Wadsworth, PGA Tour honored
BY MARK LESLIE
The PGA Tour and golf course builder Brent Wadsworth were honored at the annual banquet of the Golf Course Builders of America during the 61st International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 24.

The GCBA cited the PGA Tour's "contribution to the growth of the golf industry" through development of its Tournament Players Club courses around the country. Golf Course News presented Wadsworth, president of Wadsworth Construction Co. of Plainfield, Ill., its first annual Golf Course Builder of the Year Award.

Bobby Weed, PGA Tour chief designer, accepted the GCBA award from Wadsworth, who was accompanied by Commissioner Deane Beman, and on behalf of Commissioner Deane Beman.

Builder of the Year Brent Wadsworth, center, with Golf Course News Publisher Charles E. von Brecht, left, and Golf Course Builders of America President Perry Dye, R. Beman, and expressed optimism for the future of golf.

"Everyone here's got to be just beaming... with optimism about the next decade," Weed said. "Since Deane became commissioner in 1974 he has added to (golf's) exposure with the regular PGA Tour in the '70s, the Senior Tour in the '80s, the new LPGA Tour in the '90s, the growth of the World Youth Games and the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. That's a lot of opportunity out there."

Saying that the various segments of the industry are all allies, he added, "There are all the problems upcoming in the '90s, but I'm sure, as long as we stick together, we can overcome any obstacles."

Since the first PGA Tour course - at Sawgrass, Fla. - opened 10 years ago, 13 others have opened in the United States. Another six are in various stages of planning and construction in this country, and another is planned in Bato, Japan.

Charles von Brecht, publisher of Golf Course News, presented the cherry wood plaque to Wadsworth, whose company was the overwhelming choice as the best builder of 1989 in a national survey of architects.

"It took a couple of years to convince the industry that there was a need. Take the aggregate in dollars of the industry. Golf courses cost from $2 million to $5 million to build, times 150 to 200 per year, and it's a billion-dollar industry. And there aren't many billion-dollar industries that we've had some sort of policing group," Dye said.

"But I think if it's time to become judg-
mental about one another," Dye said.

"We hope to have over 200 members in two years — all builders, suppli-
ers, associate members. The 58 group. The PGA Tour and golf course
builders. Opponents of golf courses
are "entrenched," Dye said.

"We're not abusive. That's why the education and certification comes into play," he added.

"I think with our new board of di-
rection and all the things we're doing, making ourselves" - he said - "are very different in each region and the costs are very different in each region."

He said the GCBA can "pull some standardizations together, but they will be very regional in nature. They have to be because it's much differ-
tent building a golf course in Florida than it is in Arizona..."

"The Alliance
Dye believes the $4-billion-a-year
golf industry should have a lobbyist in Washington, D.C. That could be
the next step for the Allied Association of Golf.

"There are all the problems upcoming, Golf Summit '91, a planning session in November for the industry to devise a plan to achieve goals set for golf."

"We all want the same thing: build more golf courses for more people."

"The American Society of Golf Course Architects and the National Club Association have taken the lead in this effort and should be comple-
mended for their efforts," Ross said.

He pointed toward another important
upcoming event, Golf Summit '91, a planning session in November for the industry to devise a plan to achieve goals set for golf.

"Me and my colleagues" - he said - "made themselves known."

"They need to speak out that golf is the one sport you can play longer than others, like tennis. It's a family game, a game that you can play from 8 to 80 and enjoy it," Ross said. "It's been said that if the good Lord developed a better game than golf, He kept it for Himself."

"There's no doubt in my mind that golfing through its biggest boom, but it needs all the help it can get from the media... from governmen-
tal agencies, from financial institu-
tions, from people outside the indus-
try who want the game to grow be-
cause it's a wholesome recreational activity."

"Yes, if we're going to have any
power to improve the situation, from
adding educational programs for
ourselves to working in consulting roles -
whether it's architecture, irrigation experts, builders, agronomists
... everybody in our industry. The question becomes: How do you make that happen? One thing you have
to do is bring those people over here to show them that our product is superior and to help develop the European taste and the Oriental taste to our style of management in golf operations.

"We're not abusive. That's where the education and certification comes into play," he added.

"I think with our new board of directors and new subcommittees, that will be the first things they'll try to establish. You have to set up certain requirements and you become a judg-
mental about people in the industry."

"But I think it's time to become judg-
mental about one another," Dye said.

"We're learning to live with each other, but it wasn't that bad." But times, and competency, have changed, he said, and the GCBA's role should be to certify and educate builders. "If golf courses are "entrenched," Dye said.

"They have some reason that they're there and one of them is because of the industries. It's our job to position ourselves so that

Global spearhead
The Golf Course Builders of America will make international inroads this year. The European market is opening up, President Perry Dye said, and GCBA ex-
pects to send a representative to Europe as it strives for recogni-
tion as "the international spear-
head for builders."

"Golf is an international, ex-
portable quantity for us. We have a
great amount of American prod-
uct whether it be technology as simple as irrigation or drills about because we in the United States are the industry leader," Dye said.

"With the association's execu-
tive director working a little in Europe and me spending a lot of
my time in the Pacific Rim, I'd like to try to bring as many interna-
tional people here as possible."

"I think you'll see Americans going overseas in consulting roles
whether it's architecture, irrigation experts, builders, agronomists
everybody in our industry," Dye said.

"American golf is the one sport you can play longer than others. It's a family game, a game that you can play from 8 to 80 and enjoy it," Ross said. "It's been said that if the good Lord developed a better game than golf, He kept it for Himself."

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Wadsworth thanked his employ-
ees around the country "whose ef-
forts allowed us to attain this award" and the architects.

He praised the work of the Golf Course Builders of America and acknowledged his own firm had recently joined.

Also at the dinner, American Soci-
ety of Golf Course Architects outgoing president, Robert Trent Jones Jr., told the builders: "We admire you. We just design the courses. You're out there and have to live with these (regulatory) conditions. We often admire you for your helpful and responsible work and we look forward to working with you in the future, helping our country to be green and sport a grass and a great and glorious game, to continue to grow."
