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GCBA Championship: A battle of home favorites?

By PETER BLAIS

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 tournament. 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 tourney 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 an enormous, averaging about 10,000 square-foot putting surface. The par-4, 11th is the signature hole, requiring a 190-yard carry over an open canyon from the back tees.

The Hills at Lakeway, designed by Jack Nicklaus and taken care of by superintend-ent Greg Hinton, is one of four Austin-area courses slated for this year's GCSAA Golf Championship. The final flight will be played over Barton Creek and Austin Country Club.

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

"Once you get 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. But 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
To do in Dallas
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Airport, Fossil Creek in Fort Worth, Chase Oaks in Piano and
options regarding entertainment
of course, contact the resident
Buffalo Creek in Rockwall. In order to get tee times at private clubs,
hotel because, without a doubt,
the information centers at your
there's plenty to keep you busy
in Dallas.

Fast first aid for your tees.

Controlling divots on par 3 tees has always been tough business —
especially when players have to walk from the tee to the bucket and
back again. That's why our new Seed & Soil Caddie takes the best
ideas in divot repair and places them
all at your players' fingertips, right next
to the tee markers! ◆ To keep the rain
out, we curved the spout. To make it
easier to fill, we turned the entire
bottom into a screw-off cap. To keep it close to potential divots, we
made it as easy to move and position as the tee markers it's designed to
sit next to. And to remind players to
use it, we even included a friendly
reminder decal. ◆ Like all Standard
Golf products, our new Seed & Soil
Caddie is designed to last for years of
trouble-free use. The integral steel
spike is precision-welded for extra
strength, and the large capacity
reservoir holds plenty of seed and soil. ◆ Our new
Seed & Soil Caddie makes it easier for players to keep
tee areas healthy! Contact your nearby Standard Golf
distributor and ask about our Seed & Soil Caddie. It's
good medicine for your tees!

Baidy ready to assume GCSAA presidency

By PETER BLAIS

Providing quality member
ship services will be the
cornerstone of the Joseph
Baidy Administration, promised
the incoming president of the Golf
Course Superintendents Associa-
tion of America.

"The primary goal has to be to
service the members while en-
hancing and promoting the pro-
fession," said the 53-year-old head
superintendent at Acacia Coun-
try Club in Lyndhurst, Ohio.

"The key is providing quality ser-
vice and the way to do that is by
constantly refining the educa-
tional program. Everything we do
is like spokes on a wheel with
education at the hub."

Outgoing President Randy
Nichols rode herd on one of the
more tumultuous years in GCSAA
history. The past 12 months have
seen the resignations of the
organization's top three adminis-
trators and immediate past presi-
dent as well as a shifting focus
away from the international arena
and back on membership pro-
grams.

"Randy has done a great job," said Baidy of his predecessor. "No
president I can remember has
been under the pressure he has.
We'll try to continue moving for-
ward on the same plane."

Fellow board member Bruce
Williams is confident Baidy can
keep the 13,000-member organi-
zation on course.

"Joe will do an outstanding job," assured the head superintendent
at Bob O'Link Golf Club in High-
land Park, Ill. "He'll help strengthen our relationships with the
allied associations.

"Joe is people-oriented and al-
ways looking for ways to meet the
needs of our members. He is as
concerned about the smaller chap-
ters as the larger ones. He wants
to make sure we provide quality
services for all members at af-
fordable prices."

Baidy had nothing but praise
for former senior managers John
Schilling, Robert Ochs and Diana
Green.

"John [Schilling] made a major
career decision [to start his own
business]. He did well for us. He
took us to a new plateau and I wish him well."

As for the new senior manage-
ment staff, led by Chief Executive
Officer Steve Mona, Baidy said:
"I'm very excited about the new
ideas and concepts they'll bring
to the organization. I'm positive
they'll take us to a new plateau."

Baidy watched and learned
from last year's bylaws vote when
members overwhelming de-
feated several major proposals
erased by the board. He was
one of the main organizers be-
hind September's chapter del-
egate meeting in Lawrence, Kan.,
where this year's proposed bylaw
amendments were discussed in
the hopes of better communicat-
ing the reasons behind the pro-
posed changes to members.

"We wanted to revisit some of
the proposals the members felt
had some merit. Those that were
big-time losers [i.e., removing del-
egate voting and giving the board
authority to set dues for voting
members] won't be back.

"We had a chance to hear back
from the delegates and use their
ideas during the September meet-
ing. One of the ideas was to
present many of the proposals as
separate issues rather than lump-
ing several together in a single
question. That's why we have
something like 15 separate issues
to vote on this year as opposed to
eight or nine a year ago."

Baidy was so pleased with last
September's delegate gathering
that he plans a similar meeting at
the same time this fall.

"We probably won't have one
every year, just when major is-
ues come up," he said.

Baidy also intends to hold a full-
scale planning committee meet-
ing to map the organization's fu-
ture during his first weeks in
office.