



NY Private heads for links

by Kelly Holman Posted 01:52 EST, 15, Jun 2007

New York Private Bank & Trust has taken up golfing, investing \$145 million in a new business with Jack Nicklaus.

The private banking firm — overseen by its chairman, New York real estate mogul Howard Milstein — formed Nicklaus Cos. LLC with the legendary golf champion and his holding company for various business interests, Golden Bear International Inc.

As part of the deal, North Palm Beach, Fla.-based Nicklaus Cos. acquired the golf course design unit, which has laid out 315 courses in 30 countries and 38 states, as well as the marketing and golf equipment businesses held by Golden Bear. The price was undisclosed.

Los Angeles investment bank PGP Capital Advisors LLC oversaw a limited auction for the businesses owned by Nicklaus. Hired in July 2006, PGP ran a select process that drew a number of interested bidders, according to Stewart Kim, a managing partner at the firm.

"There was a real interesting collection of domestic and foreign financial [buyers] and strategics, and wealthy individuals," he said, adding, "a number of leading real estate developers saw an opportunity to gain access to real estate investment opportunities."

Kim declined to comment on the capital structure of the bank's investment, citing confidentiality concerns. He said, however, the investment was not structured like the typical leveraged buyout.

The deal provided liquidity for Nicklaus, who won 18 majors from 1962 to 1986 and is known by the nickname "The Golden Bear."