By MARK LESLIE

A picture says a thousand words — and can sell hundreds of golf club memberships or thousands of golf rounds, for that matter. So, taking the best photograph at the best time takes on crucial dimensions, say world-known photographers Mike Klemme and Tony Roberts.

"The power of the picture" can make or break a golf course, said Klemme, whose Golftoto, Inc. is located in Enid, Okla. When Interfive Co. Ltd. of Nagoya, Japan, hired Klemme to photograph its World Woods Golf Course in Florida, Interfive paid his fee for two days but reaped many times that amount in free advertising.

"We got photos in 25 different magazines. Six calendar companies ran photos, and it didn't cost [Interfive] a dollar," Klemme said. "We kind of turn into a marketing partner."

"I can oftentimes make a marginal-looking place look good," Roberts said. "Sometimes there's not one good hole to photograph. Then you have to pull a rabbit out of the hat.

"Real or conjured, photos are necessary for many areas at a golf course: on scorecards, in yardage books, marketing materials, advertisements, and elsewhere."

Continued on page 61

American Links, with you every step of the way

By PETER BLAIS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Four partners with extensive experience as owners, lenders, course designers and contractors have formed a company that can guide a course developer from initial planning through actual opening and operation of a golf facility.

"We impart to any project the unique ability to incorporate all these perspectives in our service to our clients," said American Links Consulting (ALC) President Randy Trull.

"This combination of experience enables us to guide a client from the initial concept to a fully operational facility. Our services will include assistance in developing a concept, determining objectives, selecting the right designer and planning well-functioning facilities.

"Not only can we provide construction management during the project, we can also extend our services to implementing programs for the operation phase and long-term management of the facility."

While many management companies claim to offer developers similar concept-to-operation services, Trull said many are insufficient to be truly effective.

"I felt a need for a company that could offer a wider range of services while still providing detailed, efficient management," Trull said. "I believe we've put the right team together to do just that."

The team includes:

• Trull, President/General Manager — Trull spent the last 20 years with Wadsworth Golf Club in Austin, Texas, and working his way up to project superintendent. At Wadsworth, he was involved in more than 20 Golf Digest's most recent

Continued on page 49
Paloma revives Tan Tara

NORTH TONAWANDA, N.Y. — Tan Tara Golf Club is reportedly on the road to economic recovery. Last October the Paloma Golf Group purchased the 18-hole course and clubhouse at a court-imposed foreclosure sale for $2.6 million. Paloma's was the only bid for the property. Membership had dropped to less than 300, down from a peak of 600. PGG Marketing VP Pamela Smith launched a campaign aimed at keeping existing members while using advertising and public relations to attract new ones. Over the first 60 days, the club retained 98 percent of existing members while adding 110 new ones. A grand re-opening is scheduled for this spring.

American Links

Continued from page 47

- Jack Parker, Business Development — As chief executive officer of Club Consultants Inc., Parker has more than 40 years experience managing golf facilities. He owns Tapatio Springs Resort & Conference Center outside San Antonio and is managing partner of The Quarry, a critically acclaimed Keith Foster design that opened last fall in San Antonio and has been nominated for Golf Digest's best new public course.
- Bill Ellis, Planning/Development — Ellis was chiefly responsible for developing The Quarry and specializes in golf development and project management.
- Jay Eddy, Planning/Finance — Eddy is an international banker with 22 years experience in real-estate finance and development. His firm financed The Quarry.

"We can hold an owner's hand and protect his interests from start to finish," said Trull, whose main strength is 20 years of engineering experience.

"I stress value-engineering, presenting a developer with all the options during construction, detailing the costs and letting him decide. For instance, that might entail the benefits of surface drainage versus underground piping or perhaps retaining elevation changes versus blasting to level the landscape."

The growth of golf has led to a proliferation of development-related firms, Trull said. Helping an uninformed developer or greens committee select the right designer, construction firm, product vendor and the like can save the developer thousands of dollars, he added.

Since the extent of ALC's participation in any project will vary, "our fee schedule is dependent on the intensity of our involvement," the company president said.

Since forming ALC in early February, Trull and his partners have been approached by several groups and entered negotiations with some in the United States and Mexico.

For more information, contact American Links Consulting, 200 Concord Plaza, Suite 750, San Antonio, TX 78216, or telephone 210-828-2885.

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