




Number 18
Pasadena Yacht & Country Club
Photo by Daniel Zelazek



Pasadena Yacht & Country Club

Returning to Prominence

By Joel Jackson saline irrigation water.

Returning to prominence is the vision of the new owners of the Pasadena Yacht and Country Club located on the shores of Boca Ciega Bay near the southern tip of the Pinellas County peninsula separating Tampa Bay from the Gulf of Mexico. CFC Property Holdings just closed the deal in June, but the principals aren't wasting any time in setting their vision into motion. Bunker remodeling has begun already, the first green has been rebuilt and seashore paspalum is being planted for a trial run with high

Additional personnel and equipment have been added and plans for a new irrigation system are not far behind.

All this has been good news for Superintendent Scott MacEwen, who came on board barely two years ago and has been making modest but noticeable improvements as the budget would allow. MacEwen told the excited owners that before too much dirt was moved around or new grass was planted, the irrigation system needed a serious upgrading to manage and protect any new renovations.

The irrigation system currently uses reclaimed water directly from the city treatment plant and the two pump stations are booster pumps installed in underground vaults. The equipment is so old that MacEwen says badly needed replacement parts are hard, if not impossible, to find. That is just one issue on the plate of the new team whose goal is to return this gem of a golf course to the prominent role it once had in the Tampa Bay area.

The Pasadena Y&CC has a proud and rich golf history that had been overlooked in recent years. According to a history of the

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Pasadena Yacht & Country Club



Front row from left: Keith Lamb, Gerry Montminy, Ray Bradford, Ray Danylieko, Bennett Stein, Wesley Hutchinson, Bahama Goode, Cesar Culabutan. Back Row from left: Bill Jordan, Larry Jordan, William Skidmore, Ed Keen, George Beaty, Bob Wevley, Stephanie Meyers.

Location: Gulfport

Ownership: Pasadena Y&CC Development, LC

Playing policy: Semiprivate

Number of holes: 18 holes. 6,408 yards. Par 72. Course Rating/Slope: 70.6/130

Designed by: Wayne Stiles and John Van Kleek. Opened in 1924.

Management: Club Manager Joe Meyer; Director of Golf Jim Morrissey; Head Golf Professional

Major renovations: Architect Bill Dietsch, Jr did a renovation in the mid-1970s and the signature 18th hole, with a breath-taking view of the bay, was redesigned by Arnold Palmer in 1987. Consultant/Designer Corey Aurand is currently designing new bunker complexes.

Total acreage under maintenance: 125 acres.

Greens: TifDwarf. Avg. Size 6,800 sq.ft. Total 3 acres. HOC .150 in. summer, .135 in. winter. Overseeding: Poa Trivialis @ 12-15 lbs/1,000 sq. ft. Green speed goals: Smooth and consistent. No. 1 green being planted in seashore paspalum.

Tees: Tifway 419 bermudagrass – 5.5 acres. HOC.500 in. Overseeding: ryegrass @ 400 lbs/acre

Fairways: Turf – 419 Tifway bermudagrass – 30 acres. HOC .500 in.

Overseeding: Ryegrass @ 300 lbs/Acre

Roughs: Turf – 419 Tifway bermudagrass – 65 acres. HOC 1.25 in. – 1.50 in. No overseeding.

Bunkers: 51.

Sand type: 37M. Machine raked with John Deere 1200.

Waterways/Lakes: 12 lakes/ponds. Maintenance by outside contractor.

Irrigation: Source: Reclaimed water. Pump station. Control System. No fertigation.

Watering restrictions/Conservation: BMP. **Total staff including superintendent:** 16 full time. 40 hours per week plus 2.0 hours over-time.

Leadership: Assistant Superintendent Keith Lamb; Equipment Manager Larry Jordan; Irrigation Technician George Beatty.

Communications: Weekly staff meetings of all club department heads, Monthly staff/safety meetings with crew.

Cultural Programs: Greens – Summer bermuda: frequent light verticutting and topdressing. Raise HOC to .150. Deep irrigation once per week as needed. Winter – Overseeded Poa Trivialis: Fertilizer – mostly foliar feeding. Light brooming replaces verticutting. Annual total nitrogen: 10-12 lbs/1,000 sq. ft.; phosphorous 3-4 lbs/1,000 sq. ft.; potassium 15-22 lbs/1,000 sq. ft. Aerify twice a year with 5/8-in, x 10-in. tines. Tees – Fertilize monthly with 1:2:1. Mow 3X weekly. Fairways – Fertilize every other month with 1:2:1.5. Circle cut in summer. Roughs – Raise/lower heights of cut.

Management Challenges: Salt, trees (shade and roots), nematodes, and drainage.

Pest Control/IPM: Chipco Choice – rotate annually between fairways and roughs. Monitor pest thresholds.

Wildlife Inventory: Osprey, otter, many species of shorebirds and song birds.

Unusual/historical notes: Walter Hagen was the club's first golf professional. The course hosted 15 St. Petersburg Opens on the PGA Tour in the 50's and 60's and reportedly was site of one of Arnold Palmer's first four victories. The course was also an LPGA Tour stop in the 70's and 80's as the Orange Blossom Classic and S&H Classic

club written in 1974 by Men's Golf Association President Maurice Hollins, the course was designed by the New England golf architect team of Wayne Stiles and John Van Cleek. The course opened in 1924 as the Bear Creek Golf Course in conjunction with the Rolyat Hotel (now the Stetson Law School) with golf great Walter Hagen as one of the two golf professionals on staff.

Hollins goes on to say that during those Florida boom years, only about 25,000 people lived in the area. Another piece of golf trivia is that the course was the site of Bobby Jones's famous and worst defeat — 7 and 6 — at the hands of Hagen. But the boom burst as quickly as it flourished and the hotel and course were closed. The hotel and golf course, rechristened the Pasadena Golf Course reopened in 1930 amid a rising tide of golf promotion in the area. One notable match was a pro-celebrity affair starring a couple of babes. Babe Didrikson (Zaharias) and Babe Ruth took on Lloyd Gullikson and Glenna Collette Vare. Didrikson was the Ladies National Champion at the time and the Vare Trophy for women golfers was named for Ms. Vare.

The 1930s were lean years for everyone and the course existed off the seasonal play, just as many do today. When World War II broke out, the club realized that with all the shortages it could not afford to operate as a golf course. The land was fenced in and used to graze beef cattle. The clubhouse was used as an NCO club and then a commissioned officers club for the Army. After the war, the course was leased to the city of St. Petersburg, but the city canceled the lease in 1954. Marion Boswell, who initiated a Major League Baseball tournament, leased the course until 1968.

Pasadena has been host to 15 St. Petersburg Opens on the PGA Tour, six Major League Baseball tournaments and one Orange Blossom Classic. Also according to Hollins, Arnold Palmer won his first professional golf championship at the 1958 St. Petersburg Open. In 1961 Bob Goalby won the tournament when he birdied eight straight holes (8 through 15) a PGA record that still stands.

Former Pasadena superintendent and West Coast GCSA icon Bud Quandt added that during his tenure in the 1970s and '80s, the LPGA held at least 16 pro tournaments under various names like the Orange Blossom

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Afternoon shadows fall across the No. 10 green. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

Classic and the S&H Classic. The West Coast GCSA honored Quandt by naming its major annual fundraising tournament after him and the

Pasadena Y&CC hosted 33 of these tournaments that have benefited turf research and local charities.

All of this history has energized the new owners and helped to focus their restorations, not only on the grounds, but also the

Superintendent Facts

Scott MacEwen



Originally from: Miami

Family: Wife Kathy; Sons, Kyle (16) and Clayton (12) and daughter Colleen (10)

Education: Bachelor of Arts in communications from Florida Southern College in Lakeland. Turf Management Certificate from the University of Georgia.

Employment history: 1989-92 Golf Club of Miami,

Crew member promoted to assistant superintendent in 1991; 1992 Tournament Players Club of Tampa Bay, assistant superintendent; 1996 -2002 promoted to superintendent at TPC Tampa Bay; May 2002 to present, Pasadena Y&CC golf course superintendent.

Professional affiliations: GCSAA and Florida West Coast GCSA.

How did you get into the business? I left a good advertising job in Miami to rake bunkers. I made this career change and worked my way up.

Mentors/Career Influence: Cal Roth of the PGA Tour staff gave me the opportunity to become a superintendent and taught me how to be a good superintendent. I also want to thank all those assistant superintendents who worked so hard for me during my career. Most importantly my wife family who have been there for me through the good and not so good times, to help me, teach me and share my successes.

Accomplishments: In 1989 I was working in advertising. Seven years later I was a golf course superin-

tendent hosting a televised professional golf tournament.

Goals: Earn the respect of my peers. Make our course a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. Oversee a golf course renovation maybe here at Pasadena Y&CC.

Work philosophy: Work hard but enjoy every moment, since life is too short. Don't sweat the small stuff because it's all small stuff.

Advice: Always provide more than is expected of you and never take things for granted. Do every job as if you were being interviewed for the first time. Pay attention to details.

Memorable moments: Hosting televised golf tournaments (Senior PGA). Second honeymoon in San Diego at the 2004 GCSAA conference. Watching my kids grow up.

Hobbies/Interests: Watching my children play sports. I can't get enough. Little League coaching. Fishing. Golf.

prominent role the club played in the development of golf in the bay area. I met Mike Vickers, one of the new owners, while visiting Pasadena for this story.

He said, "We are so happy that Scott is here as part of the team that will be rebuilding Pasadena. He had made good strides even before we came on board. The members are extremely happy with his efforts to make improvements."

MacEwen is not bashful about taking on challenges. His journey to Pasadena came by way of TPC of Tampa Bay, where he worked for 10 years first as the assistant superintendent and then as superintendent. Like many superintendents, MacEwen came to the business after making a career change. As a high school student working on the yearbook, MacEwen saw himself some day as the editor of *Sports Illustrated*. So after majoring in communications with an emphasis in public relations and advertising, he set out to conquer the publications world. But he found out fast that the major magazines don't hire aspiring graphic artists fresh out of college.

He found work in his hometown of Miami with a small company and was actually doing quite well as a paste-up artist, but MacEwen could see there wasn't much future down that path for someone with grander aspirations.

Somehow on his list of options, working outdoors on a golf course crept to the top. He sent out 40 resumes and got back two written rejections. So he started knocking on doors and the one that opened was at the Golf Club of Miami that the PGA had just purchased and was renovating in 1989.

MacEwen said, "I think they wanted to test this rookie golf course worker to see

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View across the 10th green. Number 11 is in the background. Photo by Daniel Zelazek

what I was made of because the first two weeks, all I did was pick rocks out of bunkers. The first week they would drop me off at a bunker complex with my lunch and some water and pick me

up at the end of the day. The next week I was given my own vehicle to drive myself out to the rock pile. Pretty soon I was cutting cups and before too long I was operating the sprayer.”

MacEwen’s abilities earned him a promotion to assistant superintendent in 1991 and the next year he was transferred to TPC Tampa Bay, where he began a decade of hands-on expe-



Number 3 green and Boca Ciega Bay as seen from the fourth tee. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

rience under the guidance of PGA Tour agronomists. During that period, he earned a turf management certificate from the University of Georgia through correspondence courses and a proctored examination.

MacEwen said, "The TPC experience was a great training ground and great place to work. The excitement and anticipation of the annual PGA Senior Tour event was fun and I have met some great people who are now good friends. But that chapter is closed and now I'm looking forward to focusing on the needs and expectations of the members and new owners of Pasadena. We will have our own special events to prepare for."

The 80-year-old course underwent major renovation during the mid-1970s by golf course architect William Dietsch, Jr., and the Palmer Design Company redesigned the 18th hole completely in the late 1980s. While the soil tends to be sandy loam mostly, the high salt content of the irrigation water may be contributing to a black mucky layer found in many of the wetter areas. MacEwen cites the salty water and drainage as two of the biggest challenges in managing the turf at Pasadena, followed by tree roots and nematodes.

The original course layout relied solely on surface drainage to sheet-flow the water off the course. In subsequent years the mounding and wall-to-wall cart-path installation has blocked this flow in many areas. The ever-resourceful MacEwen has cut gaps in the concrete paths where it's damming up the water and installed creative metal grates over the drain channels, allowing the water to move on.

MacEwen strives to follow a deep, infrequent watering regimen saying that he prefers to manage a drier, firmer golf course.

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View of the approach of the 15th hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

rolls around the grass is thirsty, but it the roots are deeper too,” he said.

His cultural program for the greens includes frequent, light verticutting and topdressing, which is recognized as a proven way to keep thatch on the greens under control. During the winter on his overseeded greens, light brooming replaces verticutting. The greens receive an aver-

age of 10-12 lb. of nitrogen; 3-4 lb. of phosphorus and 15-22 lb. of potassium per year. He rotates treating the fairways and roughs annually with Chipco Choice to control mole crickets and monitors damage thresholds to identify trouble spots.

While at TPC Tampa Bay, MacEwen registered and certified the course as an Audubon

Cooperative Sanctuary. He wants to do the same at Pasadena once the renovations are complete.

“I really enjoyed improving and providing habitat for the birds and animals, and modifying our practices to be as eco-friendly as possible,” he said. “We have different surroundings here. It is a more urban location, but we have plenty of shorebirds, regular songbirds and

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Bud Quandt



No story about the Pasadena Yacht & Country Club would be complete without a tip of the hat to Charles “Bud” Quandt, who was the “Boss of the Moss” at this venerable course for 23 years from 1968 to 1991. That he is a highly regarded and revered leader in the West Coast GCSA is evidenced by naming the chapter’s premiere

fundraising event, The Bud Quandt Tournament, after him.

I’d say that Bud has abandoned the hustle and bustle of city life when he retired to his retirement getaway in the little burg of Steinhatchee, but he made his way there by way of a general manager’s job at Airco G.C. after “retiring,” and he just

finished an odyssey of nearly two months that ended in Mexico with six teenagers in tow. That’s Bud. Always on the go.

But during his Pasadena days, Bud grew up with the industry and all its changes and advancements. He was there when golf course architect Bill Dietsch, Jr. undertook a three-phase remodeling of the course in the early 1970s and Palmer Design’s rebuilding of the 18th hole in 1988. Bud reports that the PGA Tour used to make stops at Pasadena during the Hogan and Snead era, and he was totally involved while hosting 16 or 17 LPGA Tour events during the 70s and 80s.

Then there were the 33 Bud Quandt Tournaments held at Pasadena. This event has been responsible for raising tens of thousands of dollars over the years for turf research and local charities.

Bud, thanks for your professional integrity and your personal vitality and sense of humor over the years.

Joel Jackson

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Fun Facts



Scott MacEwen, right, goes over bunker plans with operator William Skidmore. Photo by Joel Jackson

Here are some things you may not know about our cover story superintendent:

1. **Car:** Dodge Durango

2. **The last good movie I saw:** Castaway

3. **I stay home to watch:** U. S. Open on Father's Day

4. **The book I've been reading:** Playing by the Rules by Arnold Palmer

5. **Favorite meal:** Eggplant Parmesan

6. **Favorite performer:** Dustin Hoffman, Bruce Springsteen, Robin Williams

7. **Prized possessions:** Wine collection, boat, memories, my library

8. **Personal Heroes:** My children – Kyle, Clayton and Colleen

9. **Nobody knows that I:** Have a temper

10. **I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Diplomacy

11. **If I could do it over:** Nothing. I have been very fortunate. I appreciate life's pleasures as I experience them.

12. **I'd give anything to meet:** Neil Armstrong

13. **My fantasy is:** To visit Scotland. Fly in an F-1

14. **The one thing I can't stand:** Lying. Being tickled

15. **If I could change one thing about myself:**

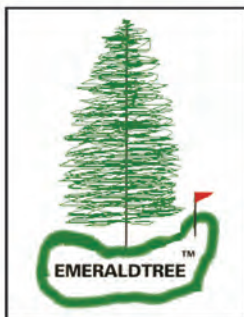
Better memory

16. **My most irrational act:** Hmmm...what was the question again?

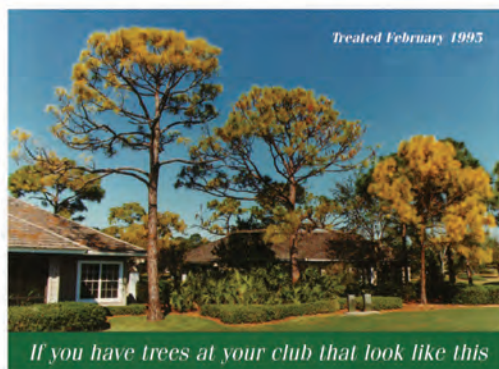
17. **My most humbling experience:** My sister's death

18. **The words that best describe me:** Intelligent, humorous

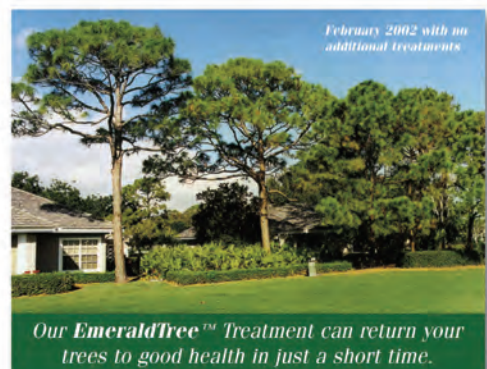
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This decorative grate across this cart path was created from an old mower reel by Equipment Manager Larry Jordan. Several paths were cut to provide drainage for water trapped on the course. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Assistant Superintendent Keith Lamb. Photo by Joel Jackson.

a few small animals, like otters, on the course. I don't expect to see deer running across our fairway, but I have seen bald eagles and osprey and that's just as exciting."

During a quick tour of the course, I spotted 12 species of birds without even trying. The most striking was the flock of skimmers

resting on one fairway and on the shores of the nearby water hazard. Several of the lakes and ponds are connected to the bay and teem with redfish, snook and tarpon. Actually I had fished those lakes back in the 1970s when I worked for the architect, Bill Dietsch, who was doing the design renovations. I have caught and released

some of the great, great granddaddies of some of those fish in there today.

But that was only 30 years ago, and this trip helped to uncover another 50 years of golf history that the new owners are embracing as a foundation to return the Pasadena Yacht & Country Club once again to prominence in Florida's golf community.

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