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Although some devices in three of Georgia's 159 counties, with two machines failing in one

crashed or need to be reprogrammed, touchscreen and other high-tech voting machines experienced few problems Tuesday as they made their fullscale debut in more than 200 counties nationwide

Anxious to avoid the kind of snags that created Florida's primary mess and lesser troubles in Maryland in September, election officials had spent countless hours training poll workers and educating voters on how the new digital tallying machines work.

The biggest general election debut for touchscreen machines was in Georgia, where some 19,000 were deployed across the state and voters offered good reviews.

One voter, Tracy Yandle of Atlanta, said it was "as easy as using an ATM."

'It's great. I've been voting for a lot more years than I care to say," Joe Penley of Barnesville raved. "It's almost too simple. My 4-year-old granddaughter could do it. It's hard to make errors if you just follow instructions.

Technical problems characterized as minor were reported

One touchscreen machine locked up and crashed as Mary Perdue, the wife of Georgia's Republican gubernatorial candidate Sonny Perdue, was casting her ballot. Officials rebooted the computer, and she continued with ease.

Only a few problems, meanwhile, were reported in the Florida counties of Miami-Dade and Broward where difficulties with high-tech machines had thrown the Sept. 10 primary confusion. Former Attorney General Janet Reno not only lost the Democratic primary for governor on that day. She was also turned away from her suburban Miami polling station when machines weren't ready.

This time was different.

'It was smooth," said Reno. "They were prepared for me this time.'

Miami-Dade and Broward election officials had stepped up poll worker training and added hundreds of workers to troubleshoot the machines.

"You're never going to have a flawless opening," he said.

Electronics play bigger role in '02 election

More voters will be using touch-screen and other el machines in this year's elections.

Voting equipment used Percentage of all counties

*Includes "Datavote."

Washington, D.C.

SOURCE: Election Data Services

"The backup system worked." For Tuesday's elections, 510 of the nation's counties - or 16 percent - were using electronic voting systems, up from 293 counties in 2000, according to Election Data Services, an independent research company in

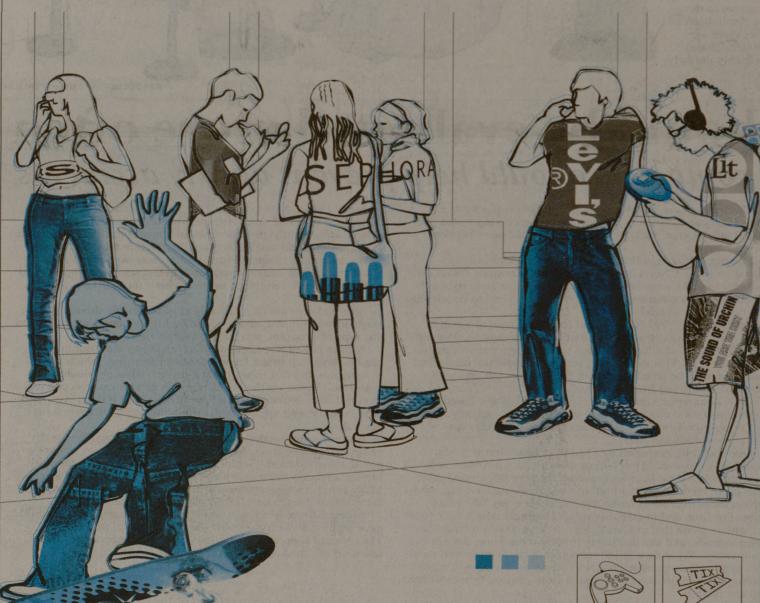
Voting also went well Tuesday in the nation's largest county to go all-electronic: Harris County, Texas, which includes Houston. Harris' new system uses 5.2-pound machines that look like personal digital assistants on steroids. Voters use a dial to highlight

Other states with cou debuting high-tech equip included Louisiana Mississippi.

Many counties rushed replace outdated equipme avoid a balloting fiascoli one that besmirched the presidential vote in Flo And that meant that mad were deployed more qui than reasonable, analysts

If there were major prob Tuesday, it could foresh trouble for 2004, when states will have high machines thanks to a new billion federal law to help replace outdated equipm

when you can gear up for signing up, that's mLife.

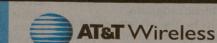


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GOP takes Georgia sea to win Senate majority

Republicans ousted a Georgia Democrat on Tuesday and won a hotly contested race in New Hampshire as the GOP pushed to overturn the Democrats' one-vote majority in the Senate.



In Georgia, Republican Rep. Saxby Chambliss defeated in ate first-term Democratic Sen. Max Cleland, a triple ampuli the Vietnam War, after chiding him for opposing President Ba plan for creating a new Department of Homeland Security.

Rep. John Sununu was victorious for the GOP in Hampshire, retaining a Republican-held seat that Democra high hopes of winning. He defeated Democratic Gov. by Shaheen, despite a lack of help from many conservatives bit his primary defeat of Republican Sen. Bob Smith.

The turnover in Georgia could prove crucial to the GOPSI reclaim control of the Senate in the Congress that convenes in July In a ferocious state-by-state battle, initial results showed each party was recapturing most seats held by incum Incomplete results had Republicans leading in races for Democratic held seats in Missouri and Minnesota. Democrats threaten

defeat GOP Sen. Tim Hutchinson of Arkansas, In North Carolina, Republican Elizabeth Dole won the right succeed the retiring Sen. Jesse Helms, batting down a che by Democrat Erskine Bowles, the one-time chief of safe President Clinton.

In South Carolina, four-term GOP Rep. Lindsey Graham replace another outgoing conservative icon, Sen. Strom Thum Graham bested Democrat Alex Sanders, the former College

Charleston president. Thurmond will turn 100 next month and will leave the Sensi January after serving a record 47 years and three months.

Democrats held the New Jersey seat that will be relinque Sen. Robert Torricelli, who abruptly ended his campaign lastr after ethics violations seemed to end his chances of being reed. Returning in his place will be Frank Lautenberg, who retired years ago after an 18-year Senate career.

Republicans on track to take House control

WASHINGTON (AP) Republicans turned aside crucial Democratic challenges in region after region Tuesday and headed towards extending their eightyear control of the House of Representatives

Democratic hopes of regaining the chamber dimmed as Republicans chalked up wins or were leading in most of the races earlier seen as toss-ups. Americans voted to fill all 435 House seats, but only a tenth of them were truly competitive.

Early Wednesday with only Alaska's polls still open, Republicans had won 195 seats and were leading in 32 others. If trend continued. Republicans would hold 227 seats — four more than they do in the current Congress. Majority

control requires 218 votes. Traditionally, the president's party loses seats in midterm elections. But this year, Republicans appeared to be helped by President Bush's popularity and by the relatively low number of competitive races.

Democrats needed a net gain of seven seats to reclaim the control they lost in 1994. As returns rolled in, it seemed likely they would fall far short--not only failing in some high-profile challenges to Republican incumbents but also losing

some of their own incumbe In a closely watched Kenth contest, three-term Republ Rep. Anne Northup defe Jack Democrat Republican Jeb Bradley defe Democrat Martha Fuller Clark an open New Hampshire sealth

had been Republican. Republican Rep. Moore Capito won a second le in West Virginia, defeat Democratic challenger Humphreys, a wealthy lawye what was the most expen congressional race in the coul

with \$9 million raised and s Republicans won three of races that featured incum running against other incumbe - the result of a redistricting reflect population changes.

Rep. Nancy Johnson, Conn., defeated Rep. Maloney, D-Conn., and Re Charles Pickering, R-Mis defeated Rep. Ronnie Shows. Miss. Rep. John Shimkus, R. defeated Rep. David Phelp III., in a downstate district. B Republican incumbent was ing the Democratic incul in a see-saw vote count in other such race in Pennsylvi

In another closely follow race, GOP businessman C Chocola won an open north Indiana House seat that had be Democratic.

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