Superintendents Do Dallas!

By day, Dallas is one of America’s most entertaining cities. By night, like its skyline, Dallas truly sparkles.

INSIDE:
A full schedule of the week’s events... page 16.
• Thumbnail sketches of the candidates... page 17.
• Ballot Box: Comment and summary... pages 1 & 19
• Joe Baidy assumes GCSAA presidency; industry reaction to Steve Mona’s hire... pages 20 & 21.
• Byron Nelson (right), the Old Tom Morris winner, is among this year’s GCSAA honorees... page 22.
• GCBA and NGCOA meetings, page 23.

GSAAA Championship: A battle of home favorites?

By PETER BAIS

AUSTIN, Texas — Superintendents Dale Miller of Barton Creek and Bill Hanna of Austin Country Club may not be familiar names to followers of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Golf Championship scene.

Neither has ever won the tourny. But both are accomplished golfers. And with the 36-hole championship flight being held at their home courses on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, their knowledge should place them among the favorites to win the event.

“Dale’s my man” said Barton Creek head pro Greg Smith of his course manager. “He’s a scratch golfer and has to be considered one of the favorites in any tourny he plays.

“We have a third course here called Lakeside. Dale shot a 61 there. That’s just a stroke off the course record.”

The championship flight will be played on Barton Creek’s Crenshaw/Coore Golf Course. Fairways are large and greens enormous, averaging about 10,000 square feet. The par-5, 16th, for instance, has a 10,000-square-foot putting surface.

“The fairways are wide, so the course puts a premium on chipping and putting. The greens are undulating, but funnel everything toward the middle.”

The par 4, 130-yard 10th is the best hole, according to Smith. The downhill drive is straight toward a fairway bunker just past the landing area. The approach is back uphill to an elevated green protected by a pair of sand bunkers. A prevailing left-to-right wind makes it all the more difficult.

Other memorable holes are the 4th and 12th, both of which have a giant oak tree sitting in the middle of the fairway. The 13th is the highest point on the course, affording beautiful views of the state capital.

Austin Country Club head pro Timsey Finick describes his layout as “one of Pete Dye’s better courses. It’s not that long. But there’s usually trouble on the left and trouble on the right, so you have to keep the ball in play. It’s visually intimidating.”

Which is why he expects Hanna to do well. Austin CC’s superintendent carries a very respectable 5 handicap and has played the course enough, Finick believes, that he won’t be intimidated.

“One you over the visual intimidation at any Dye course, you find they aren’t that difficult to play,” he said.

The par 4, 11th is the signature hole, requiring a 190-yard carry over an open canyon from the back tees.

The one that consistently plays the most over par is the deceptive 287-yard, 4th hole. Lake Austin runs the entire length of the short par 4.

“Water comes into play on the first and second shot. But the hole is so short, people... Continued on page 22