

TPCs honor Hunker, River Highlands

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"It's a wonderful feeling to be considered the best of the best," Hunker said. "It's particularly rewarding because in my previous four years here we never had a chance."

River Highlands underwent a major renovation a few years ago and it has taken several seasons for the course to mature, Hunker noted. The final major improvement was placing new sand in all the bunkers, a job that was completed prior to last summer's

PGA Tour stop, the Greater Hartford Open. The Tour players applauded the improvements during the tournament. Greg Norman won the event.

The course members also noticed the improvements and showed their pleasure through a membership survey. "It came back very positive," Hunker said. "They were much happier than in past years."

Audubon International topped off 1996 by designating River Highlands as the 48th facility cer-

tified by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Hunker noted the contributions of his two assistants, Noel Hall and Tom DeGrande, as well as equipment manager Bob Tyler. "We wouldn't have won this without them," he said.

Hunker grew up in Pueblo, Colo., and earned a turf management degree from Colorado State University. He worked six years as assistant superintendent and head superintendent at DeBell Golf Club in Burbank, Calif., before returning to his home state as course manager of Boulder Country Club. After six years

at Boulder, he took over River Highlands in 1991.

Roth praised the work done by superintendents at all 22 TPC operations. "It was a very challenging year with the heavy rainfalls and heat waves that hit many parts of the country," he said. "The tournament expectations were higher than ever. But we still had numerous successes and had the best conditions ever at our facilities."

In addition to Hunker, five TPC superintendents received gold-level awards for superior conditions at their facilities: Mike Dufrey at TPC of Michigan); Fred

Klauk at TPC Sawgrass (Jacksonville, Fla.); Gary Meyers at TPC of Scottsdale (Ariz.); Jerry Dyer at TPC Southwind; and Collier Miller at TPC Summerlin. Klauk also received an award for having the best-landscaped course for the third straight year.

The TPC also honored four operations with worker safety records that, according to Roth, were five times better than the national average. These were the Golf Club of Jacksonville, TPC at Avenel, TPC at Southwind and TPC at Eagle Trace.

The superintendents turned the tables on Roth, presenting their boss with a plaque for his help in running their facilities. "This is in recognition of the assistance we've received from headquarters," Meyers said. "We could not do our jobs without your support."

R.T. JONES GOLF CLUB JOINS SANCTUARY SYSTEM

GAINESVILLE, Va. — The Robert Trent Jones Golf Club (RTJ) has achieved designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. Numerous projects undertaken on the course enhance habitat for wildlife and preserve resources for the community including providing nest boxes for bluebirds, purple martins and wrens; placing bat roost boxes; using integrated pest management techniques; careful monitoring of water quality; water conservation; and creating buffer zones to enhance water features. Superintendent Glenn Smickley said: "Since the golf course is located on Lake Manassas, a drinking water reservoir, I am very aware of my obligation to make sure the integrity of the lake is not jeopardized in any way. With the implementation of a comprehensive integrated pest management program and strict water management measures, data collected by an independent source has shown that water quality of the lake has improved."

GULL LAKE VIEW GOLF CLUB EARNS SANCTUARY STATUS

AUGUSTA, Mich. — Gull Lake View Golf Club has been designated a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. Gull Lake View Golf Club became the fifth in Michigan and the 49th golf course in the nation to receive the honor. "Gull Lake View Golf Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," said Marla Briggs, staff ecologist for Audubon International. "The programs that we have developed while participating in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program have helped us to bring a very natural feeling to the golf experience on our courses," Gull Lake officials said.



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