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GOLF COURSE NEWS

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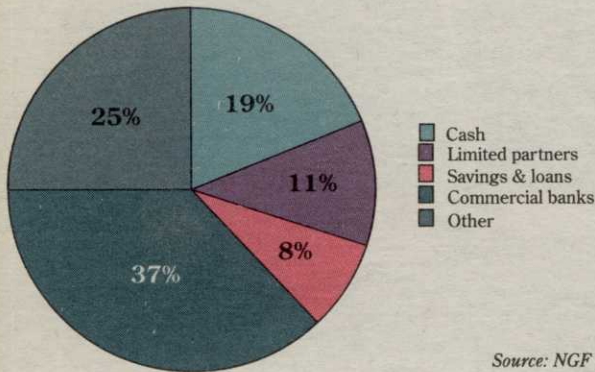
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Japanese firms stay active

By Mark Leslie

Cosmo World, Nitto Kogyo America and Sports Shinko lead the "players" in the Japanese surge of megamillion-dollar buyouts of premier U.S. golf properties.

According to a report prepared by Mead Ventures, Inc. of Phoenix, Ariz.,

the Japanese search for long-term return on investments and their love for golf are keeping real-estate brokers busy in the United States.

The Japanese interest to buy, coupled with a growing willingness of American course owners to sell, have created an active marketplace.

"Over 100 golf course owners have contacted me to find buyers or joint venture partners — looking for financial relief some way," said Donald Wizeman, president of the U.S.-Japan Golf Association based in Myrtle Beach, S.C. "Sellers are from all over the country. I probably

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Seven Bridges, the centerpiece of a major development in Woodbridge, will open in July as the latest in a number of new golf courses around Chicago. (See story on page 30.) The view from the 5th green over the 6th tee to the 6th green shows the edge of the DuPage County Forest Preserve in the background. Designed by Dick Nugent, Seven Bridges will be a high-end public 18-hole course. Residential units, a hotel, commercial center and offices are planned for the project. It lies between Naperville and Lisle.



Photo by Miles Lowry

Builders' new director puts priorities in place

Philip Arnold takes charge of association

By Mark Leslie

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The new executive director of the Golf Course Builders of America wants to develop an association that can guarantee credibility in construction, educate potential lenders, and join with other groups on the environmental front.

Philip A. Arnold, who was approved Feb. 11 to succeed the late Don Rossi, said: "I'm continuing what Don wanted to do — to give our members more. I want to deliver substance, not just form, to this group."

Perry Dye, re-elected to a third term as president of the GCBA, said: "We tried to mix Don's vision with the talent that is on the market. We found Phil."

Vice president of the National Golf Foundation for the past 2-1/2 years, the 44-year-old Arnold said he will present to the GCBA's August meeting a plan to certify all members of the association — from builders to blenders.

"Each of our seven categories of members will have a certification process to go through," Arnold said. "We



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Surviving the California drought

By Peter Blais

With some creative course management, California golf courses are managing to survive the six-year drought that has plagued that state, according to Dr. M. Ali Harivandi.

Most of California depends on melting winter snows for summer irrigation. With snowpacks way down, golf courses will likely experience an upcoming summer of even tighter watering restrictions, the University of California Cooperative Extension researcher said

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USGA funds standardized lab tests

By Peter Blais

A Cornell University professor will spend the next year standardizing the laboratory test procedures used to determine whether putting green soils meet United States Golf Association specifications.

Dr. Norm Hummell will devote his one-year sabbatical to the effort beginning in July, although he has already done some preliminary work, according to USGA Green Section Director Jim Snow. The Green Section will

pay Hummell's salary.

The turfgrass extension specialist will meet with representatives from soil-testing labs, universities and companies in the golf course development business.

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Paul Eldredge, center, president of the Midwest Division of Wadsworth Construction Co., receives the Builder of the Year award at the annual Golf Course Builders of America banquet. GCBA President Perry Dye, right, and Golf Course News publisher Charles E. von Brecht, congratulate Eldredge. Wadsworth was a repeat winner of the award which, in its second year, is presented by Golf Course News. The selection is made on the basis of a nationwide poll of golf course architects. Based in Plainfield, Ill., Wadsworth Construction has regional offices in the Midwest, Southeast, Southwest and Pacific Rim.

Photo courtesy of Ken May/Dye Designs



Arnold's aim: More service for members of GCBA

Continued from page 1

want to ensure competency in the industry. To be certified, you'd have to develop a track record. Until then you'd be an associate member.

"We don't want to shun the guy just starting out. We want to bring him in, to transmit knowledge to him. Perhaps this will include an apprentice-type program."

Arnold, who will work out of Chapel Hill, N.C., said: "Creation of more courses is the major obstacle to growth. The United States needs more facilities in the

right place."

He said major obstacles are the environment and financing.

"Builders want to be a part of the industry's environmental involvement. They aren't now, but I promise I will be active... As a starter, I will ask to be included on any committee," he said.

"The environmental issue is too big for one organization to take on alone. We need a coalition. And we need to be meeting with the Corps of Engineers, EPA and others in government to get our point across that golf courses are a lot better than other things being built... and we're working to rectify any problems that do exist."

Arnold said the needed facilities won't get built without financing. "The banking industry is used to financing hotels, restaurants. But there's no formal way to evaluate and finance golf courses. That is a major concern.

"Builders aren't going to make any money if golf courses are not built and courses won't be built without money."

He said the solution should start with a strategic plan.

Suggesting the National Golf Foundation be the source of the research, he said: "You've got to find out what's out there, what's available, how are people doing it now. And you need to educate the people who lend money, because they don't know, and when they don't know they get cold feet and don't lend.

"We need studies on how golf courses operate, how they make money, how profitable they are..."

He said a mutual fund for new courses is not out of the question.

"One may be viable. We need to find out," he said.

Arnold said that after he did a study for Textron on whether it should lend for golf courses and, if so, under what conditions, the company committed to making at least \$50 million a year available.

Arnold also foresees the GCBA becoming more involved internationally, like its president, Dye.

"A lot of the builders have a global outlook. I think everyone should," he said. "Glenn Rupp (new president) wants the NGF to be a golf force on the international level. I certainly don't want to be parochial."

Arnold is a 1977 graduate of Memphis State Law School. He was legal counsel for a real-estate development firm before moving to the NGF as vice president and associate general counsel in July 1988. He worked in the Consulting Division until being promoted to vice president in the Executive Department in November 1989.

"The foundation has done a lot for me. I learned a lot about the golf industry, the organizations and how they work, who does what, and what they want to do," he said.

Now he plans to take a much larger role in the action.

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