BRIEFS

N. Georgia Tech to graduate first turf students

By PETER BLAIR

C LARKSVILLE, Ga. — The new golf course turf management program at North Georgia Technical Institute (NGTI) will graduate its first two students this spring.

"We want to put people in the industry as quickly as possible with as much knowledge as possible," said lead instructor Joshua Jackson. "People come to a technical school to get hands-on training. We have more than $100,000 worth of equipment and 70 acres that have been made available to us. We're looking at building a putting green and a practice facility that will be open to the public. We're also looking at building a nine-hole course."

The program arose from a needs survey that revealed a half-dozen courses within 20 miles of the school and a growing landscaping market that witnessed an expansion from two to 15 businesses over the past few years. A healthy turf market coupled with the fact the school (located an hour and 45 minutes northeast of Atlanta) already operated a 140-acre sod farm, indicated a technical school turf program might be a welcome addition to NGTI's offerings.

Paul Harvey's super speaks out

By MARK LESLIE

ELMWOOD PARK, Ill. — Calling Paul Harvey "a wonderful part of the American landscape" and a person who loves the game of golf, the superintendent at the famed radio broadcaster's home course defended Harvey's past tirades against golf courses.

Alan Fierst, who Harvey has mentioned a number of times in his daily news broadcasts — including Dec. 2 when Fierst's crews were mowing grass for the first time ever in that winter month — said he does not believe Harvey thinks poorly of golf courses. Harvey has drawn the ire of the golf industry for years after making such claims as there are no birds on golf courses and superintendents are dying from mixing pesticides.

"Frankly, Fierst said, "his [anti-golf] comments have not been recently, and he has tempered them. I don't see it as a concern. He's not militant. But, by and large, I never sensed that [anti-golf sentiment] is Mr. Harvey's personal heart-felt belief."

The course manager at Oak Park Country Club here for 23 years, Fierst said Harvey's comments "cause a little bit of concern, but don't have enough meat in them to push anyone who is really interested in knowing the whole picture to cause trouble."

Harvey's writers, Fierst believes, write his news "for his constituency, who don't need a lot of wide-ranging information.

"He has a lot of control over what he reports, but has he internalized it as his own belief? No. He reports what he feels is newsworthy and of value to his constituency, at the level of intellect and depth those people choose to go on."
Georgians elect Dusch

WATKINSVILLE, Ga. — The 1998 Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association has elected Jim Dusch of Grey Hawk Ridge Golf Club in Alpharetta president.

Elected at the group’s annual meeting, Dusch will be joined by Vice President Franz “Buck” Workman of Cateechee Golf Club in Hartwell; and Immediate Past President Chuck Underwood of Northwood Country Club in Lawrenceville.

Elected to the board of directors were Frank Siple of Lanier Golf Club in Cumming and Jimmy Geter of Marietta (Ga.) Country Club. They will join Directors Sam Crowe of Monroe (Ga.) Golf and Country Club, Harold Franklin of Fields Ferry Golf Course in Calhoun, Craig Ketelsen of Orchard Hills Golf Club in Newnan, Phillip “Wade” Thomas of Idle Hour Club in Macon, and William Smith of Columbus (Ga.) Country Club.

Carolina Nat'l links up with school

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The program is part of Carolina National’s efforts to receive certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP).

“In times of tight education budgets and the elimination of special programs, it is exciting and encouraging to see what a difference linking community leaders and schools together can make,” said Terry L. Vassey, director of golf course development for Bluegreen Golf. “By adopting the school, we hope to build a long-lasting relationship with the local community with projects that are designed to enhance the environment of both the school and the golf course.”

Initial projects by Carolina National Golf Club and the school include installation and monitoring of songbird nest boxes, continued development of the school’s wildlife trail, establishment of a nature and butterfly garden, tree planting and implementing a “best plant management” (IPM) program for the grounds management department at the school.

“We are very excited to be selected for the program and welcome Carolina National Golf Club to the school,” said the Supply Elementary School principal, Dr. Carolyn Williams. “Our goal is to continue developing environmental awareness among the students and provide them with information and opportunities to contribute to their surroundings.”

Brooklake certified

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Jersey were Fiddler’s Elbow Country Club in Far Hills, Ridgewood Country Club in Paramus, and Somerset Hills Country Club in Bernardsville.

In 1991, Brooklake Country Club joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) for Golf Courses, which provides information and guidance to golf courses to help them preserve and enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural resources.

“Brooklake Country Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program,” said Joellen Zeh, staff ecologist for the Cooperative Sanctuary System. “They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property. To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas.”

The Brooklake board of directors and the course management team have always had a strong commitment to environmental issues. Golf course superintendant Scott Carpenter is convinced the ACSP and Brooklake Country Club are a perfect fit.

“The resources available regarding environmental issues are unmatched,” said Carpenter.