



# Texas Star course leads REC CENTER PLAN

*Just 10 minutes from DFW airport, the 200-acre Texas Star is one part of a blueprint that is expected to give the City of Euless a boost.*

By TERRY MCIVER / Editor-in-Chief

**T**he Texas Star Golf Course debuts this month in Euless, Texas, as part of a planned recreational complex that will feature the 200-acre golf property and 90 acres of baseball, soccer and softball playing fields.

Texas Star was designed by Keith Foster, once a student of Art Hills, now in his sixth year with his own design company, headquartered in St. Louis.

The course is owned and operated by the City of Euless, a suburb of Dallas. "This project is huge relative to the game of golf and the impact it will have on the

city," explains Foster.

"They're also building a convention center that will benefit the community and the region. It's quite enormous when you consider all the potential," says Foster.

"The city has always wanted a great golf course that will be an asset."

Foster also designed the well-known Quarry Golf Club in San Antonio, which, he says has become the leading public course in the state.

Texas Star is 200 acres of golf and golf only, with not a home development in sight. The course has been cut into a site reminiscent of the Texas 'hill country,' and features dramatic changes in elevation and rock outcroppings.

"Our goal was to create a golf course that looks like it's always been part of the land, and capitalizes on what the site has to offer," says Foster.

Jon Snider, superintendent at Texas Star, is a Texas A&M graduate, whose previous assignment was at The Cliffs Country Club near Graford, Texas.

"Jon was the perfect fit," compliments Foster. "He has been exceptional to work with throughout the entire process."

The number 13 at Texas Star displays the turf varieties used. Greens are Pennncross G-2; aprons are Tifway 419 Bermudagrass; taller grasses beyond the apron combine little bluestem, weeping lovegrass, switchgrass and western wheatgrass.

## Texas Star at a glance

Designer: Keith Foster

Size: 200 acres; 7000+ yards, par 71.

Superintendent: Jon Snider

Assisted by: Jesse Hunt

Mechanic: Walter Braswell

Irrigation expert: David Quiroga

Turf: Tifway 419 bermuda; Pennncross G-2 bentgrass; tall fescues; about 30 acres are planted in native grasses: little bluestem; switchgrass; western wheatgrass; weeping lovegrass

Snider plans to employ a peak-season staff of 20, and 12-14 year-round workers, "depending on whether or not we overseed. At this point in time, we're not plan-



*'Our goal is to create a golf course that looks like it's always been part of the land, and capitalizes on what the site has to offer.'*—Keith Foster, architect

ning on overseeding our fairways. That's a year ahead, when we reevaluate and change things," says Snider.

"If this year is any indication of the coming growing season, we may not see much dormancy. We were still mowing at Thanksgiving 1996, and we started to mow again in mid-March. We never went fully dormant. We were only down about three months."

#### **New bentgrass, natives**

Tees and fairways are sprigged with Tifway 419 bermudagrass. Greens are seeded with the new Penn G-2 variety, known for its improved density and close mowing tolerance.

"There are accent grasses used in rough areas, kept at 5-6 inches in height, and in some shaded areas we're going in with tall fescue," Snider explains.

Mowing equipment at Texas Star includes Toro walk-behind greens mowers and Jacobsen 3810 fairway mowers.

"As a city, all of our equipment purchases went out on bid. So we have a variety of equipment," explains Snider.

Equipment maintenance will be up-to-date, but for now, the office trailer/pump house serves as maintenance headquarters.

"Fortunately, we have a really nice pump house," laughs Snider.

#### **Computerized maintenance records**

"We're trying to do as much preventive maintenance as possible in less than ideal conditions," says Snider. "We plan to go to a computerized system that records hours of use for each machine, and transmits the information to the computer screen, such as recommended intervals for oil changes and all preventive maintenance.

"It's used by the city's fleet service center. They take care of the rest of the equipment used by the city departments."

The irrigation system combines a Toro OSMAC irrigation system with Flowtronex variable-speed pumps.

The greens are planted on a sandy loam/peat mix that drains just as it should.

Bunkers are the same calcareous sand, minus the peat, from the Brazos River.



**Jon Snider, left, says he and his Hispanic work team help each other get over the language barrier.**

Snider anticipates Texas Star will host 40,000 rounds per year, "and we're going to limit it to 40,000," he insists.

"If we have to start turning away people, that's when we'll go up in price."

A round of weekday golf at Texas Star, with a cart, is priced at \$47. Prime time and holiday play costs \$59.

#### **Weed control in flood plain**

"We've gone out with an application of Barricade already this year for the summer annual weeds," says Snider, "and will probably go back with Pendimethalin in the fall, with window applications of Barricade.

Barricade is the only product labeled for rescuegrass, which we have in several areas.

"We are in a flood plain, and Hurricane Creek, which runs through the property, comes out of its banks. In those areas we've had lots of weed seed deposited, and had a heavy infestation of the rescuegrass there. Along with some other areas, we're going to window treat with the Barricade and then broadcast the Pendimethalin everywhere else."

Organic products are also on Snider's list of treatment methods.

"We've used quite a bit of Houactinite, a processed sewer sludge. We've gone out in spring with 750 pounds per acre; we went into the fall last year with a good, heavy dose. The course greened up quicker and stayed green longer.

"I can't totally attribute all the green up to the Houactinite, because we're putting a pound of nitrogen on these new sprigs every week, trying to push them up to the end of October. We were fortunate through winter with the freezes and what have you, that we didn't lose any grass."

The present 12-man workforce includes nine Hispanic workers, which provides a certain communication challenge.

To jump the language barrier, Snider is using a Spanish language CD ROM to teach himself Spanish, and relying on the help of the Hispanic workers.

"They teach us, and we teach them," he says.

"Our irrigation technician is fluent in Spanish. He carries a radio with him at all times. If we do get caught in a communication problem, we call him and he translates on the spot." □