Many companies offering services

BY MARK LESLIE

Inspired by an "excellent idea" with "worthwhile" goals, companies of all sorts are offering to help build the country's first golf course for the physically handicapped. Edwin Shaw Hospital in Akron, Ohio, hopes to have its three-hole course, driving range and practice area seeded by this fall, when it will make its three-year funding from the NEC World Series of Golf. "People have given a lot," said Linda Cinson, vice president of marketing and development for the NEC World Series of Golf. "If it could get seeded this year it will be a blessing." 

The number of parties involved will slow the project, Eldredge said. "Everybody wants to do good, but when it comes the day to get their equipment, or whatever, down there, they may have to work it into their schedule. That makes it harder to coordinate." Meanwhile, handicapped golfers are being trained by the dozens at Edwin Shaw Hospital and are awaiting their chance to play on a real course. 

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Cinson tempered any optimism, saying, "People have given a lot, but we still need more." She said $20,000 of the $60,000 received from the World Series of Golf has been spent on artificial Mod Sod and grass practice greens, a driving range, equipment for classes, and a video and library, and brochures.

course for handicapped takes shape

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Course designed for all to play

Paul Eldredge of Wadsworth Construction Co. said the new course for the handicapped will have to appeal to everyone, "because there are not enough handicapped golfers to pay for upkeep." Architect Barry Serafin of Hurdzan Design Group said the course is not designed for the handicapped, meaning handicapped players don't want to feel their disability was catered to in terms of difficulty. But the design will address special problems facing the handicapped. For instance:

• Flat sand traps.
• "We want to make it as natural as possible," Serafin said. "Slopes won't be as severe but it will be a challenge for everyday.
• Planners have considered Mod Sod, artificial grass and real grass for the greens on the course. They are leaning toward bentgrass.
• "A lot of people want to and will be involved," said Paul Eldredge of Wadsworth Construction, who is coordinating construction. "It's a good project, it's an excellent idea. I think it's very worthwhile. "There's enough property there to do what they want to do, and it won't cost a lot. But it will take a little time and effort to get it all coordinated."

The timetable has been slowed by the discovery that the wetlands on the site are larger than originally thought. Architect Barry Serafin said surveyors checked the land in July to delineate wetlands. That makes it harder to coordinate." Meanwhile, handicapped golfers are being trained by the dozens at Edwin Shaw Hospital and are awaiting their chance to play on a real course. 

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