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Fyre Lake Golf Course Under New Ownership

PGA Director of Golf Mark Krizic Bringing Callaway Training Center & More Upgrades to the 18-Hole Nicklaus Designed Property

July 13, 2020 | Sherrad, Illinois – Business partners Larry Whitty and Mike Thoms have secured a purchase agreement for the sale of Fyre Lake golf course's assets to PGA Certified Director of Golf Mark Krizic. The new owner is currently the Director of Golf for Ridge Country Club in Chicago, Illinois where he has been managing operations since 2009.

Krizic will also lease the 144 acres of land from Whitty and Thoms' holding company and acquire the entire property at the conclusion of the business purchase agreement. Terms and purchase price were not disclosed.

Course superintendent William Starceвич and his staff will remain in place, now under Krizic's leadership and oversight. Krizic is a very accomplished golf educator, coach, promoter and ambassador.

He serves on the Illinois PGA Board of Directors and chairs the Illinois PGA Player Development committee. In 2013 he was named the PGA Magazine Ambassador of the Year. In 2016 and 2018 he was voted Illinois PGA Player Development Teacher of the Year. Krizic coaches Brother Rice High School and Saint Xavier University men's and women's golf teams. In addition, he is a U.S. Kids Master Instructor and member of the Positive Coaching Alliance.

Krizic also operates the Chicago Callaway Performance Center and is a certified Fitting & Product Specialist as a Callaway Master Staff Professional. With his teaching, coaching and technology knowledge, Mark grew the Ridge's membership from 425 to over 615 members. He accomplished this at a facility where space is a premium and has no practice range.

Whitty and Thoms took over Fyre Lake in 2015 and rescued the business from financial and operational mismanagement. The two always planned to sell the course to an on-site owner/operator and gave themselves five years to stabilize the business before they transitioned it.

"We're very excited about Mark's vision for Fyre Lake," said Larry Whitty. "His experience and proven results is what this course needs to realize its full potential."

Krizic's vision includes a Callaway Performance Center where he will oversee year-round training for youth and adults alike. The training center will be built into the current practice range and will include multiple state-of-the-art Trackman launch monitors. Players and students will be able to practice under the guidance of a PGA training professional inside a facility that can be opened up for ball striking even when the course is not open due to weather.

Krizic's wife Alyssa and their four children are planning to live at the Fyre Lake residential development and will be moving to Sherrad, Illinois in the spring next year. Alyssa has been Mark's key partner and driving force in growing the game of golf. She is an AGM member merchandiser and as such will be heavily involved in the new Fyre Lake golf course's future upgrades and operations.

“We are going to miss all our great friends in Chicago-land. It's been my life-long dream to own my own course and facility,” said Krzic. “With Larry and Mike's partnership and their confidence in me and Alyssa, this dream is coming true. We will be relying heavily on William and his staff during this transition period, and they've done an excellent job at continually improving the player experience at Fyre Lake.”

Krzic says there will be minimal visible changes for the remaining of the 2020 season. However, he and Alyssa will be focused on developing the training center facility, course improvements, expanding membership benefits and options, and updated branding and messaging.

The two have engaged Davenport, Iowa based Marigold Resources to assist in business development and branding for the couple's new venture. “Mark and Alyssa have the passion, professionalism and patience that will be very appealing and embraced by the golfing community on both sides of the river,” said Marigold managing partner Chris Barnard.

“With Mark's planned training center and coaching expertise, the Quad Cities' youth will have a one-of-a-kind chance to learn year-round. That's an unrealized differential here and will accelerate and grow the Quad Cities as a top regional golfing destination,” said Barnard. “Besides, the course is one of the funnest and most challenging to play in this area, and will only be better with Mark's planned upgrades.”

Mark will finish his coaching duties at Brother Rice and Saint Xavier University this Fall. And in one the hardest decisions of his life, he will be resigning his position as PGA Director of Golf at Ridge Country club at the end of this year.

“The top players I have brought here to play Fyre Lake are blown away by the course layout, the setting and the accessibility,” says Krzic. “The Quad Cities' is a fabulous golf town with rich history and superb courses. We will be upgrading our portion of the Quad Cities golfing experience and working hard to leverage its PGA, Callaway Performance Center and Nicklaus Design credentials so that Fyre Lake is not only a local favorite but a must-play for national and international golf fans alike. Players from Chicago and beyond will have an additional reason to visit the Quad Cities alongside other great courses here like TPC at Deere Run.”

Fyre Lake Golf Club is located in Mercer County, Illinois just outside the small town of Sherrard, about a 20 minute drive from Moline, Illinois. The public 18-hole course was designed by Nicklaus Design and boasts sweeping holes nestled inside a planned residential community overlooking numerous lake views, as well as dramatic descents surrounded by hardwood forestry.

For more information visit www.markkrzicpga.com and www.fyrelakegolf.com.

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