



Green Golf Partners aims to break new ground in course management

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As it closes the books on a productive 2017, Green Golf Partners is hoping for a repeat performance in 2018.

The six-year-old company bought its first golf property this year, the defunct Saddlebrook Golf Course in Indianapolis, Ind., which will likely reopen in the spring of 2018. The firm also secured a lease on Cape Royal Golf Club (formerly Royal Tee Golf Club) in Cape Coral, Fla., and it landed a management contract on Short Hills Country Club, a private venue in East Moline, Ill. All three properties anchor golf communities, and Matt McIntee, Green Golf's CEO and majority owner, believes they represent an area of potential growth. Before long, he expects to secure contracts on several other courses that serve as drawing cards for golf communities.

"We've learned a lot about working with home owners," he said, "and that's opened up a lot of opportunities for us."

In addition, this year Green Golf earned the right to lease three courses owned by the city of Racine, Wis., a group that consists of the 18-hole Herbert F. Johnson Park and Washington Park golf courses as well as a nine-hole layout in Shoop Park. To win the contract, which goes into effect in January 2018, it prevailed over a bid from Billy Casper Golf.

Green Golf is a full-service, Indianapolis-based company that offers the full range of management capabilities, and it makes some familiar promises. It vows, for example, to provide its clients with "the highest quality product and service levels," and it says it has "the highest regard for fiscal responsibility" and "the highest standards of integrity and professionalism." But Green Golf is quick to establish some distinguishing characteristics as well. McIntee calls himself "a little bit of a renegade" with a desire "to change how golf-course management is done." Reflecting the mood of the times, he describes his firm's mission as being "centered around the concept of having fun."

These days, the fun is being had at 19 properties, divided almost equally between daily-fee, private and municipal venues. The proportion was created deliberately, for McIntee aims to "balance the risk" in what he views as "an incredibly difficult industry" with "a lot of moving parts."

McIntee got started in golf management at Crown Golf Properties, a now-extinct Chicago-based firm. He established Green Golf in 2011 by joining forces with HG Golf Properties, a firm

founded by Tom Rodems in 1997. Rodems sold his interest in Green Golf to McIntee in 2016, and today he's a principal of Savoy, Ill.,-based Rodems Golf Management.

Over the next five years, McIntee hopes to double the size of Green Golf's portfolio through his version of "smart growth." He wants to enlarge the firm's footprint in the Southeast, adding to the three properties it manages in Florida, and capitalize on opportunities he sees in Michigan and Ohio. His ideal target, he feels, is a well-regarded but underperforming course in a mid-sized market.

"I'd love to grow super-fast," he explained, "but I have to be able to manage the growth. I know how hard it is to take on a new project."

Green Golf currently owns one course, leases five and manages 13. As it grows, McIntee would like its holdings to consist of one-third owned and leased properties, with the remainder on management contracts.

Green Golf Partners

Courses

Bellevue Biltmore Golf Club, Belleair, Fla. (Municipal 18)
Briarwood Club of Ankeny, Ankeny, Iowa (Private 18)
Cape Royal Golf Club, Cape Coral, Fla. (Daily fee 27)
Danville Country Club, Danville, Ill. (Private 18)
Eagle Creek Golf Course, Findlay, Ill. (Municipal 18)
Fox Ridge Golf Club, Dike, Iowa (Daily fee 18)
Jester Park Golf Course, Granger, Iowa (Municipal 27)
Kemper Lakes Golf Club, Kildeer, Ill. (Private 18)
Kankakee Country Club, Kankakee, Ill. (Private 18)
Meshingomesia Golf & Social Club, Marion, Ind. (Private 18)
Monticello Golf Club, Monticello, Ill. (Private 9)
New Berlin Hills, New Berlin Hills, Wis. (Municipal 18)
Saddlebrook Golf Club, Indianapolis, Ind. (Daily fee 18)
Short Hills Country Club, East Moline, Ill. (Private 18)
Stone Creek Golf Club, Williamsburg, Iowa (Daily fee 18)
Thunderbolt Pass, Evansville, Ind. (Municipal 18)
Twin Bridges Golf Club, Danville, Ind. (Daily fee 18)
Wawasee Golf Club, Syracuse, Ind. (Daily fee 9)
Westchase Golf Club, Tampa, Fla. (Daily fee 18)

Note: GGP's contract with Jester Park in Iowa ends on December 31, 2017; GGP will add three courses in Racine, Wis., in January 2018: Herbert F. Johnson Park Golf Course (18), Shoop Park Golf Course (9) and Washington Park Course (18).