

Japanese businessman designs course near Dallas

ROYSE CITY, Texas — Japanese businessman Akira Ishikawa is following his own muse in the creation of an 18-hole golf course in this small farming community east of Dallas.

Building a golf course is typically a process involving layers of specialists with years of experience in the golf course industry. But the 58-year-old Ishikawa is ignoring convention.

For starters, Ishikawa designed the 18-hole daily-fee course himself. Instead of hiring a golf course designer or a landscape architect, he has called upon the services of a Dallas artist/stage designer to create a theatrical landscape plan that embodies Japanese design principles.

Before the first green was plotted, Ishikawa buried the ghosts of the ranch's past. Cattle had lived on the land for decades and there were hundreds of skeletons around. Ishikawa collected the skeletons and made a special cemetery for them. He held a cremation ceremony on the highest knoll on the property. After the ceremony,

Ishikawa spent months landscaping the memorial knoll. It was to be the focal point of the course. A graceful pine tree was planted and surrounded with plants, flowers and elaborate

landscaping materials.

The entryway and clubhouse are equally original. Huge cypress beams that are reportedly the largest cut in Georgia in the last 100 years were trucked to Austin, Texas, for shaping and then left in Ishikawa's driveway. They will be part of an intricate entrance designed by Dale Nally, a Dallas designer. Nally has plans

for several large-scale, sculptural landscaping touches like a huge berm that will be part of the front gate. The cypress logs will push back into the berm to allow visitors to enter. Local crafts people are also working on things like designs for the gate's hardware.

Ishikawa envisions his future golfing customers as people like himself, international business

people who have had extreme difficulty getting last-minute reservations at golf facilities. He wanted his course near an international airport and large city and Ruysse City has fit the bill. He told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* that he hopes to finish the project for under \$2 million.

"The only thing expensive here is the art director," he said. "That is my special idea. He is particularly good for the art of

the theater. He can look at this big land as a kind of stage."

Ishikawa, who claims a 20 handicap, said he doesn't want the golf course to be too hard. He said the point of golf is to be outside, enjoying the surroundings and walking. And to help his envisioned international clientele enjoy their walk, Ishikawa is having two Labrador retrievers trained to pull walk-behind golf carts.

Changing the Course.

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