

THRU THE GREEN

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The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California

— Committed to Responsible Turfgrass Management —

Poppy's Sousa Meets The Challenge

One would think that an advantage of being at a relatively new course would mean the majority of your attention would be directed towards maintenance as opposed to construction. Not so for Manny Sousa, course superintendent at Monterey's distinguished Poppy Hills Golf Course, site of this year's Larry Lloyd Memorial Golf Tournament.

Sousa, now entering his ninth year as the superintendent, says there hasn't been much time in the last eight years when he hasn't been involved in some form of construction project, the most recent of which was a new teaching complex. A brief project summary includes: green re-contouring, bunker replacement and renovation, concrete cart paths, and drainage. All this plus annually preparing for a PGA tour event in the dead middle of winter.

For those of you who have never had the experience of playing Poppy Hills, you are in for a treat. Sousa describes the Robert Trent Jones layout as a shot makers course, where hitting landing areas are critical. Bunkers are abundant around the greens and when you get there, expect plenty of undula-

tions on greens that range in size from 6,500 to 8,500 square feet (you'll need your long putting game).

A fifteen year NorCal member, Sousa just completed his 23rd year in the business. He previously served as the superintendent at Lake Wildwood for eight years and was the Assistant at neighboring MPCC for seven years. Sousa credits MPCC superintendent, Bob Zoller and his father John as playing instrumental roles in his career.

Hosting a tournament among your peers, can be an unnerving experience, particularly in early December. For Sousa and his Poppy Hills staff, challenges such as this have become a way of life. Sousa, in fact, finds the challenge exciting. Tournament chairman, Forrest Arthur is excited too. "We really made an effort this year to provide the members with an outstanding event. Poppy's reputation as a golf facility speaks for itself. This year we've included a pre-golf breakfast as an extra touch. Our Party site is one of the best on the peninsula, and offers the convenience of lodging on site. "In many respects this year's event will determine the future direction of the Holiday event," Arthur said. We will let the membership decide through their support which way we will go.

Institute Lives Up To Billing

The 1997 Golf Course Superintendent's Institute lived up to its advanced billing as the premier educational event of the year. The over 115 members in attendance, particularly those who hung on until the end, were treated to one of the most informative Institute programs on record.

Program Cochairman, Bob Costa, CGCS, heaped praise on fellow committee members while discussing the success of the event. "This was the 7th Institute I have been associated with as a committee member," Costa said. "I think we all knew that we had something special as the topic outline began to unfold." Costa credits long time committee member Brian Bagley with developing the theme for this year's program. "Brian always finds a way to make a contribution, he's been a valuable resource and we look forward to his input next year." Committee newcomers, Dave Davies, CGCS, and Gary Carls, CGCS, also played instrumental roles. "Gary's help with the tournament and registration were invaluable down the stretch," said Costa and Davies, the self proclaimed man with no opinion, contributed greatly with speaker recommendations.

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