

THRU THE GREEN

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

JUNE 1994

THE MEETING PLACE

Scholarship & Research Tournament Castlewood CC Host Superintendent: Blake Swint

Our meeting and tournament on June 20 will be held at Castlewood Country Club in Pleasanton. Castlewood, with 810 members, is a 36-hole course, 18 of which are on the hill, 18 in the valley.

We will be playing the hill course -- the older of the two, having been built in 1921. The course was built on land previously owned by William Randolph Hearst, the publishing mogul. It was

designed by the late William Bell who designed many of the courses in the area.

Our host superintendent is Blake Swint. Blake grew up in San Lorenzo, although he was born in Georgia. At 12 he got the golfing bug, and worked a deal with the manager at Sky West Golf Course to pick up trash around the clubhouse in exchange for free golf. After two years of dedication, he was hired on the crew for summer and weekend help. He became the night waterman at 16 and hired on full time after high school graduation.

Blake knew his calling in life at a very early age and never veered off course. He was at Sky West a total of 14 years before moving on to Orinda CC to become the assistant superintendent. He left the course to work for a landscape contractor, but after four years, he couldn't stay away any longer. He accepted the superintendent position at Sequoyah CC and was there for seven years before moving on to Castlewood in 1991.

Since taking this position he has been very busy. All the original greens were constructed from clay. He first rebuilt seven of the greens on the hill course with washed sod -- the first

Scorecard

Results of April 25th Golf Tournament The Villages CC

LOW NET

Ralph Donnelly	63
Mitch Frasier	64
Craig Banick	65
Bill Hagen	67
Dave Pimental	67

LOW GROSS

Tom Arrendondo	70
Dave Bingham	71
Steve Good	72
Raj Mal	74
Dave Lewellen	75

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superintendent in Northern California to try it. Blake uses only solubles and organics to fertilize. Then came the second project, to rebuild the practice area with new target greens and tee areas. That project was finally completed last fall.

A night waterman does the irrigation, since 60% of the hill course is still quick couplers and galvanized pipe. Installing a new irrigation system is his next project. He hopes to complete that in the next year and a half.

Blake's daughter Becky, 10, loves to ride around the course with dad and help out. (Might we have a future superintendent here?) In addition to Becky, Blake and his wife, Debbie, have two

other children, Lindsay, 5, and Corey, 3.

Between his job and his family, Blake religiously follows Winston Cup Motor Racing and attends night school majoring in horticulture. He also has recently enrolled in the GCSAA certification program. Needless to say, he doesn't spend as much time playing golf as he would like.

Blake has been a member of both the Northern California and the National superintendent's associations for ten years. He supports the association 100% because it's "the greatest way to learn new skills and ideas." That fits his philosophy about this business: Try to provide the

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COMMITTEE MEETING

Continued from page 6
the banquet entertainment, host booths and duties, exhibitors needs, conference hotels and rates, media involvement, spouses program, lost of misplaced badges, prayer breakfast, and allied association involvement.

I felt that our ideas were listened to, and many of our decisions will be taken back to the GCSAA board for approval. Our work is not done, however. Leading up to the show, the committee has various assignments to carry out. We will be looking to our members for help with

some of these assignments. In return, the GCSAA will be helping sponsor our hospitality suite at the conference.

SCHOLARSHIP

Continued from page 4
Jersey. P.J. Spellman, II, Assistant golf course superintendent at Poppy Hills Golf Course formally requested to the Board of Directors for scholarship aid to attend his second and final year at Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School. It was a wise choice. Last year, P.J. took two and a half months off work without pay and paid

his own tuition, plus another \$900 for lodging. He is also married and the father of two boys. P.J., the only west coast student in the class, ranked first scholastically, with a GPA of 3.97.

His dedication and professionalism make P.J. Spellman, II, a more-than-worthy representative from the GCSA of Northern California.

BLAKE SWINT

Continued from page 1
best conditions possible for the golfer. I'm sure we'll see evidence of that at our next meeting.

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