

The Intellinet Challenge

The Vineyards, Naples Florida

Superintendent: *Pete Metcalf*

Every superintendent will face the challenge of preparing for a tournament. For most of us, it is the Member-Guest or Club Championship. Pete Metcalf, however, prepares his golf course for some of the greatest golfers of all time. When February rolls around in Naples and the likes of Raymond Floyd, Lee Trevino and Arnold Palmer come to town, you can bet that the Vineyards will be ready.

I talked with Pete shortly after the tournament and he informed me of the extremely rigid standards set forth by the Senior PGA Tour. As a veteran of five Senior PGA events, Pete has learned what he can and cannot do before the tournament. Even summer programs are timed to reduce any possibility of inferior playing conditions in February.

About eight weeks prior to the tournament, Pete begins to bring his golf course to a new level. Actually, he brings his course up to a new standard of excellence and a lower level of cut. Mowing heights begin to move downward for greens, tees, fairways and upward for roughs.

Greens are lightly top-dressed and lowered gradually to 1/8-inch, which gives them 9.5-10.0 roll on the stimpmeter. This year the greens were overseeded with Cobra bentgrass and Sabre, Poa trivialis blend and as usual they were perfect. Tees

and fairways were mowed at 3/8-inch and were firm and fast for the pros. I was very surprised to hear that members played right up to tournament time. In fact, I think Pete even had some "walk-ons" during the tournament.

Because the Vineyards is a 36-hole club, Pete had adequate staff to prepare for the tournament, but he did admit that he paid just a little more attention to the south course.

Pete has an outstanding staff at the Vineyards. His assistants, Jim Vajen, Ron Boettger and Kyle Nygard, constantly remind crew members their goal was perfection. When a man the size of Pete Metcalf exclaims that there will be no tolerance of mental mistakes, you can bet the farm that there won't be. When the tournament is over, I am sure each and every crew member will be proud to be part of another great tournament at the Vineyards.

This year was no exception. The course was in great condition. Unfortunately, bad weather shortened the event to thirty-six holes. But from the winner, Bob Murphy, to the very last place man in the field not a negative comment was heard. Although tournament conditions cannot be maintained year round, maybe some of us can hold our own little championships and try to be like my hero, Pete Metcalf.

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