



Updates from Dave
Director of Golf
September 2023

RANCH COURSE
SANTA YNEZ VALLEY



Dear Members,

Golf at the Ranch Course is BACK!!

I am happy to report that the Golf Department and Alisal Ranch are happy to bring back a Member Newsletter to keep you better informed of all things Ranch Course! There has been so much happening in 2023 and we need to update you on past, present, and future happenings at your facility. Our goal is to produce a Newsletter 2-3 times per year. There will be links in an email that go to your email address on file for billing. In addition, these links will be archived in the Members Only section of the ranch course website www.ranchcourse.com.

Consider this our "2023 State of the Union @ Alisal Ranch Course".

First of all, we want to thank you for your patience, support, and understanding as we have survived the largest setback in Alisal and the Ranch Course's storied history.

Ranch Course Updates

Be sure to check out the letter from Director of Agronomy, Elliot Weber, that details some of the challenges and successes in our recovery. Handling the Clean Up of Both Courses and the consequences of over 50" of Rain seemed a hopeless task but your Ranch Course Crew has been unbelievably dedicated to repairing the course. It is easy for members to become frustrated when conditions are not what they are used to, however you need to understand that we see everything you see and more.

As you can imagine, the cost of repair is ridiculous and not everything can be done at one time. Our main goal is to communicate better and more frequently with the membership on positive and negative issues on the Golf Course such that we continue to receive your support as we have in the past. We hear rumblings questioning whether we know what we are doing with the golf course. I believe it is due to our limited communication with the Membership since the Covid period.

We apologize and hope this is the start of giving you all a better understanding of why and how we operate and make decisions concerning the Ranch Course. Rest assured that the Ownership, Alisal Management, Director of Golf, and Director of Agronomy know what is best for this golf course and you would be hard pressed to find a team that will work harder to make your member experience memorable.

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Review of Ranch Course Recovery

After the destruction of January 8th, 2023, Alisal had the unprecedented task of major restoration of the entire resort as well as both golf courses. Remembering that day and the morning after and what we saw in person then, and to tour the Alisal and both of our golf courses today, it is nothing less than miraculous that The Alisal team and community that helped us rebuild have brought Alisal Ranch to a better place than before the natural disaster. Ranch Course Member Play, Alisal Ranch Guest Play, Corporate Groups, Charity Events, as well as the Ranch Grill and other non-Golf special events are fully back in operation.



Ranch Course Updates Continued

50" of rain caused havoc on Greens (allowing crabgrass and Poa Annuua to infiltrate greens), Sand Traps (contaminating 70% of our almost one half of a million-dollar bunker renovation from last August), and Fairways (Inches and Feet of Mud from hillsides surrounding holes 3 and most of the Back 9).

We needed to remove sod throughout areas of the Golf Course to repair other areas on the course (Fringes) that have worked fantastically. Erosion issues on Holes 3 & 18 as well as Structural Bridge issues on Holes 7 & 8 have been frustrating to say the least in terms of permits, approval process from engineers, and completion time of repairs. Somehow, we are on the "Back 9" of our needed repairs. We expect the final Bridge Repairs to be complete prior to any Winter rain.

Elliot expands on these subjects in detail with photos in his letter. I think this will help you all better understand why conditions have been abnormal for the last few months.

The last major repair on our year-long recovery plan is Hole number 3. Ownership and Management have met with Golf Architect Casey O'Callaghan (Recently renovated Newport Beach CC which is another Billy Bell design) and obtained plans and options to determine the best method to renovate the third hole. We will make a decision prior to the end of the year and choose an option that tremendously improves the hole and makes it more fun and playable for all levels of Golfers and restores the hole featuring the principles of the original Billy Bell design.

Lastly on Course information, we just aerified the Greens with the assistance of an outside contractor using a method called DryJect. I believe Elliot will expand on this method in the next newsletter coming around the Holidays. It looks to have been very successful as I have checked it out firsthand as well as having members reporting to me. We anticipate a 2-3-week faster recovery period than prior methods based on what we saw in terms of green recovery and soil samples taken. This should make the Fall tournament season especially fun!

Capital Projects

Outside Services Welcome Hub – Beginning of our Ranch Course Member and Guest Upgrade Plan to enhance the daily experience for you and your guests.

Overall Clubhouse Beautification & Landscaping Projects such as color, roses, and natives are in progress. Facility and Ranch Grill Equipment Upgrades will have a positive effect on the Dining experience and increase the number and quality of Special Social and Dining Events organized by Men's & Ladies Clubs, and Alisal Ranch at the Ranch Grill this Fall and in to 2024.

Driving Range upgrades that are scheduled for the last quarter of this year will include:

*Additional Hitting Area with New Mats and replacement of all old Mats. Will have the ability to Hit Drivers from tee friendly mats (Not on Grass in front of Mat).

- * Shade Tee Umbrellas on request
- * DG Path to Short game area

- * Landscaped & Shaded sitting area
- * Short Game Area Targets



Website Upgrade

After a few Covid years without much attention and a recent hack in 2023 to the administrator of our website, the Alisal Ranch Course website is currently being worked on with new content throughout the Members Only section.

Sorry to all the new members that might have had issues getting into the Members Only Section. We are now able to give the site administrator content which they will have updated within 24-48 hours.

Areas in the Members Only section that will be of interest to you and have been or will be updated shortly are the Calendar of Events for Golf and Social Events, Member Roster, New Members, and Local Rules (Current Post Flood during Renovation until further notice).

*Please contact me at dhartley@alisal.com or my website helper agolfergrl@gmail.com if you have any access or content issues going forward.

Schedule of Events September - December

All upcoming Member events are posted on the Alisal Website, Cart Sign Holders, and in the Pro Shop.

The Fall is an extremely busy period for Alisal Ranch Golf Groups, Corporate Group Business, Wedding Golf Groups, and Individual Ranch Guest Play. In addition, many Men's and Ladies Club Championships and Tournaments will be held.

I would highly suggest you make Tee Times (you may book 14 days out) or call the pro shop in advance if you wish to play or practice to see how busy it is.



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Membership

The Ranch Course is more than thriving in Membership Requests, Admission of new Members as well as additional Members to existing Corporate Accounts. We are at all-time high levels for Individual, Family, and Corporate Accounts. As Director of Golf, I am constantly monitoring these numbers as well as the amount of play associated with these increased numbers to ensure The Ranch Course keeps the private, serene, uncrowded feel we all love so much.

These increased member numbers fuel our capital projects, renovations and repair from the floods, the upgraded golf course condition, and the ability to pay a wage to employees that allow them to live in Santa Barbara County and work at Alisal. As important for you, this allows the Ranch Course to operate profitably while keeping your private monthly Golf Club Dues at a level that is very much below the normal for Southern California private Clubs. You also have the option to include the River Course for an additional \$75 per month to add a second course to your membership. This pricing is per month and is unmatched for a program like that. Finally, if you wish to go FULL Country Club living, then we also offer our Signature Club Membership with Alisal amenities that almost no one in Southern California can match for unique activities all in one place.

Your options at Alisal Ranch are immense. Contact me at dhartley@alisal.com if you would like to add any options or have anyone that you would be interested in sponsoring for Ranch Course membership.

Thank you, Members!

I personally wish to thank all of you for the support for me, my family, and my staff that you have given over the past four years through all the challenges of Covid and the Alisal disaster.

I have heard from so many new members that are so grateful to be part of the Ranch Course. In particular, I want to also thank all of the long-time members that I have been lucky enough to call my friends for decades. Without all of you Alisal does not make it to where we are today where the future of the Ranch Course seems limitless.

We are blessed!

See you at the course,
Dave

Important note on Memberships

The Ranch Course has evolved with our increasing membership. The average age is reducing, the number of Corporate Members is increasing, the number of younger families with children and young golfers is increasing and the type of golfer is changing. The number of Corporate Ranch Groups, Wedding Groups, and requests for Charity, University, High School, and Junior Events are higher than ever. Many of these golfers are not "traditional golfers." This requires an acceptance from our longer-term members and a responsibility from the golf operations team to ensure the important traditions of the game of golf and private club membership are upheld. It is essential we work together to develop an environment that will last long beyond our playing days.





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Updates from Elliot
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Crabgrass Update

As you probably recall, each summer we would see a different type of grass growing along the edges of the greens and in some greens, like hole 15, we would see this broadleaf grass throughout the entire green. This is known as crabgrass, and we consider it a weed. It can quickly take over a putting green surface, therefore it must be controlled and removed.



The problem is that it is a very difficult weed to control in bent grass greens. All the herbicides that can be used to control crabgrass also damage bent grass. After researching available herbicides and talking with other properties that have dealt with crabgrass in greens. I came up with a plan to apply an herbicide at 1/3 the label rate, 3 times over the course of 3 months. This plan was developed to minimize damage to the putting greens, but at same time kill and remove the crab grass.



The program was very successful in my eyes. I have not seen any crabgrass in the putting greens, but unfortunately, we have suffered some bent grass damage. The larger areas of damage we have begun plugging in some grass. Since we don't have a nursery green, I have been taking plugs from the perimeter of the green and moving to the areas that are damaged.

This way the playable areas are healed and by moving the damaged areas to the perimeter, makes them out of play.

I appreciate your understanding and patience with this process as the ultimate goal is to provide the best playing conditions possible as soon as possible, weather permitting.



Dear Members,

I wanted to take a minute and thank the membership for all their support.

2023 has been a crazy year to say the least, but with all your continued support of the golf maintenance department, it sure makes our job easier. Trust that we are always trying to improve the golf course each and every day. If you see an issue, then rest assured we have seen it as well and are already working on it. Sometimes, it appears we are going backwards, (yellowing of poa, thin spots from crabgrass, water in bunkers, etc.) but just know we are moving forward.

All these little things will make a huge improvement for you and your guest to enjoy in the future.

Regards,

Elliot Weber
Director of Agronomy





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Poa Control Update

Oh, the famous Poa Annua grass, you either love it or hate it. Well, I hate it! With this past Winter's record rainfall, the Poa annua in the greens exploded, and popped up everywhere. To have the best playing surface, it is best to have only 1 grass type. Poa annua and bent grass compete against each other and have different growth patterns. So, when you have a mixture of both, greens tend to be less smooth and consistent. So just like the crabgrass, I decided it was time to start removing the Poa annua out of the greens. This is a common maintenance practice at golf clubs with bent grass greens. I started an aggressive chemical removal program this year and it will be an ongoing program for the coming years. In today's arsenal of chemicals, there are several designed to specifically remove Poa annua. I have been rotating between 2 of them and they are working and doing their intended job. The side effect of starting this type of program is finding the right rates, that kill off the Poa slowly while maintaining a green color. It is a delicate balance.



This year, I learned that the rates I started with worked great and when I increased the rate to get better control, it turned all the Poa off color and shrunk the Poa plant, causing unsightly off-color greens and bumpiness. I am continuing to adjust rates to find the right balance. So yes, the off coloring is part of the process, as it shows the chemicals are doing their job. As the Poa annua dies, the bent grass will creep in and fill those areas. This program will be ongoing and dynamic to successfully remove most of the Poa, and even then, it will require preventative applications so the dreaded Poa annua doesn't make a return.

Rain Damage Update

On a positive note, it is obvious that we are making progress in the repairs from the flood we had back in January. The bridges were the first thing that was temporarily repaired so we could get the golf course open for play. The rest of the repairs will be done later this year and shouldn't impact member play while repairs are being completed. (Continued on next page)



Bunkers

Well, we had great bunkers (over \$4000000 of renovation) for a couple months, then mother nature decided it was time for rain and rain and even more rain.

Unfortunately, the new sand and drainage was contaminated from all the down pours. Estimates from bunker samples we were requested to send to the insurance company showed over 70% of these new bunkers were contaminated. We have noticed, as I am sure most of you have as well, some of the bunkers are not draining properly and stay extremely wet and even have standing water in them early mornings.

We are in the process of going into the worst bunkers (Holes 2,3,4 and others as needed) and trying to clear out the drainage and add some more sand the week of August 7th to improve the playing conditions.

We are still working with our insurance company on this specific issue, and we hope to get a resolution soon as we have not received a penny of reimbursement at this point for sand recovery costs.



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Rain Damage Update Continued

Hole 18 was the next repair job to tackle. Here we were able to restore the entire damaged area and bring it back to the original size. A Gabion fence was installed along the creek edge and then backfilled to tie in the creek edge to the golf course.



Our solution to repair, renovate, and improve Hole 3 is we have hired a golf course architect to work with our engineer to come up with the best possible plan at the most realistic cost.

We anticipate receiving some insurance funds to help with the renovation project, but incoming reimbursement has been terribly slow. However, we have started to clean up the area in and around the River and Bridges.

More information to come soon.

