

Preserve Golf Club Carmel, CA

Golf Course Builder

Landscapes Unlimited

Golf Course Architect

Tom Fazio

2016 Golf Course Project Architect

Tim Jackson

Jackson Kahn Design

Golf Course Superintendent

Tim Taagen

Turfgrass Supplier

and Installation Contractor

West Coast Turf

New cool
to warm
season
turfgrass
conversion
significantly
reduces
water use

TURF REPORT



Water Saving “Santa Ana” Hybrid Bermuda Replaces Cool Season Fairways at the Preserve Golf Club

The Preserve Golf Club, a prestigiously ranked Golf Digest list of America’s Top 100 Golf Courses, has completed its turfgrass conversion project. In addition to improving course conditions at the Tom Fazio designed course, the switch from cool season turfgrass on fairways and the driving range to warm season turfgrass, is expected to decrease water use by over 16 million gallons a year.

A Special Place

“Play challenging golf on a walk through the full spectrum of nature at The Preserve, “ is how the club describes the Preserve experience. “Throughout 365 acres the course wanders by towering oaks, through rolling savannahs, around wetlands and across seasonal streams framed

by the majestic Santa Lucia range. You can rarely see the next hole, let alone other golfers – and again, tee times are not required. Come golf in a serene, natural world, free of distractions, save the occasional cry of a red-tailed hawk.” But even that unique experience was to be perfected with new and improved turfgrass.

Cool Season “Out”—Warm Season “In”

The cool season fairways were replaced in spring 2016 with West Coast Turf’s Santa Ana hybrid bermuda. The course was closed for just four months. This warm season turfgrass is not the standard for this region, but it is the ideal solution for water savings while not sacrificing quality of golf course play.

Here are a few things to know about warm season grasses:



They require significantly less water than cool season grasses

They provide drier, firmer playing conditions during hot summer weather

They tolerate traffic and drought better than cool season grasses

Divots recover quickly on fairways and tees during the summer months

Converting from cool season to warm season grasses often yields a significant savings in pesticide, herbicide, and fungicide use



“Our members are ecstatic with the firmer, faster and consistently superior playability coupled with significant reductions in fairway water requirements. Our golf course is vastly improved and both our environment and community benefit. A win-win-win,” said James Student, chairman of the club.

Santa Ana Bermuda Goes North

Santa Ana hybrid bermuda, while drought tolerant and resistant, pushes the northern boundary of the transition zone at this location. It has an ability to stay greener longer going into winter, and green up faster in spring than other bermudagrasses. It also will use between 30-50% less water than the cool season grass. Rough areas were also changed out to other water saving native grasses.

“We’re quite pleased with the Santa Ana bermuda, especially its ability to tolerate cooler temperatures along with shade and still look very green,” said golf course superintendent Tim Taagen. “We’ve already had a few frosty

mornings and yet it continues to look as green and healthy as it did when it was hot. The membership couldn’t be more pleased with the choice and working with West Coast Turf was fun. They made it easy and their top quality workmanship shows. The most exciting thing is that the turf doesn’t require nearly the water we used on perennial ryegrass at a much lower cutting height,” Taagen said.

Not the First, and Certainly Not the Last

The Valley Club of Montecito in Montecito, CA, and on the Golf Digest list of America’s Top 100 Golf Courses, and Montecito Country Club, a Jack Nicklaus Signature Course in Santa Barbara, CA, also converted their cool season turfgrass to West Coast Turf’s Santa Ana hybrid bermuda. They similarly wanted an exceptional environmentally responsible water saving product without sacrificing excellence of play. The Valley Club transitioned in two phases in 2012 and 2013, and Montecito Country Club reopens in 2017.



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