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## THRU THE GREEN

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Northern California

## From The President

As I sit here looking out of my office window at a very soggy and wet golf course (two inches last night). I am reminded of what a great job of course preparation Tim Greenwald and his crew performed on Rancho Cañada prior to our golf tournament and Christmas Party. The whole tournament and dinner was very successful and this was due to the efforts of many people. Blake Swint and Forrest Arthur were responsible for the golf format and worked very closely with Bob Costa and his staff at Rancho Cañada to assure a successful event. A special thanks is also due the Golf Pro . . . . . and his staff for their help in setting up and scoring the golf.

So, thanks again to all of those people who helped to make this year's Christmas Party special. Even Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

By the time you read this, I am sure that you are signed up for one or both of the GCSAA Regional Seminars on January 8th and 9th. Topics are "The Superintendent as a Grow-in Manager" and "Risk Management". By your support of these National Seminars you are also supporting your local chapter.

Also on tap for January 16th is a General Meeting to be held at Palo Alto Hills Country Club. No golf that day, but a great opportunity to find out about your Association, the National Association and what direction we're headed in. The main speaker will be Steve Mona, GCSAA's Chief Executive Officer. He will be answering questions regarding policy, the affiliation agreement or any other topic you are interested in. This is the meeting to bring your concerns, your ideas, your input and your complaints. Whatever it is, we want to hear about it. If it concerns the Association it is important to all of us.

On behalf of myself and the Board of Directors, I would like to convey the wish for a Happy New Year to every member of our Association and their families. Especially the families who support us and understand that they do come first. See you.

Joseph Rodriguez, CGCS  
President



Joseph Rodriguez, CGCS  
GCSANC President 1996-1997

## Office Notes

By: Barbara Mikel

Happy New Year! I can't believe 1996 is history. Membership cards are being distributed as renewals are received. If you haven't renewed by this time, you will be assessed a last charge. Don't delay another minute. I will have to drop your name from membership at the end of this month if I don't have your renewal. If you allow this to happen, you must start the new membership application process. Application fees are considerably more expensive than even renewals with a late charge.

I have received some membership questionnaire forms with membership classifications changed. If you have a question regarding your membership class, please call the office or Wayne Lindelof, membership chairman. We have a procedure to use to change membership classifications. Classification descriptions are found in the Bylaws located in your Membership Directory.

## Did You Know?

Researchers at the UCLA School of Public Health have found that workers who use back support devices have one-third fewer back injuries. The Southern California Injury Prevention Center examined the records of 36,000 workers at 77 Home Depot Stores in California. The study concluded back supports can help reduce back injuries among workers who do a lot of lifting. The researchers recommend that proper training combined with back belts for repetitive lifting should be part of a back injury prevention program.

## USGA

### Evaluating New Grasses For Use On Putting Greens - A Practical Approach

by: Pat Gross, Western Region Agronomist, USGA Green Section

**H**ow do you go about selecting the best possible turfgrass variety for use on your putting greens? Read the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) reports? Read the sales literature? Visit your local university and take a look at their turf plots? Talk to the superintendent next door and see what he's using? Put the new grasses on your nursery and see which one is best? Maybe you are doing all of the above. With all of the new creeping bentgrasses and hybrid bermudagrasses, it is sometimes difficult to muddle through all the information and determine which variety is best for your course.

It is always good to start by gathering as much scientific information as possible and consider grasses that have been tested for a minimum of three years. Historically, most superintendents have relied on the NTEP trials as a starting point. Unfortunately, NTEP data for putting greens has not been highly regarded by superintendents mainly because the tests are not usually conducted

close to their area and under similar climate conditions. University field plots, and particularly the NTEP plots, also fail to take an important factor into consideration — traffic. A new program is not underway to evaluate cultivar performance under real world conditions. The GCSAA, NTEP, and USGA have come up with a project to build fifteen practice greens in difference climatic regions throughout the United States that will contain relicated plots of twenty different creeping bentgrass varieties. Eventually, the new hybrid bermudagrass will also be evaluated. The practice greens will be maintained just like the other greens on the golf course and will be subjected to normal traffic and wear. This will provide better data that can be used as a guideline to make an informed decision.

While this program may not answer all the questions of how a particular grass will perform at your golf course, it will provide more useful information under real world conditions. It is still best to plant the top

four or five varieties in your putting green nursery to gain first hand experience on how these grasses will respond to your management practices and growing conditions.

Breeding efforts over the past ten years have produced new creeping bentgrass cultivars with finer texture, improved density, lower water use rate, better stress tolerance, and many other positive attributes. With so many more choices available, it seems we are getting closer to having specialized grasses that fulfill specific needs in various areas of the country. While all of these varieties look great in the test plots, it is difficult to predict how they will perform at your particular golf course, especially under traffic conditions. It is hoped that this new turfgrass evaluation program will answer some of these questions and provide additional information on specific management practices for different regions of the country. ♦

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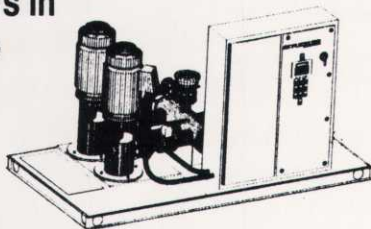


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## I'll Be Home For Christmas ...and Beyond

By Bob Costa

While most superintendents are taking a breather from the daily pressure and stress of summer, three NorCal Superintendents and their staffs are getting ready to face the biggest challenge of their season — preparing their respective courses for the arrival of touring pros and television cameras, better known as the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.

Serious thoughts of a winter vacation won't come any time soon for superintendent Mark Michaud (Pebble Beach), Eric Johnson (Spyglass Hill) or Manny Sousa (Poppy Hills). They'll have to wait at least until after the first Sunday in February. Only when the last shot of the Otters bobbing in the Pacific fades from the viewers screen, will they know it's time to relax.

For Poppy Hills superintendent Manny Sousa a veteran of six AT&T Pro-Am's the pressure is already on. "We've already begun our tournament preparation," Sousa said when I cornered him for a few moments in early December. "At this stage we're concentrating on increasing the rough height, which will be maintained at 2.5 inches throughout the tournament. Our focus is to try to get the height as uniform as possible. We're also concentrating on repairing any thin areas that may affect playability. At about the four week mark, we will concentrate on blocking off portions of the tees likely to be used during the tournament."

With Sousa's and his staff's experience, successfully meeting the rigorous PGA Tour standards is all a function of schedul-

ing. "The challenge," Sousa says, "is adjusting to changes in weather." Winter storms can play havoc with even the best laid plans. Last year's event brings back vivid memories of those challenges as Sousa and his fellow superintendents battled weather that eventually resulted in the controversial decision to cancel the tournament. Sousa recalls all the hard work that went into preparing the course that ill fated weekend, only to receive word that the tournament was cancelled. "What frustrated me the most was the effort of so many people — all the planning and preparation, and then just like that, it was over. Sure I was let down, all of us who were a part of the tournament were."

In spite of last year's disappointment Sousa says he looks forward each year to the challenge of being a part of one of the PGA Tours most prestigious events. "I still look forward to each year with the same anticipation," Sousa says. "Each year we try to improve our preparation by noting what we've learned from previous years."

The challenges which face Sousa and his staff each year are not limited exclusively to preparing the course for tournament play. They include handling the nuances of the thousand of spectators that will descend upon the course during the tournament week. Placement of thousand of feet of rope, power, water, restroom facilities and grandstands all have to be coordinated by Sousa and the Poppy Hills staff. "Our goal is to have all those items in place by the end of the advance week, but invariably we're out there pounding stakes and stringing rope

right up until tournament time."

Sousa's Tournament week schedule includes a daily 7:00 a.m. meeting with PGA officials. "We discuss general course conditions and any concerns they may have regarding playability," says Sousa. The Poppy Hills staff under Sousa, and course Assistant Superintendent P.J. Spellman II's direction begin their day at 5:30 a.m. As one would expect, the set up includes, daily mowing of greens, tees, cup changing and bunker raking. After a brief break during the tournament, the staff is back out at 2:00 p.m. often working right up until dark.

With all the planning, preparation and execution required for a tournament of this magnitude, you would think that when it's over it must be quite a let down. "So what does it feel like?" I asked Sousa. "My initial reaction is - Oh my gosh! It's over, we made it. There is no doubt a sense of relief and accomplishment. We're fortunate in the sense that the tournament runs for just three days at Poppy Hills. On Sunday, I usually just relax, enjoy the tournament and visit with friends." For Mark Michaud and his Pebble Beach staff, relaxing will have to wait one more day. ♦

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## Be a Fixer, Not A Finger-Pointer

Problems are the natural offspring of change, so you'll see plenty of them in the years to come. Build a name for yourself as a problem solver, and you'll be a valuable person to have around.

Organizations need people who can take care of problems, not merely point them out. Too many employees get this confused. They seem to think complaining is a constructive act. Their keen on identifying all of the problems - often in an accusing, blaming fashion - but contribute little towards improving things. Their attitude is "Upper Management is supposed to make it all work. We'll sit back, watch them struggle and second guess their solutions."

As employees, in fact, as an entire society, we've gotten unbelievably good at the blame game. We're experts at dodging personal responsibility and using our energy to criticize and complain instead. This carries a terrific cost. So long as we search beyond ourselves for solutions, we disempower ourselves. You might say that even as we commit the crime and blame someone else. We also become the victim.

Even when we find someone else to blame for our circumstances, we win a hollow victory. It may feel good for the moment to get ourselves off the hook, but it perpetuates the problem.

Finger-pointing does not position us to do our part - that only we can do - toward workable solutions.

We've come to expect too much from our institutions, and too little of ourselves as individuals. In the long haul, it simply doesn't work. The organization's values grow out of individual employees values. The organization's results are merely the accumulation of singular people's results..

So instead of being a finger-pointer, and rather than trying to single out somebody to blame, assume ownership of problems. Let the solutions start with you. You'll increase your odds of career success. ♦

### Quick Quotes

*"We have only one person to blame, and that's each other."*


— Larry Breck —



Dave Scattergood  
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Randy Finken

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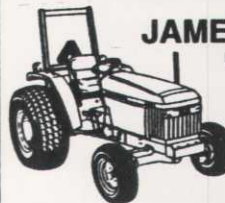
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## Naumann's Norcal News

**Dave Smith**, longtime Northern California Golf Course Superintendent is the new Supt. at El Rancho Verde Golf Course in Rialto. He was the Supt. at Micke Grove prior to his move . . . . **Bob Zoller** is smiling a lot more these days, he has just finished building a new maintenance facility at the Monterey Peninsula Country Club. Included is a new mechanics shop, separate fertilizer and chemical storage units, equipment storage bays, employees lunch and locker rooms and a supt. office. . . .

## Tournament Results - Rancho Cañada

### Superintendent's Division

1st Low Gross	Mike Garvale	72
2nd Low Gross	Forrest Arthur	74
3rd Low Gross	Ross Brownlie	75
4th Low Gross	David Hayes	76
5th Low Gross	Bruce Olsen	78
1st Low Net	Brad Langley	68
2nd Low Net	Dave Davies	69
3rd Low Net	Gary Carls	70
4th Low Net	Ernie Martin	71
5th Low Net	Roger Robarge	71

### Affiliate/Guest Division

1st Low Gross	Mike Ligon	74
2nd Low Gross	Mitch Frasier	86
3rd Low Gross	Jack Holt	86
1st Low Net	John Parodi	67
2nd Low Net	Steve Franzen	68
3rd Low Net	Emil Yappert	69

### Specialty Holes

Closest to Pin #3	Larry Norman	7' 2.5"
Closest to Pin #7	Roger Robarge	9' 0"
Closest to Pin #11	Eric Johnson	13' 5"
Closest to Pin #16	Mike Ligon	112' 9.25"
Long Drive	David Hayes	
Accuracy Drive	Mike Camello	1' 2"
Superintendent's		
Closest to Pin For TV	Ray Story	8' 8"

## Grass Carp Permit Fee Proposal

Proposed regulations have been issued by the California Fish and Game Commission to implement expansion of the Authority to use grass carp to control aquatic vegetation in golf course ponds within Imperial, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

**The regulations as proposed would establish permit fees as follows:** Permit application fee: \$750.00 per application plus \$500.00 for each noncontiguous pond to be stocked. Renewal fee: \$250.00 per renewal, plus \$175.00 for each non contiguous pond to be stocked.

The California Golf Course Superintendents Association has taken the position that these fees are prohibitively high and will effectively kill the program. California Superintendents are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed regulation. The commission has agreed to postpone action on the regulations which was scheduled for December 6, 1996.

For copies of the proposed regulations, please contact Cynthia Kelly, JD, GCSAA Government Relations Counsel at (910) 832-4459 or ckelly@gcsaa.org.

### Send Written Comments to:

Mr. Ronald Pelsman  
Assistant Executive Director  
Fish and Game Commission  
Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244  
(910) 653-4899

## Hearings on Power Equipment Scheduled

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) reports that hearings on **emission regulations in California** are expected to begin in December. OPEI is seeking superintendents willing to testify about the potential adverse impact of the existing California small engine regulations on their operations in terms of being forced to purchase substantially more expensive equipment and reduced product offerings. Contact William Guerry, Jr., at (202) 342-8858 or wmg@colshan.com if interested



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## 65th Anniversary Committee Formed

June 6, 1997 will mark the 65th Anniversary of GCSANC, a fete so noteworthy that a committee is being formed to organize special events and develop commemorative items to publicize and acknowledge this special date in our professional history.

Formed under the name Northern California Greenskeeper Association the first meeting took place at the clubhouse Presidio Golf Club. The founding members included Will Rodgers - Contra Costa Golf Club, H. Sam Smith - Union League Golf Club, William Mayre - Presidio Golf Club, T. D. Macfarlane - Claifornia Golf Club, and Roy Hanna from Castlewood Golf Club.

Committee members Barbara Mikel, Randy Gai, Bob Costa, Cliff and Myrtle Wagoner, are interested in obtaining any bits of historical information pertaining to our Associations past. If you have something to offer, or would like to participate on the committee, contact Barbara Mikel, or Joseph Rodriguez

## Thank You, Thank You Very Much

Special thanks are due to: Host Superintendent, **Tim Greenwald** his assistant **George Young**, and the Rancho Cañada maintenance staff for a great effort in preparing the course in light of over a half inch of rain which fell the day before the tournament. **Todd Pontii**, PGA professional and his staff for their assistance. **Geoff McBreen**, Food and Beverage Director and staff. **Blake Swint** and **Forrest Arthur** Tournament Coordinators. **Santa Claus** and his stunning and beautiful wife, **Mrs. Claus** and . . . . .

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