

Colbert's development team active in K.C.

By PETER BLAIS

SPRING HILL, Kansas — Jim Colbert's business home will be the site of the first development undertaken by the Senior Tour golfer and his new partner, the major national engineering firm Burns & McDonnell.

Colbert-Burns & McDonnell of Kansas City, an integrated golf course development firm specializing in municipal and daily-fee projects, hopes to break ground late this summer on an 18-hole course, practice area and clubhouse for this suburban Kansas City municipality. The architectural firm of Finger Dye Spann has completed a preliminary routing and started construction drawings. Colbert-Burns & McDonnell will help obtain financing, build and eventually manage the facility.

"We hope to have at least three courses scattered around the country under construction by the end of the year," said Larry Lundine, director of project development for the new firm.

Colbert, leading money winner for two consecutive years on the PGA Senior Tour and chairman of Jim Colbert Golf Design & Development, recently formed a limited liability corporation with Burns & McDonnell, one of the leading engineering, architectural and project management companies in the country.

"Through my experiences with Jim Colbert Golf Design & Development, I learned of the need for a higher degree of professionalism and talent in the development of golf courses to better serve municipalities, golf course architects and landowners," said Colbert, chairman of the board for Colbert-Burns & McDonnell.

The firm will concentrate on municipal facilities, banking on the close relationships forged over the years between 1,100employee Burns & McDonnell and the many cities where that firm has undertaken government projects, Lundine explained. Obtaining financing will be one of the major services the firm provides. In Spring Hill's case, that means developing a \$6.5 million revenue bond, according to Patrick Crooks, director of Colbert-Burns & McDonnell.

"In the financial markets," Crooks said, "those accustomed to providing traditional sources of financing have trouble understanding the golf business, and therefore, are reluctant to fund golf course development. To alleviate this problem, Colbert-Burns & McDonnell has established relationships with some of the premier financing institutions in the golf course development industry, which gives us access to capital markets." GOLF COURSE NEWS Crooks said the new firm plans to eventually develop five to 10 projects annually, usually performing every step from the initial feasibility study through the opening and management of the course. The only responsibility farmed out will be the actual golf course design.

Many architects looking to

streamline the course development process have started working with Colbert-Burns & McDonnell, Lundine noted. "They see the benefits of having design consultation, feasibility studies, financial planning, permitting, environmental impact studies, engineering and clubhouse design all under one roof," he said.

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first and foremost, should be really and truly playable for all levels. They should challenge me from the back tees and Jerry, who's a 20-handicapper, from the front. We should be able to enjoy ourselves, and if we hit a good shot we should be rewarded. No trick shots, or hazards you can't see. No buried elephants. Goofy stuff like that drives me crazy."

Spencer remembered the advice of his father before he died in 1982: "One of the last things he said was, 'You don't regret the things you did badly; you regret the things you didn't do at all.'"

Not wanting to ever say that to his son, Spencer not once, but twice, "just flat did it." Result: He has been living the dream.

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