

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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