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IN THE BLACK

with John Beveridge



Works both ways

HAVING a big partner can be a mixed blessing for a mineral explorer.

The good part is that you get a break from the endless cycle of raising money to finance drilling but the downside can be that the big partner might walk away with too much value.

Coppermoly managing director Peter Swiridiuk has no misgivings about his company's deal with Barrick which will see the big gold producer spend \$20 million to get a 72 per cent stake in three tenements on the PNG island of New Britain.

"If Barrick decides there is a big enough deposit for them to mine, nobody will be happier than me," said Peter, who has extensive experience mining in PNG.

So far the project has retained the keen interest of Barrick with drilling and some chargeability tests showing evidence of a major copper/gold/zinc system.

Coppermoly is also in the right metal at the right time with head grades at most big copper mines declining at the same time as demand from China and India has stayed very strong.

Even if Barrick is not convinced the deposits are large enough for it, Coppermoly will have a wealth of drilling information that could well justify a smaller mining project.

A speculative buy.

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