DTN buys Broadcast Partners and, with it, GolfLinks network

BY MARK LESLIE

OMAHA, Neb. — Data Transmission Network Corp. Inc. (DTN) grew from a major player to the dominant force among satellite weather systems on May 3 when it bought Broadcast Partners (BP), which includes GolfLink, a satellite golf weather and information service.

The companies broadcast weather through radar and satellite images with local, regional and national outlooks. Before the purchase, DTN boasted 76,000 subscribers and BP had 39,000 agribusiness industry subscribers to a service called Farm Dayta.

“We’re always interested in growing, be it by acquisition or diversifying into another industry,” said DTN Director of Public Relations Eric Miller about the $6.35 million acquisition. “Obviously, this makes us a more dominant service in the ag industry. And they [BP] have other services — GolfLink and the construction industry.”

GolfLinks owner Jerry Lemons, who has a partnership with BP, was unsure how the purchase might affect him.

“It’s a change in ownership, and a change from the standpoint that the only competitor we had now owns us,” Lemons said. “I own the Golfinks service from the standpoint of marketing and exclusive rights to the golf course industry. That has not changed.”

Lemons said the purchase “speaks well for the technology we have. I brought this technology into the golf industry in September 1994. DTN entered the market in April 1995. It is a service that is very affordable and it makes no sense to be without it, even for the mom-and-pop clubs — even more-so for them than the richer clubs.”

“Our weather center started in 1995 with golf courses in mind,” Miller said. “We found there are a lot more people out there who want it. We’re doing a lot of business with construction firms, government agencies like emergency preparedness, departments of transportation, and aviation.”

BP, a general partnership, was formed by Farmland Industries, Inc., Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. and LAA Communications Co.