Benz pioneers surface-to-surface misses

6,000 miles a mere map/Fax away

By MARK LESLIE

LOS GATOS, Calif. — Pushing computerized terrain modeling to a new level that encompasses the technical elements of construction, golf course architect Brad Benz said he is speeding up the construction process by 30 to 35 percent.

“This is light-years ahead of other programs,” said Benz from his headquarters here.

“It is phenomenal. We keep upgrading and advancing it with each project, we learn something new.”

Benz and his computer-expert sidekick, senior golf course architect David Snead, essentially designed and built two computers for the process. Taking elements of 52 software programs relevant to their needs, they merged them so they communicate with one another.

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Builders crossing the Pacific in opposite directions

Kajima exports Japanese savvy while... Pacific Golf getting it done abroad

By MARK LESLIE

PASADENA, Calif. — When a company’s main diet is building floating airports, tunnels and dams... when it hails from a country where many sites are “engineering and construction nightmares”... when it even designs and builds its own construction equipment, a mere golf facility should present no challenge too big. That is the feeling of global engineering and construction giant Kajima Corp. and its Golf Division manager in America, Tom Buzzbee.

“Our golf design is heading towards centralized management and design,” said Buzzbee from his headquarters here.

“It’s getting complicated and expensive.

“We’re on the ground floor of something I think will change the way we do business. More and more, both in Indonesia — is seriously investigating 20 others through-out Asia. ‘They are mainly in China and Indonesia,’ Martin said, although ‘India and Vietnam show great promise.’

A vast majority of the projects are getting their financial support from within each country, he said, and while “probably a little less” is being spent generally, “those spending more are getting more, maximizing use of their money.”

He said more competition from contractors, materials and suppliers is helping push costs down.

Asked if golf will, in the foreseeable future, be affordable to average citizens in Asia-Pacific, Martin said: “I firmly

An American in England

LONDON — Call it multilateral. Call it an invasion from abroad. But don’t call Duke’s Dene golf course an Americanization of a British game.

This golf course — although developed by Mizno-Gumi Co. of Tokyo and designed by American Brad Benz — will be “every bit British” when it opens in July or August, said Benz.

Yes, it will sport bentgrass greens and tees. But that is the only thing about Duke’s Dene (meaning valley) that will not scream out: “I’m British!”

“People were concerned how an American could do anything in England that would be remotely close to English golf,” Benz said. “I said, ‘That’s the easy part.’ The technical side of solving problems in golf is far

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Kajima, team-style

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While Kajima works out of eight offices in Asia, two in Australia, three in the Middle East, two in Africa and one in South America, it also maintains five U.S. offices. The Pasadena subsidiary, Kajima Engineering and Construction, Inc. (KEC), encompasses the Golf Division, which often does business as Golf Dimensions, a joint effort of Kajima and Irvine, Calif.-based Project Dimensions, Inc. Having completed Cypress Golf Course in Anaheim, KEC is managing development of Farmont Golf Club in Ojai, overseeing driving range/par-3 facilities in Torrance and Sacramento, and has a half-dozen in pre-contract negotiations, Buzbee said.

"We're the third arm the owner always wished he had," he said, adding that KEC's service is "like design-build but the design process is not in-house. We manage the customized team, the right amount of local and specialty designers, and put them together to get the right flavor for the project."

"We incorporate everything the developer needs, all the personal things and particular team members he wants, and roll them all into one. And he gets one bill each month, one meeting, one project manager. We're managing the process, coordinating with [sub-contractors], paying them, contracting, committing to dates and budgets. We take 12 phone calls and 12 contracts away from the owner, who may not be comfortable administering them."

Saying that KEC learned centralized management in Japan where "a lot of the sites are engineering and construction nightmares," Buzbee said in America "the architects run the show, and that's one think Kajima had to learn. We instead ask architects if we can recommend them and include them on our team."

American architects who worked in Japan in the 1980s became comfortable working with KEC, he said. "When they worked in Asia, Kajima kept showing up everywhere they went. They started to realize the financial capabilities of a Kajima being so well funded. There was never a fear of not finishing a project."

Buzbee warned that KEC is not the right company for a developer planning just a golf course. But if housing, clubhouses, roads, utilities, or other construction is planned, KEC is there to "create the right recipe—designwise and constructionwise. A hybrid group is always put together."

Pacific Golf making presence known in A-P

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believe once the rush for the resort and private club market reaches saturation, developers will start to look at mid-range price daily-fee courses.

"There is a great demand for daily-fee courses and once that floodgate opens, I honestly believe we'll see another 'boom' in activity."

When this daily-fee construction takes root, golf will become affordable for the average citizen, Martin said. "Like a shot of Vitamins!"

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