

Superintendents Do Dallas!



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

Big D
has plenty
to keep you
busy, day & night

It's
Showtime!

By TOMMY WITT

DALLAS — Record attendance is anticipated as attendees converge on Dallas for the 65th International Golf Course Conference and Show, Jan. 31-Feb. 7. But one question remains: "What is there to see and do in Big D?"

There are numerous entertaining answers available for conferees. Dallas, the number one destination for Texas visitors, is prepared to keep you entertained.

Attractions abound. As the nation recently marked the 30th anniversary of President Kennedy's death, conferees may visit the JFK Memorial, Deely Plaza and the Texas School Book Depository Sixth Floor Museum. Other notable city points of interest include the John Neely Brown Cabin, Reunion Tower, Thanksgiving Square, the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex also features many fine museums.

Fans of the television show "Dallas," may consider a trip to the South Fork Ranch. Tours of the house and grounds are a favorite of most first-time visitors to the city.

If shopping is your cup of tea, you have come to the right place. The North Park Mall, famed Galleria — complete with skating rink — and various outlet malls are also available for your shopping pleasure.

The West End District and Deep Ellum Districts are noted for their nightlife. Musical entertainment, restaurants, night clubs and shops make these two areas prime choices of Dallas visitors.

The subject of dining provides an endless menu of options. Noted restaurants such as Baby Ruth, The Mansion on Turtle Creek, The Riviera, Del Frisco's Steakhouse, Old Warsaw and The Enclave are some of Dallas' best.

No trip to Texas would be complete without being exposed to some real Southwestern entertainment. The famed Billy Bobs is located in the city of Fort Worth, about 30 minutes from downtown Dallas. Restaurants, clubs, shops, live music and indoor bull riding can all be found under the same roof. Nationally recognized country and western entertainers are regulars on the stage. Dallas is also home to numerous country and western clubs.

For those interested in sports, Dallas offers everything under the sun. During the conference period, both the Dallas Mavericks basketball and the Dallas Stars hockey teams will play at least one home game at Reunion Arena, which is accessible from all conference hotels. In addition, the Mesquite Rodeo is held every weekend in Mesquite, a suburb

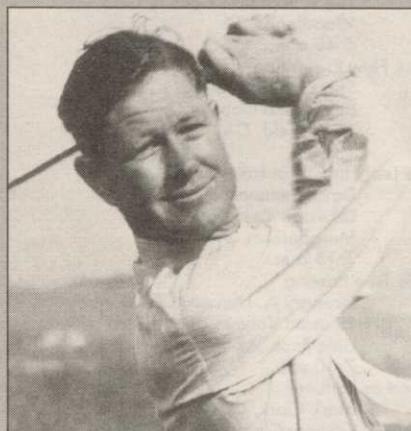
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Tommy Witt is the golf course superintendent at Bent Tree Country Club in Dallas.

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GCSAA 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 tourney. 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 a 14,000-square-foot putting surface.

"It's fairly easy to reach in two. But the green is so big, that's no guarantee you'll make par," Smith warned.

"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, 430-yard 10th is the best hole,



The Hills at Lakeway, designed by Jack Nicklaus and taken care of by superintendent 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.

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 capitol.

Austin Country Club head pro Tinsley Pinick 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, Pinick 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

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It's
Showtime!

Spodnik, MacCurrach honored by GCSAA

By MARK
LESLIE

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Superintendent John Spodnik, who has "inspired many people throughout his career," and PGA Tour agronomist Allan MacCurrach, cited for "exceptional contributions to the superintendent's profession," will be presented the GCSAA's 1994 Distinguished Service Awards at the international golf show.

The award "means being recognized by your peers as a contributor to the advancement of the profession in general and to the turfgrass industry," said Spodnik from Westfield Country Club in Westfield Center, Ohio, where he has served for 34 years.

"I'm overwhelmed," MacCurrach said. "Superintendents have made my job easy over the years. People like us, who are able to travel, are exposed to different things [agronomically]. Oftentimes, I'm just passing on information I've picked up the week before."

Spodnik, who retires in September, was the 1969 president of the GCSAA and has been secretary-treasurer of the North Ohio

Golf Course Superintendents Association for 34 years. He has been director of the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation at Purdue University for several years, holding the office of president in 1975. Serving in his third year as treasurer of the Musser International Turf Foundation, he was a director during the formative years of the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, which honored him with a life membership in December.

MacCurrach is senior agronomist for the PGA Tour, making advance visits to sites for Tour, Senior Tour and Nike Tour events. He also assists Tournament Players Club superintendents in de-

veloping their agronomy programs. Before joining the PGA Tour in 1974, he was superintendent at Valley Country Club in Warwick, R.I., and Chevy Chase (Md.) Country Club. He left the Tour to consult Golden Bear, Inc. from 1984-88.

GCSAA President Randy Nichols said the two men "have made exceptional contributions to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession."

Their careers, he said, "embody the highest traditions of this award."

Spodnik, Nichols said, "has inspired many people throughout his career."

Spodnik feels his main contribu-

tion has been "setting the right example" of professionalism and, through chapter involvement, helping agronomy students with scholarships and training programs.

"If your profession is going to grow and be recognized, you have to have professional people presenting that image to the public," he said. "Some very talented young people are joining the industry."

"I can remember the average age in our Northern Ohio chapter was 54. It's down near 32. That's remarkable, and it means we're attracting new people. People now look at education when hiring, whereas before it was the School of Hard Knocks."



John Spodnik



Allan MacCurrach

MacCurrach said: "The most positive thing I've seen over years is the fact that superintendents now are part of the game of golf. Twenty-five or 30 years ago, they really weren't in the forefront, or known by the pro golfers, or ever mentioned on TV. Now, not only for me, but for the rules people as well, our first contact at a course is the superintendent. He's the key man the week prior and all during tournament week."

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GCSAA Tourney

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usually try to bite off more than they can chew," Pinick said.

Another Texan who could do well is board of director candidate Tommy Witt of Bent Tree Country Club in Dallas.

"Tommy used to work in the Austin area and knows the courses," Smith said. "He's a very good player. He can't hit the ball out of his own shadow. But he sure can putt."

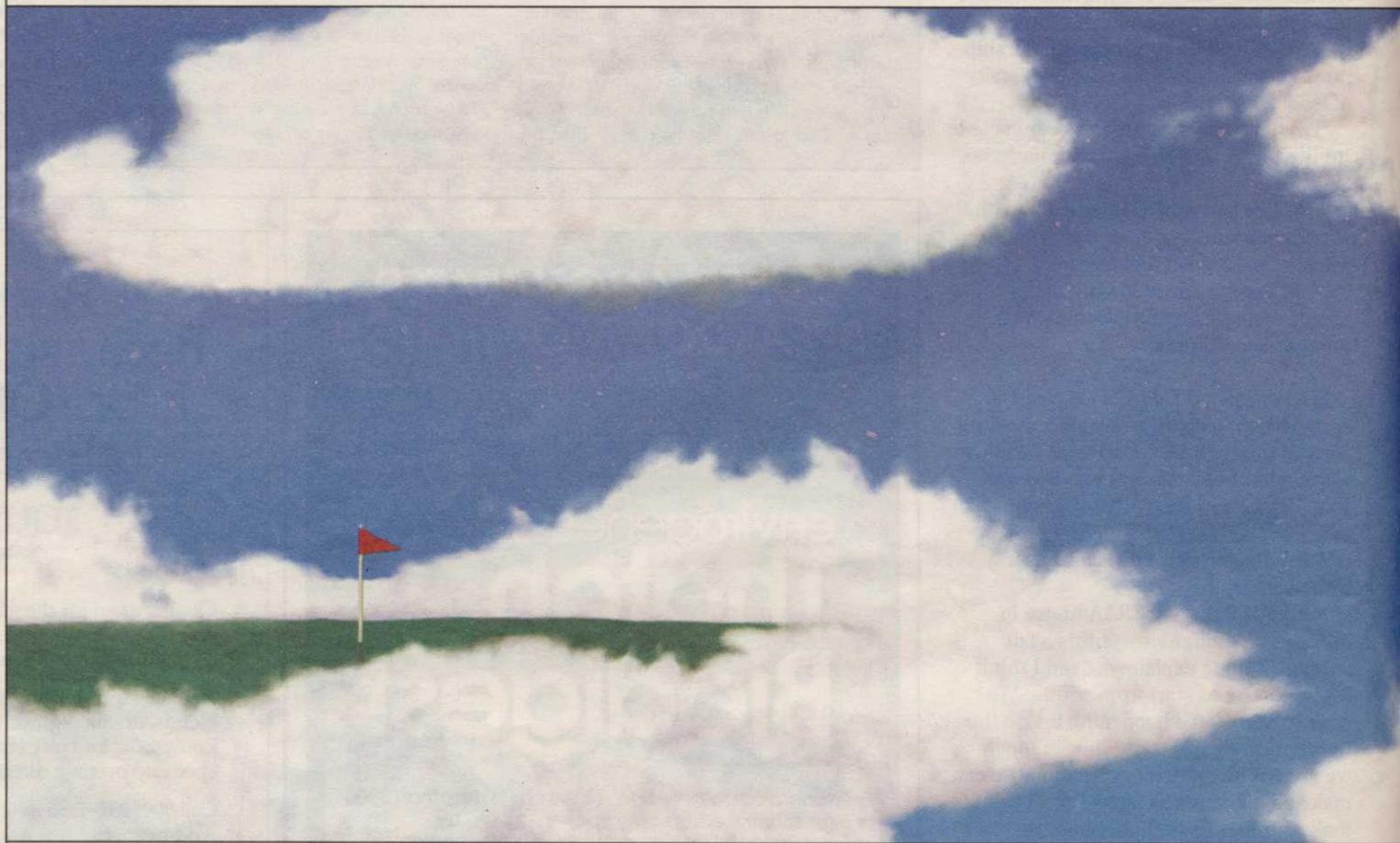
Several people in the know also mentioned GCSAA President Randy Nichols as a likely contender. Nichols and playing partner Dave Powell of Myers Park Country Club in Charlotte, N.C., were among the final-round leaders in last year's tourney in San Diego. On Steele Canyon Golf Club's third hole they had the misfortune of inadvertently putting one another's balls. Both were disqualified.

"You can't talk about who might win the tournament without mentioning Dave Powell. He's won it several times [1985, '88, '89]," said defending champ Richard Stuntz of Alvarado Country Club in Lawrence, Kan.

Stuntz won his first title last year after several near misses. Stuntz plans to play in the Jan. 29 two-player, Best Ball Mixer with neighbor Roger Null (champion in 1983, '90 and '91) of Boone Valley Club near St. Louis.

"Roger's playing real well. He tied for fourth in this summer's U.S. Golf Association Mid-Amateur Championship qualifying round," Stuntz said.

If Powell or Null wins a fourth title, they would move into second in tournament victories. Emil Masciocchi won six championships (1940-41, 1946, 1948-50).



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