

THRU THE GREEN

April, 1998



The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California

— Committed to Responsible Turfgrass Management —

Swint, Castlewood Host Annual Meeting

Outgoing President Blake Swint and Castlewood Country Club, a familiar site for GCSANC events, played host to the 1998 Annual Meeting on April 6th.

Swint, a GCSANC member since 1985, began working on a golf course at age 12, and realized during his senior year in high school that he wanted to be a superintendent. "At the time I knew that with my high cut off the tee that I would never be a good player or professional golfer," Swint laughs. And so his golf management career began, first as a night waterman at Skywest Golf Court in Hayward, followed by a stint as the Assistant Superintendent at Orinda Country Club in 1979.

In 1985 Swint got the break every aspiring superintendent dreams of, his first superintendent job at Sequoyah Country

Club. 1991 marked the start of Swint's tenure at Castlewood, where he has been busy since his arrival. For example, the Valley course recently underwent a major renovation of all its greens and bunkers and the installation of a greens only irrigation system. Followed by 12 tees, which are presently in the process of being rebuilt. The Hill Course, hasn't escaped the blade of a dozer either. The entire irrigation system has been replaced and 11 greens, 12 tees and cart paths are scheduled for construction during the next three years. The uniqueness of Castlewood can be traced back to its roots. Resting on the lands of Phoebe Hearst, the Hill Course was designed by Bill Bell and constructed in the 1920's. The Valley Course followed in the 1950's. The recent renovations were the result of a masterplan developed by John Harbottle, who worked hard to retain the Bill Bell, George Thomas style of architecture. What makes Castlewood so special says Swint is its location. "It's a beautiful piece of land that was chosen by the Hearst family during the last century." Prior to the development of the region, an abundance of prominent people were entertained on the grounds.

Swint's love of the profession and the game were echoed in his final thoughts. "I have always had a passion for the game of golf and a desire to provide good playing conditions for those who play.

Research Pinpoints Best Case Scenario For Annual Bluegrass Control

By Steve Stringer

Tourism isn't the only thing that thrives year-round in California's central coast region. Annual bluegrass or *Poa annua* also flourishes in the area's moderate climate. A profuse seeder which grows well at any height of cut, *Poa annua* invades turf when competition from other grasses is weak.

"Annual bluegrass is a tenacious weed that germinates throughout the year here," says Mark M. Mahady, a turf consultant based in Carmel Valley. "It is invasive in all turf types in this area. We have wider windows of germination than other parts of the country due to our very moderate coastal climate. Annual bluegrass will go into a decline during August and September, but with regular irrigation on a golf course, it proliferates even under summer conditions."

Mahady recently completed a field research trail studying Progress® Herbicide for Control of *Poa annua* under rough conditions at the Pebble Beach Golf Links. The course maintains a solid stand of perennial ryegrass in fairways and rough areas and wanted to gain better control of *Poa* throughout the year. In addition to determining the best rates of Progress to use, Mahady was charged with studying the best timing and frequency of application. The study was completed under a cooperative agreement between Pebble Beach and AgrEvo, manufacturer of Progress.

Continued on Page 5 Bluegrass Control

Family Day Planned For May

Developing creative ways to increase member involvement has been a recent objective for GCSANC Board Member, Mike Nunemacher. More family oriented meetings is what Nunemacher proposed to the Board as an alternative to the regular monthly meeting. Working in conjunction with the Sierra Nevada Chapter, Nunemacher announced plans for a joint family event in May. "We're in the process of working out the details to attend a Sunday A's game," Nunemacher reported. "Prior to the game a picnic or BBQ is being planned."

"The objective is to bring members together in a different environment than golf," said Nunemacher, "and to involve the family as well." Details of the event will be made available in early April.

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important if the course hosts a large number of outside events. Moreover, the construction costs are likely to be more favorable, since there is economy in scale. In some cases parts of the plan can be implemented by the maintenance crew. This usually involves minor drainage repairs, tree removal or planting, or minor renovations to bunkers and tees. However, extensive remodeling, such as the reconstruction of all the greens or installation of a new irrigation system, will require an experienced golf course contractor.

The undertaking of a long range improvement plan requires a strong commitment from the golf course leadership if it's to succeed. In addition, the construction work as a result of the long range plan is not painless, causing disruption to the normal business routine. But these are the necessary things that must occur if the golf course is to realize its full potential over the ensuing years.

Bluegrass Control (Cont'd)

Multiple Application Sequences

"Prograss is a product that should be used in multiple application sequences for best effectiveness," explains Mahady. "Because Poa germinates in different flushes, the product should be used several times to assure control. So we looked at the number of applications that were most efficient in controlling annual bluegrass. The two prime periods of germination here are November through January and then March through May."

Using a rough area on the 14th hole, Mahady studied various rates and timing for two years, replicating all field trials four times to be statistically sound. Mahady sprayed only the left hand sides of the 10-foot-wide, 15-foot-long plots, so that each treatment plot contained an in-plot check. "We could always tell the true level of control with the multiples applications," he notes. "There were dynamic differences between treated and untreated areas."

Mahady's research results revealed that the one-gallon-per-acre rate of Prograss applied five times per year at specific intervals provided the best year-round control of annual bluegrass. Specific application timing was mid-October, late November, early March, mid-April and late May. Before his Prograss research began, the rough area contained about 23% annual bluegrass cover. Using the rates and sequence described, applications of Prograss resulted in 95% control of annual bluegrass.

Prograss Offers Valuable Features

"Prograss offers a number of features that are very valuable to golf course superintendents and other turf managers," Mahady

Bluegrass Control concludes on page 6

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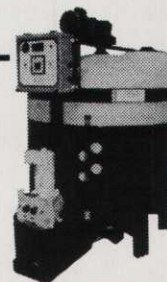
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Boardroom Briefs

• Dave Sexton, CGCS, performed the annual review of the GC-SANC books and accounting procedures. Dave reported that he was satisfied with the manner in which the Board, and Association Secretary, Barbara Mikel had managed the finances of the Association.

• Jeff Ball, a recent arrival to northern California from Florida, made a brief presentation to the Board suggesting that they consider funding an economic survey to determine the impact of golf in California. In addition, Jeff recommended the development of a 60 second promo video related to golf and the environment.

• Secretary/Treasurer, Gary Carls, CGCS, announced that a portion of the scholarship reserve account had been transferred to Golf Links Credit Union. Golf Links Credit Union access is available to GCSAA members.

• Affiliate representative John Holmquist presented to the Board a draft of the long awaited sponsorship program. John has been working in conjunction with Bob Costa in the development of this program. John reports the plan is to introduce the program to the affiliates at the upcoming Annual Meeting. Sponsorship opportunities would be available beginning in January, 1999.

• Mike Nunemacher announced plans to arrange a joint family day

venture with members from the Sierra Nevada chapter. The family gathering would be centered upon attending an A's game on Sunday, sometime during late May. Stay tuned for details.

• Program Chairman, Gary Carls, CGCS, reported that the dates and location for the Superintendent/Pro Tournament have been changed. The new tentative date and site is July 21st at the soon to open Wentz Golf Course in Livermore.

• The Board of Directors unanimously voted against making a five year commitment to support the GCSAA Foundation through a joint state contribution. The Board is exploring making some form of a contribution to the Foundation, directly to GCSAA.

• Wayne Lindelof, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee announced his selection committee has chosen five students as recipients of CGCSANC Scholarships. Presentations were made on April 6th at the Annual Meeting.

• Bob Costa, CGCS, reported to the Board that a letter informing the affiliates of the new advertising program, is in the draft state. A plan to include limited advertising in the Membership Directory was also proposed and approved by the Board. Costa also announced that GCSANC member superintendent, Brian Bagley, will be featured in the next issue of California Fairways.

Bluegrass Control (Conclusion)

reports. "First of all, the product provides both a preemergence and postemergence of control of annual bluegrass with multiple applications. Prograss had been looked at as a preemergence product with some level of postemergence activity. We found that if we didn't irrigate immediately following a Prograss application, we enhanced postemergence activity. This led us to believe that in our control area, Prograss provides more of a defined postemergence effect that previously observed.

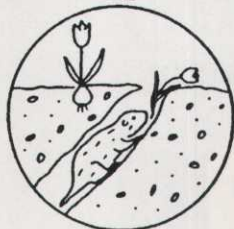
"Secondly, observations in this field and in field trials in Southern California indicate that Prograss does not affect the germination or normal development of perennial ryegrass. This is doubly important because more and more golf course superintendents are using

perennial ryegrass as the selected turf type for roughs and fairways. In essence, superintendents don't have to worry about timing Prograss applications around overseeding programs."

Superintendents throughout the Pacific Northwest may be able to extrapolate certain aspects of these results to their own conditions. Annual bluegrass is a specific annual weed problem in those locations, as well as in central California. Outside coastal areas, the Prograss program should perform even better because extreme summer heat reduces *Poa annua* infestations during summer months.

"Prograss is a very effective product for treating annual bluegrass in solid stands of perennial ryegrass," says Mahady. "There's no doubt about it, it works very well."

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