

NEWS

Company is formed to build

BY PETER BLAIS

Golf course architect P.B. Dye and two Toronto businessmen have formed a new company that plans to build low-cost, municipal courses in an era of spiraling construction costs.

"The idea is to build a course, including land cost and clubhouse, for under \$5 million to \$6 million," said Dye of the firm Brassie Golf. "We just finished a course for the city of Lexington (Ky.), where the golf course and clubhouse were just under \$3 million. We're trying to go for that \$25 greens fee which gives you more than enough cash

flow if your course doesn't cost 12 or 15 million bucks.

"We're going to try to build 80 golf courses over the next 15 to 20 years. We're figuring on six to eight courses a year, maybe finding some older courses, revamping them, getting a good management team in there and setting them up."

The low-cost, municipal course is a niche the West Palm Beach, Fla.-based architect feels is being overlooked. National Golf Foundation figures would seem to back him up.

Seventy percent of the golf played in the United States takes place on

the country's 7,796 (1989 figures) public facilities. Only one-fourth (1,113) of those are municipal. The remaining three-fourths (5,833) are private, daily fee.

Since 1970, 642 new municipal facilities have been built, compared to 1,585 private, daily-fee ones.

"Everybody wants to go for the up-scale, the high-dollar ticket," said Dye. "But a lot of people can't afford \$125 to play a round of golf or a \$50,000 initiation fee. That's more than most people make."

The key to building an affordable, municipal course is finding land that can be donated or pur-

chased very cheaply. In the case of Lexington's Kearney Hills GC, the city donated the land for its eighth municipal course. At Columbia, S.C.'s Northwoods GC, 120 of the 170 acres were purchased for \$100,000, with the remaining 50 given by the state in return for an easement guaranteeing the course will be open to the public at least one day a year.

"The one in Lexington showed that it could be done. The one in Columbia shows we can do it without the city donating the land. There have got to be a lot of possible deals like that," said the son

Horse farm: From trotters to fairways

Facing prospects of losing money on her long-time horse farm because of tax changes, a Maryland woman has won approval to convert her land in Olney into a golf course.

The county Zoning Board of Appeals gave Helen Polinger approval to turn her 175-acre Polinger Horse Farm into an 18-hole Trotters Glen Golf Course.

Two barns will be converted — one as a clubhouse and the other as a machine shop, Polinger said.

The board ruled the course is allowed under existing zoning and will maintain the open character of the area.

Palmetto Golf buys Pleasant Pt. Plantation

Palmetto Golf Inc. has bought Pleasant Point Plantation on Ladies Island, S.C., according to Palmetto general partner Will Mann.

The Spartanburg, S.C.-based company plans to build single- and multi-family housing units and golf and tennis villas on the 680-acre plot.

The development features a Russell Breeden-designed golf course. Construction plans call for a new clubhouse, pool and tennis facilities.

Golf selling condos in NYC

Real estate agent Martin Raynes is using golf to help sell condominiums in the glutted New York City market.

Sales agents for 60-story Three Lincoln Center, where prices range from \$310,000 to more than \$3 million, are offering the services of a golf pro and a computer that simulates famous courses and analyzes a golfer's swing.

The condominium complex will open this fall.

Del. commission OKs sewage use

The Delaware River Basin Commission recently approved the use of treated sewage water to irrigate Five Ponds Golf Club in Warminster, Pa.

The interstate agency, which regulates the use of the river and its tributaries, approved the Warminster Township Municipal Authority's request to allow 300,000 gallons of treated effluent to be diverted into a stream that runs through the course.

Under the agreement, the 133-acre course can withdraw up to 150,000 gallons a day from the tributary.

Photo taken on hole #5 at Muirfield Village Golf Club

