



Golf Course Builder of the Year Joe Niebur of Niebur Golf, far left, receives the award from Golf Course News Publisher Charles von Brecht. At right is Golf Course Small Builder of the Year Tim Furness, of Furness Golf Construction, with his plaque.

Jim Trzinski photos



Niebur, Furness the Best Builders

ORLANDO, Fla. — Saying the annual honor has created a healthy competition in the industry, Niebur Golf President Joe Niebur accepted the 1998 Golf Course Builder of the Year Award here, during the banquet of the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA). Niebur's Colorado Springs,

Colo.-based firm received a 78.675 out of a possible 80 in ratings from the developers, architects and superintendents involved in projects that Niebur completed in 1998.

Meanwhile, Furness Golf Construction of Charlevoix, Mich., was named Golf Course Small Builder of the Year — among builders completing fewer than four 18-hole courses in 1998. Furness finished at 79.2 out of a possible 80.

Both awards are sponsored by Golf Course News.

"After we were notified about the award, a friend asked how important it is," Niebur said. "To Niebur Golf, it is very important. It's really important to me that we are considered one of the best builders. Secondly, I believe that with today's accelerated schedules and the way that standards continually keep going up because of all you golf course designers and consultants, quality is at a premium more every year."

Thanking the GCBA and citing it for making "huge strides in growth every year," Niebur said: "It's an organization I'm proud to be a part of. I also want to thank the golf course designers, owners and superintendents we worked with this year for their vote of confidence."

Niebur also thanked his family as well as his employees, whom he said "are the most dedicated guys, and, I believe, the reason we have continually been successful."

"I truly believe the desire to produce quality exists in all our employees," he added.

Tim Furness noted his gratitude to:

- Golf course architect Arthur Hills for having "the patience and confidence in us to allow us to get started in the earlier days."
- Golf course architect Warren Henderson and Rick Smith Golf Course Design for "allowing us to build their great golf courses."

• His family and employees. "More than anything, I'd like to thank my people," Furness said. "Without them, I would not be here. I have the best staff in the world."

"I feel honored," Furness added, "that the people we work for and with feel our work is the quality required to rate us high enough to receive this award. I am very humble to be here."

Meanwhile, on behalf of Golf Course News, Publisher Charles von Brecht presented a plaque to GCBA Executive Vice President Phil Arnold recognizing his support and that of the association for the builder awards program.



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