The smile eases from Tim Greenwald’s face when asked if he is looking forward to winter’s first rain. The memories of last winter, and the floods that twice forced the closure of 18 holes is still fresh in his mind. “Without question the biggest challenge I’ve ever faced in my turfgrass career,” Greenwald states, “I can’t imagine how it could possibly be any worse.” Greenwald describes the day after the March 10th flood as a scene of total destruction. What had been the day before, a serene hole golf course bisected by the serene Tarmel River had been transformed into a scene that could have provided a set for a Hollywood disaster movie. Mother Nature had struck again, this time her footprint would be left for months, for all to see.

The first task the following morning for Greenwald and his staff was to assess course conditions. Greenwald set out on foot, video camera in hand, and realized very shortly that his number one priority was to remove silt from the greens. Fifteen greens in all were covered in silt, ranging in thickness from several inches, to several feet. Removing the silt proved to be a tedious task. Hand shovels and water were used to scrape and wash the soupy mud onto the collars and green surrounds. After four days the job was complete and Greenwald’s attention now turned to developing an 18 hole golf course that would allow Rancho Cañada to reopen. “We combined ten holes from the East Course and eight holes from the West Course,” Greenwald remembers, “utilizing holes on the north side of the river.” For lack of a better name the new look golf course was referred to as the “Dream 18” by the staff, a name that helped has also served as the site for numerous qualifying tournaments and most recently the U.S. Senior Amateur.

Our Host

Tim Greenwald has served as the Golf Course Superintendent at Rancho Cañada for the past 10 years. Tim began his career in Golf Course Management at Quail Lodge, located in Carmel Valley, where he was involved in the TARP program. A native of Michigan, Tim was involved in the lawn care industry before he ventured out to California in 1979. Under Tim’s guidance, Rancho Cañada has served as the host course for the Christmas Party several times. The tournament has carried the name of former Rancho Cañada Superintendent, Larry Lloyd.