

Hole-by-hole

**AT THE SITE OF THE
SCGA AMATEUR,**

El Caballero Country Club

Gene Cofsky, who is editor-in-chief of Tee Times, El Caballero's membership newsletter, and head golf professional Mark Taylor created this hole-by-hole description of the site of the 103rd SCGA Amateur.



No. 1.

PAR 5, 510 YARDS

— Uphill all the way to a severely sloped green, back to front. Out-of-bounds to the left.

No. 2

PAR 4, 434 YARDS

— Sharp dogleg left, bunkers surround the green; No. 1 handicap hole.

No. 3.

PAR 4, 383 YARDS

— Straightaway fairway to another back-to-front sloped green with bunkers left, right and back.

No. 4.

PAR 4, 407 YARDS

— Slight dogleg right and fairway slopes right to left. Bunkers all around the green perimeter.

No. 5.

PAR 4, 361 YARDS

— Lake to the left-front of the green and bunkers right and back. Green slopes back to front.

No. 6.

PAR 3, 216 YARDS

— Bunkers enclose the green; two to the right, one left and one in front.

No. 7.

PAR 5, 514 YARDS

— Strong dogleg right and out-of-bounds on the right. Fairway slopes right to left. Green is heavily bunkered.



No. 8.

PAR 3, 212 YARDS

— Bunkers are right and left and the trees on the right can cause further contemplation from the tee.

No. 9.

PAR 4, 456 YARDS

— Water comes into play along the left side of the green. Fairway bunkering to the right and more guarding the green.

No. 10.

PAR 3, 167 YARDS

— Water guards the entire right side of the long, oblique green. Bunkers behind catch mis-clubbed shots; shortest of the par-3s.

No. 11.

PAR 4, 402 YARDS

— Trees in the fairway can block second shots on the dogleg right.

No. 12.

PAR 5, 528 YARDS

— Longest hole on the course, with the fairway tilting right. Two-tiered green slopes severely back to front.

No. 13.

PAR 4, 381 YARDS

— Downhill tee shot toward kidney-shaped green guarded by deep bunker in front. There's also a bunker behind the green and another in the right fairway.

No. 14.

PAR 4, 386 YARDS

— Keep drive left of center for the best shot at the green on this dogleg right.

No. 15.

PAR 4, 419 YARDS

— Dogleg left features an oak tree in the center of the fairway. Green slopes front to back.

No. 16.

PAR 3, 178 YARDS

— Bunkers surround green.

No. 17.

PAR 4, 458 YARDS

— Out-of-bounds left. Water guards left side of green and bunker does likewise to the right. Green severely sloped.

No. 18.

PAR 4, 423 YARDS

— Bunkers all the way to the green on the finishing hole.



Teaching El Cab new tricks

The year was 1986. It was a Sunday in July at Hillcrest Country Club in Los Angeles. Dave Sheff was about to win the SCGA Amateur championship in his first try but he almost blew his chances away with a double bogey on the 70th hole of the tournament.

Among the challengers that day was future SCGA Amateur winner Pat Duncan, who bogeyed the final hole to lose a chance at a playoff. Still Duncan had a 68, the final round's best score — shared with 22-year-old Markel Taylor, a bag room worker at Mesa Verde CC.

A 76 in the third round proved to be too much ground to make up, though, and Taylor finished in a tie for sixth, just short of plate-winning status.

It illustrates the decision Mark Taylor made that has led him 16 years later to a position as hosting head golf professional at that same venerable championship. "I was a decent golfer," he says with a smile, "but I realized maybe not at a touring pro level."

What he also discovered after working for Art Schilling in the Mesa Verde bag room during his student days at Edison High in Huntington Beach and later at Cal State Long Beach (where he and touring pro Paul Goydos were teammates) was that he loved the game, nonetheless.

After landing a job as a teaching pro at Hillcrest, he further confirmed during those seven years that teaching the game was his first love. It continues to be after four and a half years as El Caballero's head man.

"My parents were both golfers at Mesa Verde," he recounted, "so I got started at the game fairly young. I didn't take it seriously

though till I was about 14."

Competitive golf remains part of Taylor's life 24 years later. He gained a spot to play in a U.S. Open sectional qualifying during a couple of the years El Cab has hosted that event and still has realistic hopes of making the final. In the meantime, he remains very competitive in the SCPGA's section tournaments.

PGA members Keith Thykeson, Paul Duarte, Tim Caldwell and Alex Galvan and apprentice John Baltzersen assist Taylor in the shop.

Mark and his wife Susan live in Thousand Oaks with sons Steven, 4, and Kevin, 2. Yes, Steven's already been out on the course. "But just recently I showed him how to keep his clubs clean," Taylor related, "so for right now, he's a lot more interested in keeping those grooves shiny than he is in hitting the ball."

You get a feeling, though, that Steven will find his niche, just like dad did.



MARK TAYLOR FINDS HIS NICHE AS HEAD GOLF PROFESSIONAL AND AN INSTRUCTOR OF THE GAME.