger, director of the Nutramax's agricultural division.

Petersan recently retired as superintendent of Austin Golf Club. He still serves as a

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## Time of His Life

SUPERINTENDENT CHRIS GAUGHAN WILL NEVER FORGET CADDYING FOR HIS SISTER ON THE LPGA TOUR **By Anthony Pioppi**

**L**ike many other superintendents, Chris Gaughan didn't come directly to the profession. But like few others, Gaughan has "LPGA caddy" listed on his resume.

Gaughan, 48, has been a part of Eugene (Ore.) Country Club for almost his entire life, from his days as a caddy starting when he was 10 years old to today where he is in his 14th season as superintendent.

As much as he enjoys maintaining Eugene Country Club, he readily admits that nothing surpasses the time between 1982 and 1984. That's when Gaughan toted clubs, gauged the wind and read putts for his sister,

Kathy Mant, on the LPGA Tour. Kathy is the oldest of the seven Gaughan children, and Chris is the second youngest.

"It was a ball. I was meeting people, traveling and I enjoy golf," Gaughan says. "It was the most fun job I've ever had."

Caddying came as an unexpected invitation from his sister after Gaughan completed his fourth year at the University of Oregon, still a few classes shy of his finance degree. But he decided to try the nomadic lifestyle, one where caddies are known only by nicknames, such as Speedway (from Indianapolis) and Scraper (short for

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and membership; Jayne Davison, director of merchandising; and Chris Wilkerson, senior consultant construction management.

### **A Polo Field, a Golf Course ... What's the Difference?**

Where there's golf there's ... polo?

Why not? Wellington, Fla.-based Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design recently broke ground on a unique renovation at Wellington Golf & Country Club that will include a polo field/practice range, and a golf course that will vary in length depending on whether or not the ponies are running that day. The facility will reopen at Thanksgiving with a new name.

Houston businessman John Goodman, who owns Wellington and the nearby world-renowned International Polo Club Palm Beach, instructed Jacobsen Hardy to renovate the existing practice range into an area that could be converted easily into a polo field, as well as a ring for show-jumping competitions and other equestrian disciplines.

"Mr. Goodman's vision is to incorporate a spectator-friendly area for equestrian special events as part of the new golf course," Peter Jacobsen, PGA Tour vet and partner with Jim Hardy in Houston-based Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design, said in a press release. "It's a unique but extremely efficient use of the practice range that will provide added value to the club members and added challenge to the architects."

The golf course, which will undergo a thorough renovation in addition to its convertible practice area, closed April 15 with plans for a soft reopening on Thanksgiving as The Wanderers Club at Wellington, a private country club with membership by invitation, according to Louie Bartoletti, general manager of Wellington G&CC.

Making the polo field fit on the existing practice range required creativity, according to Jacobsen Hardy. Polo fields are typically crowned and drain to just 0.75-percent slope, explained Jacobsen Hardy Senior Vice President/Managing Architect Rex Van-Hoose. The minimum slope to move water off a golf course is generally 3 percent.

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Skyscraper). Gaughan was quickly dubbed Mant, his sister's married name, and it stuck with him the entire time he was on the tour.

In the off-season, he returned to work on the crew at Eugene.

"I had a job the day I came back," Gaughan says.

Gaughan says he didn't have a close relationship with his sister when growing up in Eugene because they are 10 years apart. He was 8 years old when she left for Arizona State University, where she became one of the top collegiate golfers in the country. In 1970, she won the precursor to the NCAA individual title, the Division of Girls and Women's Sports tournament, which came two years before Title IX was enacted.

The common bond was the fact they were the two best athletes in the family.

"She was the No. 1 man on the boys' golf team (in high school)," Gaughan said of his sister, the first and only women's golf coach at Georgia Southern, a Division I program. "She was a jock."

And her brother was a natural choice as her caddy, Mant says.

"Chris is my only sibling that took golf very seriously; he was a 2 or 3 handicap," she says. "I thought it would be a wonderful opportunity for him to see his country and for me to have someone reliable in my corner."

Mant's transition from collegiate play to the professional ranks was neither quick nor easy. Her ego took a blow during the U.S. Amateur when she finished last in the qualifying round; "reverse medalist" is how Mant terms the dubious achievement.

She stopped playing golf competitively, became a buyer for a clothing company and married, only occasionally picking up a golf club. But about a year later, the game drew her back, and she became a teaching pro in California. She attempted to qualify for the LPGA,

twice missing by a single stroke before making it in 1979.

Gaughan debuted on his sister's bag in May 1982 and was instantly accepted by other caddies. After the first few weeks of the tour, Gaughan settled in with a group of guys he traveled with from site to site, usually sleeping five to a room. The beds were broken down so that two guys had mattresses and two slept on box springs. The odd man out was the guy who caddied for the highest round, and he was forced to sleep elsewhere, including the car.

During his first few tournaments, Gaughan suffered because his sister played poorly. He explained to her the rules of the road in hopes she would pick up her game. "I asked her to shoot a 75," he says. "She shot an 82."

Despite the sometimes stark accommodations, Gaughan enjoyed the road. By the sixth week out, Gaughan met the woman, Debi, who would be his wife, when the tour stopped in Wheeling, W.V.

It was Debi who instigated the end of Gaughan's caddying career after the 1984 season. She told him, "I know how we met, and you can't stay out there."

Gaughan, who is still a single-digit player, returned to work full-time at Eugene and was approached by the general manager about taking over when long-time superintendent Bill Norman retired. Gaughan wanted the position but knew he needed more education, so he enrolled at Oregon State and took nothing but turf classes. He then interned for two years at other courses before becoming the assistant at Eugene in 1991. He was named superintendent in 1993.

Mant remained on tour until 1989 and was elected president of the LPGA Players Association in 1985. Since then she has been a teaching pro and golf coach. She sums up how she and her brother look back at their time on tour.

"If I had the opportunity again, I'd absolutely go do it," she says. ■