Golf course superintendents by nature develop a unique relationship with the property they manage, but for Harding Park Golf Course superintendent Pat Macaulay, his is a labor of love.

A native San Franciscan, every day of Macaulay’s education— from grade school to college— was consumed in the shadows of Harding Park. For the last two years, he and his staff have executed a plan to transform the newly-renovated public golf course from one that generates nearly 80,000 recreational rounds annually to one that will host a professional golf event. Macaulay will showcase his work, Oct. 6th through 9th at the World Golf Championships-American Express Championship.

It is a daunting assignment, especially at a municipal facility with the administrative demands of interacting with supervisors, organizing a staff of individuals from five different labor unions and meeting the strict management codes of the city.

“It was not an easy task,” says James G. Prusa, western regional agronomy manager of KemperSports, the group that manages the facility. “But Pat and his staff have instituted a sound agronomic program developed in concert with Jon Scott, vice president of agronomy for the PGA Tour. Pat and his staff of San Francisco municipal employees have raised the course conditioning to world class standards.”

Scott gives Macaulay and his staff high marks for the conditions of the course, especially the greens which are only 2 1/2 years old. Scott indicates that they have been disease free and still remain a pure bentgrass surface (avoiding the infestation of Poa annua grass that is common to the region).

If the age of the course and traffic did not offer enough challenge for Macaulay, Mother Nature has tested his skills. The winter months were colder and wetter than normal, and a foggy summer has strayed into fall. The excessive moisture combined with the lack of sunlight could impact the firmness of the course, but at this point all parties believe the conditions are at the desired quality.