



Prep's new athletic center will feature an expanded wrestling room, 200-meter indoor track, 6,000-square-foot weight training and fitness room, 1,000-seat competition basketball gym and a 10-lane competition pool.

## Athletic Center to Break Ground This Spring

BY BRIAN A. GNATT

Support for Georgetown Prep's Vision Campaign remains strong. In the last seven weeks of 2004, Prep raised \$6.5 million. The campaign has now surpassed the \$25 million mark and members of Prep's advancement staff continue to detect a strong interest from alumni, parents and friends of Prep.

One of the goals of the campaign – the construction of a new athletic center – will become a reality this spring as the \$35 million project breaks ground. The project also includes rebuilding the golf course and athletic fields and constructing new roads around campus.

The athletic center will include a 200-meter indoor track, 6,000-square-foot weight training and fitness room, 1,000-seat competition basketball gym, 10-lane competition pool, wrestling room, expanded locker rooms and coaches' offices and an athletic hall of fame. Hess Construction of Gaithersburg, Md., was chosen as the general contractor. Construction is expected to take 18 months.

Once the athletic center is completed, the current field house will be converted to a learning center with a new media center. Highlights of the learning center will

include increased seating in the library from 22 to 100 seats, reading rooms for one-on-one and small group study sessions, eight state-of-the-art classrooms, and a commons area with space for a student lounge, café and offices for student organizations.

Preparation work has already begun on campus. Montgomery County installed a new traffic signal this winter at Prep's driveway on Tuckerman Lane. That entrance will be used by construction vehicles for the athletic center as well as for the luxury apartment complex that will be built on approximately 3.5 acres of Prep's land along Tuckerman Lane. That project is also expected to begin this spring.

Since the athletic center will be built on the baseball field adjacent to the field house, Prep will install artificial turf in the stadium so teams will have adequate space for games and practices. The stadium field will be covered with FieldTurf, a polyethylene fiber that resembles natural grass and is stabilized with smooth, rounded silica sand and rubber granules. The turf, which feels like a beanbag, can be used year round.

The cost to install the turf is about \$900,000, but the field has an estimated life of 20 years and is expected to cost less than grass in the long run. 