



■ *Number 10, 371 Yards, Par 4*
Photo by Daniel Zelazek

A scenic view of a golf course. In the foreground, a wooden bridge spans across a body of water. The middle ground shows a well-maintained green golf course with a clubhouse in the distance. The background is filled with tall pine trees under a clear sky.

SAN JOSE COUNTRY CLUB

A Traditional Family-Style Club

By Joel Jackson, CGCS

Born in the Florida land boom of the Roaring 20s, the San Jose County Club was envisioned as a resort and a planned community on the eastern shore of the St. Johns River just five miles south of the heart of downtown Jacksonville. Back in those boom days, the San Jose site was accessible by boat on the river on its western boundary and by car and train as U.S. Highway 1 and the Florida East Coast Railroad ran north and south just east of the property.

Those booming 1920s saw a number of Donald Ross golf courses built across Florida, and the original San Jose course was one of them when it opened in 1925. But the land boom was followed

by the historic bust and depression of the early 1930s and the course languished as a daily fee facility until 1947 when 300 members organized, bought the course and created the private club that exists today. There are 15 of those charter members still active in the club, and the membership spans generations of families from grandparents to grandchildren.

It is that sense of belonging and family that leads Director of Golf Course and Grounds Clayton Estes, CGCS to call San Jose “a traditional Old Florida style club.”

Estes says, “Our members live here, work here, play here and eat here. There is a strong family atmosphere here. They utilize the club to the maximum from the formal Saturday night and holi-



The recently remodeled clubhouse is a classic backdrop for the 408 yard, 18th hole. Photo by Daneil Zelazek.

day dinners to business lunches during the week. The junior golf program has been expanded thanks to the efforts of Head Golf Professional Todd Bork. The kids split time in the summer between the swimming pool and the golf course.

“Lots of the junior golfers walk the course since the 1920s-style course design kept greens and tees close together. In fact almost 25 percent of our play, of all ages, is walkers. We don’t have a formal caddy program, but some folks bring their own. The clubhouse just completed a major renovation which provided better access to the club’s dining and meeting areas, and there are plans for a display area to showcase some of Donald Ross’ original sketches of the course and other historical memorabilia of the club.”

But the clubhouse isn’t the only focal point on the property for socializing. Twice a year the members are invited down to the maintenance facility. There is a golf course maintenance appreciation tournament in February, and everyone meets at the shop after golf for a barbecue dinner and to thank the staff for its efforts. Proceeds from the event go to course projects like landscaping and lightning protection. In October the maintenance facility hosts a member/member event with a square-dance caller and country and western band. Around Christmas time, Estes and the green committee host a staff/vendor tournament. The event has become so popular that Estes has had to make it an invitation-only affair.

Even though the course sits in a densely populated suburban area, the mature trees and shrubs conceal most of the houses, maintaining that parkland atmosphere traditional to the old Ross courses.

The club is located on SR 13 (San Jose Blvd.), which parallels the St. Johns River from Jacksonville to Palatka. The property is bounded by waterways and wetlands. Christopher Creek lies to the north, Pottsburg Creek Swamp to the east, Goodbys Creek to the south and of course the St. Johns about 300 yards to the west. Being in this watershed environment requires Estes to be ever

mindful of his management programs so they don’t add to the environmental impact of the residential development surrounding the course.

To be a good provider for the members, a good neighbor to the residents and a good steward of the environment of the area, Estes and his staff use sound Integrated Pest Management techniques and follow Best Management Practices to minimize chemical and fertilizer inputs on the course and grounds.

Says Estes, “We have established a 15-

foot no-spray setback around all water bodies. We also raise the height of cut on the lake banks to five inches to help filter any possible runoff. Whenever we must control weeds, turf disease, or insect infestations, we do so by only spot treating with small hand-operated sprayers and do not use large boom-type sprayers. That gives us precise control of the applications in those sensitive areas.”

Estes says his secret weapon for safe, efficient pest control on the golf course is Scott Strickland.

“Scott is a 10-year veteran of San Jose and the key to our success is his commitment to scouting and mapping of pest infestations. Through his diligence and vigilance we apply fewer pesticides and only when and where they are needed to control a problem. This is good business and good stewardship.

“We are currently alternating Merit and Chipco Choice applications to control grubs and mole crickets. We did treat 20 acres on our fairways with Curfew with good results. If we do develop any hot spots, we tend to use Orthene for control. But we rely on Scott’s scouting and mapping and soap flushes to ID problem areas and we treat only those problem areas.

“Fire ants can be a problem anywhere in the south. We keep our course clean by making applications of Award fire ant bait in the spring and fall. Any mounds that are spotted are also baited with Award. Nematodes are only a real recurring problem on No. 4 fairway, No. 5 approach and can be a concern on the 2.5 acres of greens and tees and roughly 10 acres of fairway mounds. I have become a believer in using humic acid to improve the soil CEC (cation exchange coefficient) and stimulate the soil microbes. I feel this improves the turf root development and

Clayton Estes, CGCS

Originally from: Torrance, Cal.

Family: Wife JoAnne; son Jimi; Chuey, a yellow Lab; Buster, a Lab/Springer mix; and Monroe a 15-year-old tabby.

Education: A.S. golf course operations from Lake City Community College

Employment history: 1980 TPC, Jacksonville (OJT); 1980-83 Bardmoor, Largo (J.C. Penney

Classic) assistant superintendent; 1983-84 Bobby Jones GC, Sarasota, superintendent; 1984-85 Caloosa GC, Sun City Center, superintendent; 1986-89 Onion Creek, Austin, Tex. (Liberty Legends of Golf) superintendent; 1989-95 TPC Prestancia, Sarasota (Chrysler Cup and Senior PGA Q-School) superintendent; 1995 - present, San Jose CC, director of golf course & landscape grounds.

Professional affiliations and awards: NFGCSA, FGCSA, GCSAA, FTGA. President of NFGCSA 1999-2000. Currently NFGCSA external vice presi-

dent. Award: Received the Nicklaus Award for Superintendent of the Year in 1987 while at Onion Creek.

Mentors: My dad who taught me the game of golf at age 6. He wanted to go to LCCC for the GCO program, but he never got to, so I did. My grandfather who worked at Big Sandy GC in north Georgia after retiring from the farming and fencing business. Alan Maccurach was a friend and mentor who helped me tremendously in my career path.

Goals/Accomplishments/Advice: My goal is to be the best superintendent I can be. So far I feel I’ve had a well-rounded career working on all types of courses from private, daily fee, municipal and corporate owned. I’ve had the opportunity to prepare courses for several televised professional events. My advice to the younger folks would be to leave work inside the gate. It will be there tomorrow. Let your spouse/family know up front that there will be periods of time when they won’t see you for days and maybe weeks on end due to your job responsibilities.

Memorable moments: My 15 minutes of fame came during an internationally televised event when I was interviewed on how we were restoring four greens that someone dug up with a shovel just in time for the Sunday round of the 1993 LPGA Chrysler Cup.

Hobbies: Fishing





The par 3, 12th hole is guarded by one of the three lakes on the golf course which come into play on nine or ten holes. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

results in less pest pressure, which also means applying fewer pesticides.

"To minimize a lot of post emergent applications for weed control we make two pre-emergent herbicide applications (Dimension) with our spring and summer fairway and rough fertilizer applications, and we make one Spray-Hawk walking boom application of Barricade and Surflan to unseeded areas in the fall prior to overseeding. Scott then takes the 24-gallon electric sprayer and applies the pre-emergent to the bunker faces.

"This year we will oversee the fairways. We skip overseeding every third year to clean up the Poa annua, which gets out of control if you overseed continuously. The greens were seeded on Oct. 7 this year and then Mother Nature threw record-high temperatures at us two weeks later. But now that it has turned cooler they are coming along nicely. We started with 8 pounds of Poa trivialis per thousand square feet and will 'dust' them with follow-up applications of 2 lbs/M as needed not to exceed 16 lbs/M overall.

"When we fertilize our fairway and rough areas, which are done three times a year, we do not spread those no-spray areas with the tractor-mounted equipment. We use walking spreaders so we can better control the coverage of the material and make sure it doesn't get too close to the water. The Poly-on fertilizers we use are a polymer-coated product, which releases the nutrients slowly for rapid turf uptake which prevents any nitrates from leaching into the ground water. This past year we also applied calcium silicate as part of our program to achieve a quicker pH response and to strengthen the turf against disease pressure in the late fall season which can be cloudy, wet and stressful to the turfgrass."

Turf stresses can also be brought on by soil conditions.

"Actually the native soil is pretty sandy, but a lot of river bottom got dredged up and used as fill on the course. We have areas of blue clay, marl and fine sands spread over the course," Estes said. To

TURF TOUGH. TURF TENDER.



Kubota gives you a range of affordable compact utility tractors for turf and landscape work. They are tough and tender at the same time.

Tough: Handle all the different landscaping and grounds maintenance jobs you need to get done with Kubota's Performance-Matched loaders and backhoes, plus operate tillers, mowers, sprayers, snow blowers and more.

Tender: You can choose standard turf tires, Galaxy turf special tires for a light step on the turf or R4 industrial tires for multi-purpose use.

Your Kubota dealer can help you choose the powerful, versatile, affordable model that's best for your work and your budget.

See One Of These Kubota Dealers Today!

BRADENTON
Franz Tractor Company
5504 15th Street, E.
941-755-5722

CRESTVIEW
Wise Equipment Sales & Service
1147 South Ferdon Blvd.
850-682-3366

DELAND
Triple D Equipment
2820 S. Firehouse Road
386-734-2119
tripledeq@worldnet.att.net

FT. MYERS
Creel Tractor Company
3771 Palm Beach Blvd.
941-694-2185

FT. PIERCE
Pippin Tractor
3200 Kings Highway
800-332-7896

HOMESTEAD
Richards Tractors & Implement
1995 N.E. 8th Street
305-247-8711

LAND O' LAKES
Gulf Coast Tractor & Equipment
3827 Land O' Lakes Blvd. (Hwy. 41)
813-995-2533

PLANT CITY
Gulf Coast Turf & Tractor
404 N. Frontage Road
813-764-0603

Kubota Everything you value.

Kubota Tractor Corporation markets a full line of tractors and construction equipment through a nationwide network of over 1000 authorized dealers.





The park-like atmosphere of the Donald Ross design is evident in this shot of #7 green with the 8th hole in the background. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

compensate for the reduced percolation of these fine-grained soil types, Estes instituted a regular deep-tine aerification program in 1996. Using a Soil Reliever, Estes aerifies the entire course at least once per year. The tees are done an additional two times per year and the greens are done once by Estes' crew and

twice a year by a contract service.

The greens at San Jose are Tifdwarf and maintained to roll 8.0 - 8.5 on the stimpmeter to compensate for the undulations on the challenging greens. But like so many courses of its generation, the greens have a certain amount of off-type contam-

ination which shows up prominently in the summer time with the close cut and necessary verticutting practices. Estes has replanted the practice green by the clubhouse with TifEagle ultradwarf for the members to evaluate for a possible change in the future.

During the winter season, when less disruption to the putting surfaces can be tolerated, Estes aerifies with solid tines on the greens, but he has added his own innovation to the process.

"We aerify with standard concrete star-drill bits instead of using the stock tapered solid tines for two reasons. First, I think they create more surface area for a more effective hole for air and water exchange and they seem to be even less disruptive than the standard tine. Second, they are a lot less expensive than the standard tines."

As with any older course with lots of mature trees, Estes has to deal with shade problems.

"Rather than try to grow turf in the roughs with lots of trees, we have created pine straw natural areas, which have been self sustaining for the past three years. We just use the tractor-mounted blower to clean up the pine needles on the fairways and blow them into the natural areas. We may have to touch up the edges by hand, but it's not as labor intensive as scattering bales of pine straw like some folks have to do."

On the flip side, Estes has to contend with the loss of 20-30 trees per year due to storm damage and lightning. If a replacement tree is warranted, Estes will generally plant an oak tree judiciously so that future



Your Sand Man

- Trap Sand
- Top Dressing Sand
- Greens Mix
- Green Divot Sand

All Sands meet U.S.G.A. Specs

E. R. JAHNA INDUSTRIES, Inc.

Lake Wales, FL 33859-0840 • (863) 676-9431

San Jose Country Club



San Jose Country Club

Location: Jacksonville

Ownership: Non-equity membership

Playing policy: Private. 18 holes, 6,625 yards, par 72. Course/Slope rating: 71.6/128.

Designed by: Donald Ross, opened in 1925. San Jose CC established in 1947. Renovated in 1988 by Bob Walker.

Management: Chris Chapman, club manager; Steve Apple, president; Todd Bork, head golf professional; Ladson Montgomery and Victor Zambetti, green chairmen; Nick Clark, golf professional emeritus; Krista Shaunessy, director of membership services; Clayton Estes, CGCS director of golf course and grounds maintenance.

(In a touch of class, Bork, Clark and Estes are all listed on the score card.)

Major renovations/Ongoing projects: Bunkers - installing/repairing drains and replacing the sand.

Total acreage under maintenance: 115 acres

Greens: Average 5,500 sq.ft., total 2.5 acres. Turf type: Tifdwarf. HOC: .110 - .170.

Overseeding: Poa trivialis @ a total of 16 lbs/1,000 sq.ft. Green speed goals: 8.0 - 8.5.

Tees: 3 acres total of Tifway 419 bermudagrass.

HOC: .475 - .600. Overseeding: perennial ryegrass @ 40 lbs/1,000 sq.ft.

Fairways: 28 acres of Tifway 419 bermudagrass.

HOC: .475 - .650. Overseeding: perennial ryegrass @ 250 lbs/acre. No overseeding this year - Clean-up year.

Roughs: 55 acres of Tifway 419 bermudagrass.

HOC: 1.0 - 1.5. No overseeding.

Bunkers: 47 sand bunkers all machine-raked with Cushman Groom Master with tines and flap attachment.

Natural areas: 12 acres of pine straw.

Waterways/Lakes: 3 lakes, total 10.4 acres designed to capture and retain storm water runoff.

Irrigation: Irrigation lake with deep-well fill as needed. Carol Childers vertical turbine pump system. Toro 670 heads, 80-foot spacing, double-row coverage. Toro Site Pro Network 8000 computer control system. Pro Plus fertigation system with variable-speed injection pump.

Total staff including superintendent: 18 - 16 full time and 2 part time working 40-hour weeks. Lake City Community College golf operations OJT students in the summer.

Leadership: Justin Jones, first assistant superintendent; James Dick, second assistant superintendent; Teresa Xander, landscape supervisor; Ed Weaver and Antonio Lopez, equipment technicians; Scott Strickland, pest control technician; Dennis Swander (LCCC student), irrigation technician; Micha Moten, a budding gospel singer and all-around good guy!

Communications: Weekly GCM staff and safety meetings; biweekly department-head meetings; monthly green committee meetings; monthly club newsletter articles.

Challenges: Our close proximity to the St. John's River requires us to be extra vigilant with our maintenance practices. Heavy soils and shaded conditions in high traffic areas.

Cultural/IPM programs: We use all slow-release granular fertilizers and also spoon feed nutrients with our fertigation system. 75% of our spray program for herbicides is done by hand with a 24-gal. sprayer. In 1996 we began an in-house, deep-tine aerification program, the first time since course was built in 1925.

Smooth—PowerSM

Soil Reliever Technology

(800) 340-3888

www.aerificationplus.com

AERIFICATION PLUS, INC.
TURFGRASS AERIFICATION AND ROOT ZONE MANAGEMENT

Fun Facts

Here are some things you may not know about our cover story superintendent

1. Car: I want to find and restore a 1959 El Camino.
2. The last good movie I saw: A Beautiful Mind.
3. I stay home to watch: Educational television, The Learning Channel, History Channel, etc.
4. The book I've been reading: The Bible. Tough reading. Small print.
5. Favorite meal: Bob Rehberg's fried snook, turnip-greens soup, broccoli slaw and Dirty Bob's hush puppies.
6. Favorite performers: Bob Seger, Pure Prairie League, Meg Ryan, George Carlin, Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker.
7. Prized possession: My dad's 1963 Farm Chemical bowling team shirt he wore when he bowled a 300 game in Louisville, Ky.
8. Personal heroes: Golf course maintenance personnel who happily go in every day and grind it out. Mark Black - he has a gift for getting peo-

ple to do what needs to be done.

9. Nobody knows that: I want to take flying lessons
10. If I could do it over: I would have spent more time with my family. Tournaments, etc. made me miss a lot of things in the early stages of our life together.
11. I'd give anything to meet: Vanna White.
12. My fantasy is: Be a contestant on Wheel of Fortune and meet Vanna White.
13. The one thing I can't stand is: Laziness.
14. If I could change one thing about myself: Increase my tolerance for stupid people
15. My most irrational act: Calling a 6-5, 250-lb. well driller, who buried his truck in a fairway, a stupid SOB. I apologized for getting my blood all over his fist.
16. My most humbling experience: Birth of my son - 12:10 AM, December 25, 1979.
17. The words that best describe me: Only just slightly obsessive compulsive.

shade will not be a problem. He leaves as many snags in place as possible, but removes any that might be a safety problem. When he has to remove a snag, he uses the cut-up tree to create brush-pile habitats and food sources in out-of-play areas.

The club is a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and Estes has helped in making the program an active part of club life.

"One of our members, Mr. Buddy Pollock, has been a tremendous resource for our pro-

gram. Mr. Pollock personally tends our feeding stations and installs and monitors our nest boxes," he said.

I asked Estes if he was working on making San Jose a certified sanctuary. "We haven't formalized the process yet, but we are doing so many of the requirements it's time for us to document them and get on with the program. I am sending Teresa Xander, our landscape supervisor to the ACSP workshop in Orlando to give her a hands-on orientation in the process to help us get started."

Getting San Jose certified would just be one more accomplishment in a career that has led Estes from Florida to Texas and back. He probably has one of the most diverse resumes I've come across in my years of profiling superintendents. This diversity of experience is a boon to San Jose as he has done everything from municipal course operations on a shoestring budget to preparing high-profile courses for television coverage of professional events.

He credits much of his on-course and career success to former PGA Tour agronomist Alan Maccarrach.

Estes said, "In my opinion American golf is where it is today because of Alan's influence. In the age of televised golf Alan was at the heart of the grooming programs and standards that were set. Those conditions set the mark that others sought to achieve on a regular basis. What I learned was that a well-conditioned golf course came about by following a sound, year-round program and did not result from

Quality is Par for the Course.



No matter how you slice it, Caterpillar® Skid Steer Loaders deliver – versatility, productivity, serviceability and ease of operation. These durable machines are tough on the job ... and easy on the turf.

Ringhaver



The performance you *want* in the size you *need*.
CATERPILLAR® SKID STEER LOADERS

BROOKSVILLE
 352/796-4978

DAYTONA BEACH
 386/947-3363

LEESBURG
 352/315-9823

MULBERRY
 863/425-4951

ORLANDO
 407/855-6195

PALM BAY
 321/952-3001

SARASOTA
 941/753-7535

TAMPA
 813/671-3700

TARPON SPRINGS
 727/938-1515

For information on new and used equipment to rent, lease or purchase, contact a sales representative or visit our Website. www.ringhaver.com



The clean detailed look of the par 3, 162 yard 8th hole is a testament to the professionalism of the maintenance staff. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

a mad dash to glory in the last few weeks before an event. Undoubtedly, the high standards depicted at tournament sites have raised golfers' expectations but it has also raised our stature in the game.

"I came to know Alan during my tenure at The Tournament Players Club during construction as a student at Lake City and as an assistant superintendent after graduation. It seems we developed a mutual respect as he was instrumental in my landing several key jobs that gave me the opportunity to work at high-profile clubs like Onion Creek in Austin, Tex. and

TPC at Prestancia in Sarasota and prepare those courses for the Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf and the LPGA Chrysler Cup respectively.

"My introduction and inspiration into golf came from my dad and my grandfather. My grandfather worked at Big Sandy GC in north Georgia after retiring from the farm and fencing business. My dad taught me the game when I was six years old and he dreamed of going to Lake City Community College for the golf course operations program. He never got to go, so I did."



Aerial photo of San Jose C.C. shows the parallel hole layout popular in the Donald Ross era. The St. John's River can be seen in the upper left hand corner. Photo by Joel Jackson.

It seems that family and close knit relationships are essential to Estes' personal and professional values and success. They make a good fit with San Jose's traditional Old Florida family lifestyle.

Computer-Exact Custom Mixes. Every Order. Every Time.

- All Loads Scaled
- Soil Analysis Available



- Next Day Service
- Volume Orders

Visit our website at www.golfAg.com!

Traps Installed to Spec.



Golf Agronomics meets all your top dressing needs with our ability to customize your mix with a variety of soil amendments including:

- Dolomite
- Hi-Cal
- Charcoal
- Wetting Agents
- Humic Acid
- Minor Elements
- Rock Phosphate
- Gypsum
- Customer Products

GOLF AGRONOMICS SUPPLY & HANDLING

Serving all of Florida

(800) 626-1359
(941) 955-4690 Fax