



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Merchants Bank Links with Vermont Golfer  
Libby Smith**

*SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT* –Thomas S. Leavitt, Senior Vice President of Retail Banking for Merchants Bank today announced Merchants Bank’s commitment to a two-year sponsorship of Essex Junction native Libby Smith on the FUTURES Golf Tour.

The FUTURES tour, which celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, is the largest international development tour and the second largest women’s golf tour in the world. Featuring an 18-tournament national schedule and a total purse of \$1.25 million, the tour is home to more than 300 players from 29 different countries and six continents. In 1999, the LPGA named the FUTURES Tour as its official developmental tour, providing an excellent training ground for women golfers who aspire to play on the LPGA Tour.

Currently, Smith is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> on the FUTURES Tour coming out of the Bank of Ann Arbor FUTURES Golf Classic held June 24 – 26, 2005, where she scored a 224.

Just halfway through the 2005 Tour at this point, the 24 year-old Smith has surpassed last year’s earnings and climbed more than 45 spots from her 2004 ranking with an average score of 72.96.

“Merchants Bank is extremely proud to sponsor and support Libby as she pursues her goal of making the LPGA,” said Leavitt. “Her dedication, commitment, hard work and leadership are an inspiration to all of us. We have also been influenced by the terrific example of Team Libby, led by Bill and Julie Wick.”

“Everyone out here can play, and we’re all here with the same goal. But this is all about finding out how to get the best out of ourselves,” says Smith.

Smith made history while attending the University of Vermont as the only woman in the United States to compete on a NCAA Division I Men’s Golf Team. While at UVM, she served as Captain of both the Men’s Golf Team and the Women’s Basketball team and

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was recognized by New England Intercollegiate Golf Association at the 2001 NCAA Women's Golf Championship for her impact on women's golf.

"Libby gave UVM fans four years of thrills on the court and the links. Her all-out approach to her sports was also evident in the classroom as she completed a Civil Engineering degree. She embodies all that is good about Vermont student-athletes, both high school and college. We wish her much continued success," Leavitt enthused.


Smith's goal now is to move up further in the Money List (top earners) and rankings of the FUTURES Tour and onto next years LPGA Tour by playing in qualifying schools this fall. Each year, the LPGA holds two sectional qualifying events and one Final Qualifying Tournament. This year's qualifying schools will be held in Rancho Mirage, California and Venice Florida.

The top 30 players and ties from the each of the two sectional qualifiers advance to the final stage. The Futures Tour receives 10 exemptions into the Final Qualifying Tournament based on the year-end money list.

The LPGA Final Qualifying Tournament is a 90-hole, five-day event, taking place on both the Legends and Champions courses at LPGA International. The first 72 holes are played on both courses, while players play the Legends course during the final round. The cut, historically held after 54 holes, reduces the field to the low 70 players and ties after 72 holes.

In addition, Smith will be attempting to qualify for the European LPGA.

Smith next plays at the Albany FUTURES Pro Golf Classic in Albany, New York, July 15-17 where she will compete for a \$9,800 purse on the par 72 course at Capital Hills.

The continuing mission of Merchants Bank is to provide Vermonters with a true community bank. It fulfills this commitment through a branch-based system that includes 35 bank offices throughout Vermont, employees dedicated to quality customer service and the LYNX family of products: Free Checking for Life<sup>®</sup>, MoneyLYNX<sup>®</sup> Money Market Account, TimeLYNX<sup>®</sup> Certificate of Deposit, HomeLYNX<sup>®</sup> Home Equity Line of Credit, RealLYNX<sup>®</sup> Residential Mortgages, CommerceLYNX<sup>®</sup> Business Banking Services, eLYNX<sup>®</sup> Online Banking and PhoneLYNX<sup>SM</sup> Automated Phone Banking. For more information about Merchants Bank visit the website at [www.mbv.com](http://www.mbv.com). Member FDIC.  Equal Housing Lender.

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Libby Smith

*Editor Note: Digital file is available.*

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