

## Rocky Mt. mechanics hope to start college program

By PETER BLAIS

GOLDEN, Colo. — In response to a severe shortage of qualified equipment managers, Greater Denver technical schools are trying to develop a golf course mechanics program.

Roger Poole, dean of Warren Technical College here, has discussed the possibility of developing a multi-school program with Pickens Technical College in Aurora and other area vocational schools that could lead to a certificate program in golf course equipment management.

Poole said he hopes to meet this spring with officials from area schools that have faculty capable of teaching diesel, small engine, hydraulic and turf classes, and might be interested in developing a golf course equipment managers' training curriculum.

If there is sufficient interest, the schools would seek an advisory committee consisting of superintendents and managers in related fields that could employ graduates of any new program. The advisory committee would tell the schools what they should teach.

The state department of education would have to approve any new program, Poole said. That approval, he added, will take time, although the schools could begin offering course work in those areas before formal approval was granted.

"Finding qualified equipment managers is a real problem in this area," said Fox Hollow Golf Course equipment manager Fred Peck, founder and immediate past president of the 100-member Rocky Mountain Golf Equipment Managers Association.

"The demands superintendents are making on their equipment managers are much tougher today than they were just a few years ago. They want someone who can do more than just fix equipment. They want someone who can keep accurate records, purchase new equipment, train operators, participate in budget preparation, and keep track of all the equipment at the course. They want someone they can basically turn the equipment operation over to and not worry about it."

The Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association has been very supportive of the mechanic group's efforts to start an equipment managers' program at a local school, Peck said.

"Golf courses have an abundance of equipment they don't use any more or just use on an occasional basis. They'd be more than willing to lend or donate to such a program," Peck said.

Asked why more students don't consider golf course equipment manager careers, Peck said: "Nobody knows about it. If you asked seniors at the local high school about jobs on a golf course, the only ones they could probably tell you about would be golf pro and superintendent. We need to get the word out that you

can make \$35,000 or more as an equipment manager.

"And there's more prestige to the position than there used to be. It's halfway between a blue collar and white collar job. I'm in charge of \$750,000 worth of equipment here and considered part of the superintendent's management team."

## Houston layout to open in Oct.

HOUSTON — The new 18-hole course under construction at the Cypresswood Golf Club is expected to be open for play by October.

Golf course architect Keith Foster designed the new layout, which will be the third 18-hole course at Cypresswood, making it one of the few 54-hole facilities in the area.

The new Foster-designed 18 will be more upscale than the existing Cypress and Creek courses.

"There will be a few more amenities on this course, along with a separate clubhouse and driving range. It's going to be first-class," Cypresswood head pro Kelly Walker told the *Houston Chronicle*.



Photographed at Blackwolf Run, Kohler, Wis.