

ENTERTAINMENT CENTER NEWS

A QUARTERLY FEC SUPPLEMENT TO
BOWLING CENTER MANAGEMENT

WINTER 2010

Bull's-Eye!

**The Perks of Running
Dart Leagues in Your FEC**

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STOPPING BY THE CLUBHOUSE

A BREAKTHROUGH FEC FINDS A HOME ADJACENT TO A GOLF PARK



Darin Van Tassell (l.) and Tony Ross have masterminded the construction of The Clubhouse.

By Frank Seninsky

President/CEO, Amusement
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The Clubhouse Family Entertainment Center (42,000 sq. ft.) in Statesboro, Ga., with its 24 bowling lanes and 4 private VIP lanes, Ballocity, 3000 sq. ft. Zone laser tag, 4 Highway 66 mini-bowling, 3000 sq. ft. of debit card-operated games, full service restaurant and snack bar, and corporate meeting/birthday party rooms, opened its doors on Oct. 15, 2010 to a very excited Bulloch County community. Owners Darin Van Tassell and Tony Ross are quite happy that their \$6.2 million project is performing 12% above projections after 7 weeks.

The Clubhouse is actually the Phase 4 development of Hackers Golf Park that opened in 1998 and now encompasses 30 acres that include Twin Falls Mini Golf and ATEC Batting Cages. "The Clubhouse was designed to have the feel of an old minor league baseball park with a lot of brick and wrought iron," said Van Tassell, who is also a figure in the international baseball world, recently serving as competition director for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Interestingly, The Clubhouse is completely non-alcoholic. "The decision to create an alcohol-free FEC was NOT an anti-alcohol decision," said Van Tassell. "It was a business decision. In order for a facility of this size and scope to flourish in a smaller market, we need lots of groups to be compatible with one another. Six-year-olds, 16-year-olds, 26-year-olds and 60-

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year-olds — we need all of them to be comfortable with each other. And I believe we have succeeded in doing so.”

Ross adds, “Darin and I are in complete agreement. Due to the large population of college students in our market, we did not want The Clubhouse to turn into a nightclub on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights so we made a business decision to appeal to a larger market. It was a good decision also knowing that we are in a conservative family market.”

Birthday parties have been strong since opening day, and will likely be a cornerstone for the facility. “We have had 120 birthday parties in the last four weeks,” said Ross.

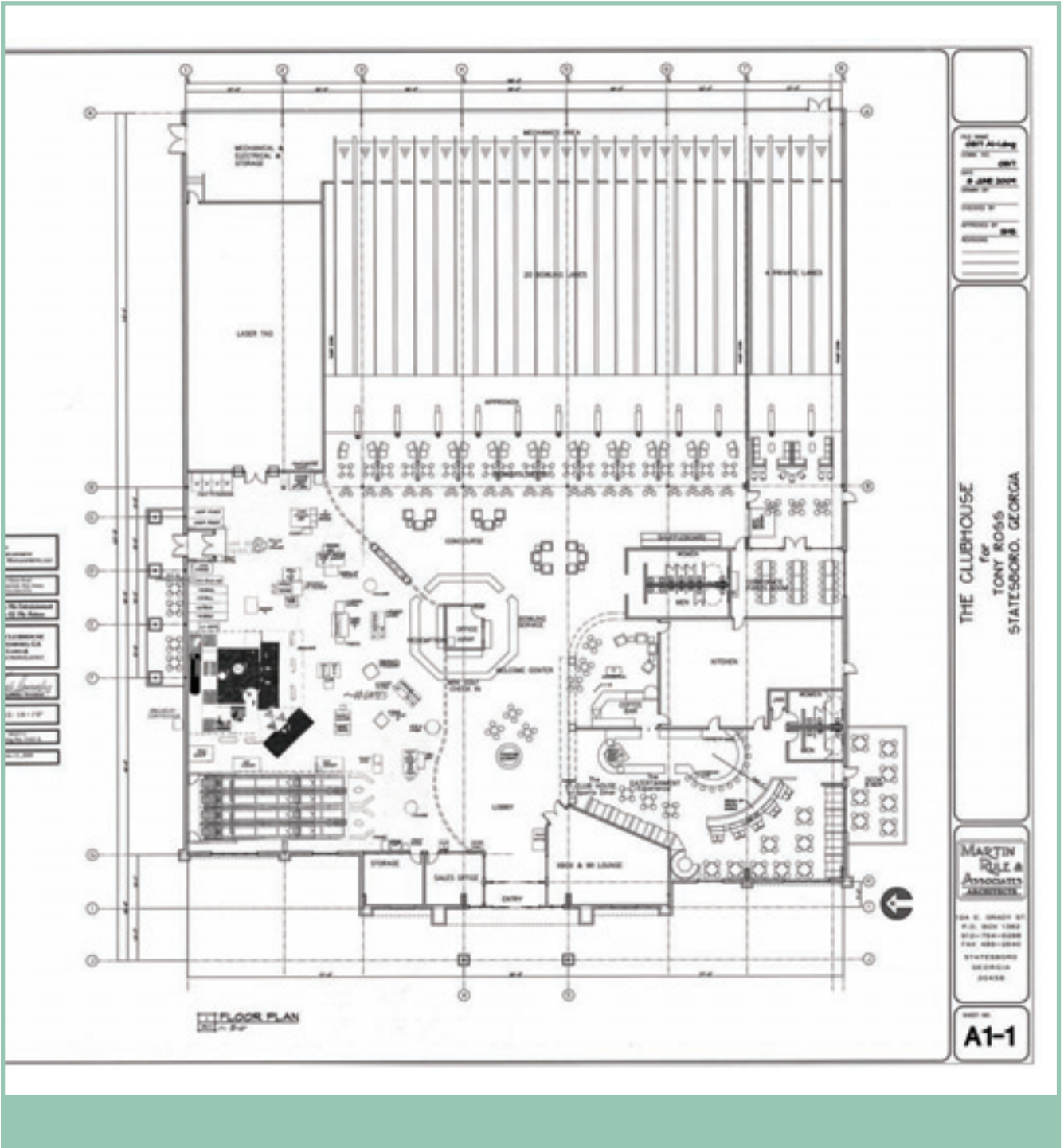
“We should be able to maintain that but don’t see increasing to more than 35-40 per week because we will also be focusing on groups. Our

largest group so far has been 100 but lock-ins and larger groups are being scheduled.”

What are the strongest components of The Clubhouse? “The strongest anchor is bowling,” said Ross, “and then comes the other attractions including the strong game component. Food and beverage are currently No. 3. Both Darin and I see a stronger potential in each category, especially with food and beverage.”

What are the greatest challenges? “No. 1 was obtaining financing in the midst of a recession,” said Ross. “No. 2 is staff training. We had so many people cross-training in different areas — laser tag, Embed System, kitchen, Conquer Pro, pin spotters, game repair — 8-10 different areas in which training was going on for three days prior to opening.”

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What was the biggest surprise? “Our biggest surprise was the quality and the presentation of the food that we are serving,” said Ross. “Spikes Sports Grill is a full-service restaurant, with a large and diverse menu. We have received rave reviews

on the quality of the food.”

What people or organizations were critical to the project’s success? “Attending Foundations University was very important to me fully under-

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standing the scope of what I was getting into," said Ross. "Dorman Spencer (BowlingEquipment.us) and Doug Wilkerson also acted as if they were partners with us. They work because it is a passion and this passion has spilled over to others in the project and our staff as well."

What do you think the future will look like for The Clubhouse?

"Being in the fun business is contagious," said Van Tassell. "There is nothing quite like seeing smiles and having our guests thank us for improving the quality of life in our area."

"The future looks bright," added Ross. "When time is right, we will add a go-kart track. We have an option for an additional 40 acres."

For more information, visit HackersGolfPark.net or TheClubhouseatHackers.com or call 912-871-1000.

Background on Tony Ross

Tony grew up Waynesboro, Ga. and graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He worked in the electrical utility industry for the next 25 years in every phase of construction, sales, and marketing. He was the lead engineer for both Units 1 & 2 of the Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant, responsible for reactor building and fuel handling building (Unit 1) while overseeing several hundred electricians and management personnel. Tony's wife, Mary Allison Ross, is a professional baker specializing in wedding cakes, birthday cakes, and special events. They have two boys, Dylan and Dalton.

Background on Darin Van Tassell

Darin graduated from Georgia Southern University with a BA in political science and played baseball for the Eagles (85-89) and earned NCAA Academic All American honors as a senior. He received his PhD & MA in International Studies from the University of South Carolina. As a member of the International Baseball Federation, Darin worked in more than 20 countries side by side with many baseball legends, including Joe DiMaggio, Harman Killebrew, Hank Aaron, Lou Brock and Duke Snider.

In 1996 Darin became the youngest head coach in Olympic history as he coached the Nicaraguan Olympic Baseball Team to a Bronze Medal against the USA Team at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, GA. He was the Technical Commissioner for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and the Competition Director for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Darin's wife, Netra, is an adjunct professor at GSU in the Department of Family & Consumer Sciences. They have two boys, Whitt (age 12) and Payne (age 9).

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