

BRIEFS



ASGCA OFFICERS ASSUME SEATS

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland — Jeff Brauer of Arlington, Texas, was elected president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) here at the society's annual meeting in early May. Other officers are Denis Griffiths, Braselton, Ga., vice president; Alice O'Neal Dye, Delray Beach, Fla., secretary; and Bob Lohmann, Marengo, Ill., treasurer. Immediate past president Don Knott of Palo Alto, Calif., will serve as an ex-officio member of the ASGCA board of governors.

GOLF & YACHTS IN FLORIDA

FT. MYERS, Fla. — Florida Design Communities opened Gulf Harbour Yacht & Country Club on March 11-12, unveiling a 190-slip state-of-the-art marina homes, bi-level swimming pool and Jacuzzi, and half-redesigned 18-hole golf course. Gulf Harbour, formerly known as River's Edge Yacht & Country Club, was purchased by Florida Design Communities in July 1993. Since that time, FDC has redesigned nine of the golf course's 18 holes to form a more challenging layout.

NORMAN OPENS U.S. OFFICE

TEQUESTA, Fla. — The Sydney, Australia-based Greg Norman Design Co. has opened its first United States



Greg Norman

operation here, and the popular golfer-designer has assembled an experienced executive staff. Running the business are Vice President of Australia and Southeast Asia

Bart Collins, Chief of Design Bob Harrison, Design and Construction Manager Jason McCoy and General Manager David Barnes.

SAND CREEK OPENS MARSH COURSE

CHESTERTON, Ind. — The nine-hole Marsh Course at Sand Creek Country Club is open for play. The course was designed by the Desert Springs Companies partners Jerry Mobley and Charles Howard. Together with Sand Creek's current 18 holes — the Creek and Lake courses — the Marsh Course brings the private country club to a total of 27 holes.

JACK II BUSY IN ITALY

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — Working on the Italian countryside site close to Lake Garda and featuring the historic Drugolo castle, Jack Nicklaus II has begun designing the first 27 holes of a 72-hole resort project outside Milan — the largest of its kind in Italy.

Benz pioneers surface-to-surface missives

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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Duke's Dene, above in reality and below through computer modeling, greens up for its opening south of London.



An American in England

By MARK LESLIE

LONDON — Call it multicultural. 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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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 Buzbee.

"We think the golf business is heading towards centralized management," said Buzbee from his headquarters here. "It's getting complicated and expensive."

"We're on the ground floor of something I think will change the golf business a little. How much we are able to do depends on how we are able to circulate."

Since the construction firm is the "lead" company in projects in its native Japan, Kajima was "the logical one to take that position in America — to lead the team, administer all the contracts, pay everybody, take on the liability insurance on behalf of the group..." Buzbee said.

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By MARK LESLIE

SINGAPORE — Golf developers in Asia-Pacific are no longer all talk and no show, according to a major golf course builder in the region.

"Previously, a lot of people were 'talking' about projects [and it] never went beyond 'talk.' Now, those who are talking are serious," said M.D. Martin, managing director of Pacific Golf Course Construction Pte. Ltd., headquartered here.

Pacific Golf, which has two projects under construction — both in Indonesia — is seriously investigating 20 others throughout 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

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IMPRESSIVE TEAM OPENS GREEN BAY CC

The Green Bay Country Club, five miles southeast of downtown at the intersection of Interstate 43 and U.S. Route 172, opened to members for play on May 5. The 18-hole Dick Nugent-designed, private course was constructed by Wadsworth Golf Course Construction Co. on rolling farmland, unobstructed by homesites. The natural setting, which features a winding creek, was enhanced by Nugent's addition of four manmade lakes and complemented by the all bentgrass playing surfaces. Water comes into play on 13 of the 18 holes. The par-5, 6th hole is the longest five-par in the state at 634 yards. Western Golf Properties served as consultants during construction. The management team includes club manager Alex Reichi; superintendent Marc Davison; professional Mark Hagenbach.



Kajima, team-style

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While Kajima works out of eight offices in Asia, two in Australia, four in Europe, 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 thing 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 — in Indonesia, Korea Taiwan, 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.

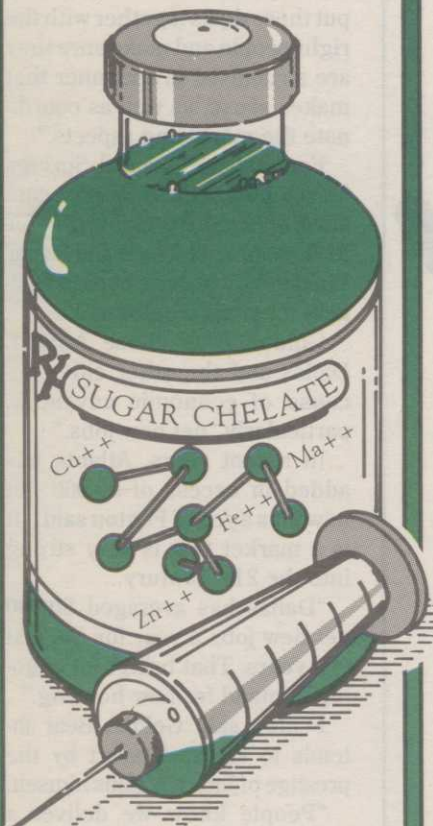
"There is a great demand for daily-fee courses and once that floodgate opens, I honestly believe we'll see another 'boom' in activity."

When this daily-fee construction takes root, golf will become affordable for the average citizen, Martin said.

One of the two Indonesian projects Pacific Golf is working on will be finished this year and one next year, Martin said.

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