

By PETER BLAIS

PHILADELPHIA—Construction has begun on the Glen Mills Schools golf course, the 18-hole Bobby Weed-designed layout that will serve as both a recreational and job-training facility for the court-referred 15- to 18-year-old men attending the 170-year-old school.

The directors and staff at the 1,000-student school decided to

Students play major role at Philly boys school course

begin seeking permits for the golf course roughly two years ago and obtained their final local permits in late February. Because so few courses have been built in recent years in the Philadelphia area, Glen Mills Schools Managing Director Harrison Ipock believes this is the first new Delaware County course to

have to undergo the permitting process.

School officials signed a contract with general contractor Pennink Arrimour Golf Inc. of Brynathyn and began clearing the 236-acre site in mid-March. Plans are to grass the course this fall and have it ready for play by late next summer, according

to Ipock.

The first four holes will run along a ridge reputed to be the highest point in Delaware County. The layout then dives into the woods; running along a creek and a small lake that comes into play on the 12th and 16th holes. The lake will also serve as the course's irrigation reservoir.

Located on the Glen Mills campus in a fast-growing area 20 miles from downtown Philadelphia, the proposed course has been very well received by neighbors, in part, "because no housing is planned," Ipock said.

Profits generated at the daily-fee course will go to the Glen Mills Schools Student Scholarship Fund, which finances career objectives of students needing tuition assistance after they leave the school.

Glen Mills has hired John Vogts as superintendent. Vogts and other instructors will teach students about many aspects of the golf course industry, including service delivery, machine operation, machine repair and maintenance, irrigation, fertilizer and chemical application. Students will also help operate the pro and sandwich shops.

"His personality was one of the things that helped us decide to hire John," Ipock said. "He has gotten a few students involved in the construction process already. One of the shop classes is also planning to make tee markers."

Vogts worked on a golf course as a teenager and has held assistant posts at several Philadelphia-area courses including Rolling Green and Merion.

"I understand what it's like to be a teenager working on a golf course," he said. "Most people don't understand how much teaching superintendents do. It's a major part of the job and seems very natural here."

Vogts spends a couple mornings each week with 30 students in a classroom. Wetlands and soil conservation have been among the topics the students have discussed thus far. Classroom time has been followed by field trips to the course site.

A new dormitory (Garfield Hall) will be constructed and its 70-plus students programmatically connected to the operation of the golf course.

As for the course, Vogts said: "It's going to be fabulous. We'll have 40 acres of bentgrass fairways. Bobby Weed has been here every week and is paying close attention to detail."



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CIRCLE #102

MACCURRACH STARTS CONSTRUCTION OF PGA FACILITY

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — MacCurrach Golf Construction has begun construction on the PGA of America's 18-hole course at the PGA Village in Port St. Lucie. It will be a Pete Dye design called The Reserve and is slated to open in 2000. In addition to building the course, MacCurrach Golf will construct a 30-acre learning and development facility which will be under the direction of Rick Martino. It is the first such teaching facility to be developed by the PGA of America.