



THE NEWSLETTER

September 2008

of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.**

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Following his Father's Lead Lands Santos at Manchester Country Club

By: Gary Trask

When Justin Santos went to his father for advice on whether or not he should become a golf superintendent, he was asking someone who could speak with authority on the subject.

Frank Santos had been in the business for nearly three decades as the head super at Cape Cod's Cranberry Valley Golf Course and The Ridge Club. He knew nearly everything there was to know about the industry and had passed on quite a bit of that knowledge to his oldest son, who was basically raised on a golf course while growing up in Marstons Mills, Mass.

So, as you can imagine, it came as a bit of a surprise for Justin to hear his father actually discourage him from following in his footsteps.

"He didn't want me to do it," remembers Justin of his discussions with his father as he neared his high school graduation in 1993. "He talked about the long hours and how tough it can be on a family at times. I looked around at a few other things, but I think I decided at an early age that this is what I wanted to do. So I went for it."

Looking back, Santos is glad that the efforts of his old man to dissuade him from the business are one piece of fatherly advice he didn't follow. Today, the 34-year-old is finishing up his second year as the head man at Manchester Country Club in New Hampshire and says with conviction that there's nothing else in the world he'd rather be doing.

"I always remember how great I thought it was for my father to be outside all day and to have the kind of camaraderie that he had with his staff," Justin says. "It's kind of cool that I have those same things today."

After high school, Santos headed to the Stockbridge School of Agriculture where he picked up his turf management degree. He then earned his



Manchester Country Club

Photo Source: Manchester CC

Bachelor's degree in business at UMass. before accepting the assistant super job at Westchester Hills Golf Club in White Plains, N.Y. Two years later, he spent one season as an assistant at Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y., before getting his first super position at Canoe Brook Country Club in Summit, N.J. where he was responsible for 18 of the 36 holes at the club for seven years.

Santos always wanted to work

closer to home so when the opportunity to take over at Manchester CC came about, he jumped at it. He took over in February of 2007 and in just two seasons he has already made a huge impact at the Donald Ross-designed course that is member-owned and opened its fairways in 1923.

"I feel like I'm home here because I love the area and I love the course," he says of the club that hosted the 2002 New England Amateur as well as a number of New Hampshire Golf Association events. "The membership has been great and I think I have helped do some things that, in the long run, are going to be extremely beneficial to the course."

First and foremost on that list is the massive tree removal project that began last November. It was an endeavor that Santos saw as a necessity for the course going forward and he had to put his salesman hat on in order to convince some longtime members that he wasn't some young, loose cannon coming in looking to make some waves.

Last summer, Santos drew up a hole-by-hole plan of what he thought needed to be done. He presented it to the greens committee and took members on a personal tour around the course. He did the same for the board that governs the course. When it was

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Santos - continued from page 1

all said and done, Santos was given the green light to begin the project.

"They agreed to about 95 percent of what I laid out," says Santos. "There were a few trees here and there that they thought were an integral part of the layout, but other than that we went ahead and did everything I thought needed to be done."

Nearly 800 trees were removed and the benefits are already palpable. The fifth green had been a problem at the course for many years, but this season, even with all the moisture the area received, it held up for the entire season.

"There's no doubt in my mind that if we didn't do the tree removal, that green wouldn't have made it," Santos says proudly. "That was the case with basically the entire course. With all the trees that were in place, there wasn't enough sun and there wasn't enough air movement. This is something that needed to happen."

"It wasn't an easy thing to get done, because there was some resistance. But I made sure to communicate with the members as much as possible about it. I utilized the course's

Web site and bulletin boards and kept everyone in the loop. That way when things started to happen, nobody could stand up and say they weren't notified of why and when it was happening."

According to Santos, it is that kind of communication that is vital to being an efficient superintendent. He manages a staff of as many as 20 workers during the summer and says that he does his best to keep his guys abreast of everything that's going on. He also says it's important to lead by example.

"Talk is cheap. I wouldn't ask any one on my crew to do something that I wouldn't do myself," says Santos, who made it a point to mention that his job is much easier thanks to the commitment of his staff and the help of his first assistant, Mike Wade. "There are days that I can't get down in the trenches with the rest of the crew because I've got to deal with the politics of the job, but for the most part I try to get out there as much as I can and be hands-on as much as possible."

In addition to his work, Santos spends much of his free time outdoors. He's an avid snowboarder, kayaker and hiker. He also tries to play as much golf as he can, but it usually only

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Tom Brodeur, TPC Boston and the PGA

By: Mike Cassidy

Not many superintendents get away on Labor Day weekend let alone any other holiday throughout the golf season, and not many of us are as busy as Tom Brodeur, superintendent at TPC Boston in Norton. I should say the weeks or even months leading up to the Deutsche Bank Championship/PGA event held at the TPC course every September, are full steam ahead preparing his course for this unique Monday finish for the PGA tour. A bit more pressure may have been on him due to the FedEx Cup championship as well. .

A Monday finish, the PGA tour, and one of the best newer golf courses in New England. Tom Brodeur is the man in charge down there and said it's a different look for the pros than the usual manicured wall to wall look they are used to every week. He will be the first to say that it's a very difficult place to grow his rough due to the soil structure on site, yet he makes the place look spectacular with natural fescue areas, great bunkering due to the recent renovations over the last couple of years.

This years event was less stressful due in part to the fact that the renovation work had fully matured and the concerns of rebuilt greens being ready for a PGA event was a distant memory. The course looks incredible on TV every year, yet this year in particular I saw the beauty of the course in a way that Tom explains as definition or transition from one cut to the next. Manicured fairways cut at .425 inches, to a

step cut, then primary rough at 3.5 inches and beyond that the natural look of a classic old course fescue that really brings the eye in to notice features that you don't see week to week on TV.

It's always nice to hear the broadcast booth compliment the superintendent for the conditions the pros get to play on week to week and Tom will be the first to say he puts a premium on hiring good assistants and has the added benefit of working for the TPC network that gives him 4 or 5 solid guys from other TPC courses for two weeks before and after the event. He has an in-season staff of 30 full time guys and gets an additional 40 volunteers for the tournament. Even with the extra help some of the cutting gets done in the dark due to shorter days this time of year.

With the absence of Tiger Woods this year Tom said the only issue was that the crowds were down about 10%. The field is so strong and being part of the FedEx Cup championship made for an incredible leaderboard down the stretch.

One thing Tom feels strongly about is the support he gets from his membership. It's a lot to give up as a member of a club that hosts an event this size. The members give the course up for 10 days and if you think about the tournament as a whole, the set up of tents, stands, cables etc. all add up to additional distractions. Most of the members embrace and support the event and like that their course is on

the national radar.

Well...as I write this article Tom and his staff are still in clean-up mode and will be right up to next years event! Great job by Tom and his staff. ❖

September 15, 2008 Twin Hills Country Club Team of Two Champions

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James Fitzroy
71 Gross: Kurt Calderwood and
Chris Tufts

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Hole 13: Kurt Calderwood 8'7"

Long Drive:

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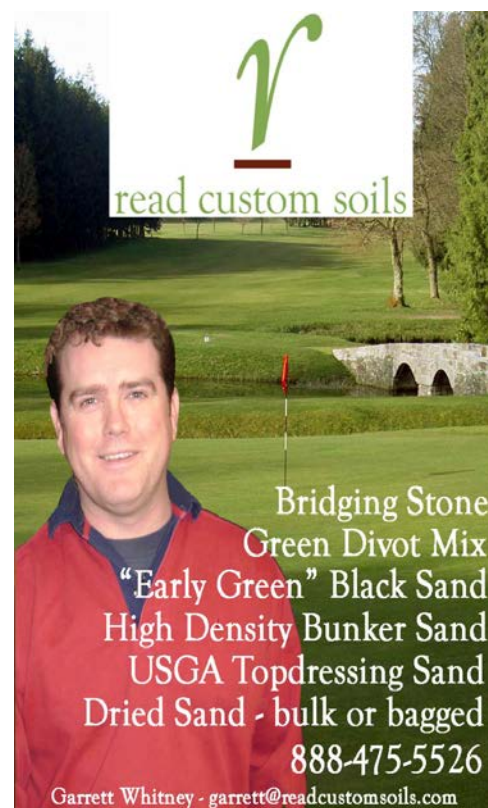


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amounts to around 15 rounds a year, due to his hectic in-season schedule.

"I didn't really start playing until I started to work on a golf course so I always joke with my father that he should have stuck a golf club in my hand all of those years I was at the course with him as a kid," Santos says with a laugh. "That way I'd be a single-digit handicap and not the 20-something that I am today."

Nonetheless, Frank Santos did manage to make a good enough impression on his son that Justin didn't ignore his passion – despite the advice to do other otherwise.

"I think looking back my father is glad that I did it, because he knows how happy I am doing what I'm doing," Santos says.

Justin's foray into the business does, however, give his mother, Irene, the perfect opportunity to give her son and husband a friendly dig whenever given the chance.

"She likes to tell everyone that she's got two men in the golf course

superintendent business, but still has the worst lawn on the block," Justin laughs. "And, you know what? She's probably right." ♦



Renovations at Manchester CC: Photo to left - before renovations and Photo to Right - after renovations

Photos Courtesy of Justin Santos

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Since the 1980s it has been known that applications of manganese can decrease the severity of diseases caused by the fungus *Gaeumannomyces*. Though the original research was done on diseases of wheat, PACE Turf has applied those findings to turfgrass diseases, such as take-all patch and decline, with good results.

Larry Stowell, Ph.D., PACE Turf's agronomist and plant pathologist, says that to achieve disease suppression of take-all patch, he recommends that soils contain a minimum of 30 ppm (parts per million) manganese (when analyzed using Melich III extraction). Iron should be present at 3 times the level of manganese. "At least 90 ppm iron is desired if you are targeting 30 ppm manganese," Stowell says.

"Products that are effective in delivering manganese are Granusol Mn (a granular 31% manganese product) and manganese sulfate (which can be applied as a granular or as a spray, 30% manganese). To maintain soil manganese levels at a minimum of 30 ppm, apply either product at 100 - 200 lbs/acre watered in following application. The 100 lb/acre rate will increase soil manganese by about 15 ppm. Quarterly applications at this rate (equivalent to 2.3 lb/1000 sq ft) may be necessary in some locations to keep the manganese at 30 ppm in the soil, but be careful -- too much manganese can also be a problem."

PACE Turf's other lead turf researcher, Wendy Gelernter, Ph.D., says, "Please keep in mind that manganese (Mn) is a whole different ani-

mal than magnesium (Mg), with which it is frequently confused."

How does manganese damage the disease-causing fungal organism? Gelernter says, "Ian Thompson and his colleagues at Purdue University are working with take-all of wheat (which is closely related to take-all patch and decline diseases). They've found that the fungus causes some of its damage by converting manganese--an essential plant nutrient-- into a form that the plant cannot use. When extra manganese is applied to turf in the form of Granusol manganese or manganese sulfate, the plant gets another chance to grab some of this important mineral before the fungus gobbles it up."

The Purdue researchers also made a finding that has great potential in turf management: the fungus that causes gray leaf spot, *Magnaporthe grisea*, may disable manganese in the same way as the take-all fungus does. Stowell says, "If this proves to be correct, then it may be possible to prevent some gray leaf spot damage through preventive applications of manganese, as well."

For more specific information on manganese requirements, see PACE Turf's soil management guidelines at www.paceturf.org. Additional turf management topics are available to members of PACE Turf. Free trial memberships are also available at the website.

PACE Turf is a membership organization that provides research, education and information services to the turf management community. Founded in 1993 by Wendy Gelernter, Ph.D. and Larry Stowell, Ph.D., the PACE Turf mission is to generate and share independent and objective agronomic information among turf professionals so they may develop management programs that are effective, practical and scientifically sound. ❖

Source: PACE Press Release

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Golf Facilities Excluded from Federal Disaster Relief

We want to provide you a quick update on GCSAA's disaster relief grassroots campaign and enlist your help once more. Privately and commercially owned golf facilities were specifically excluded from receiving federal disaster relief in legislation passed by the U.S. Senate recently. The bill, a broad tax extender package, included a provision to provide federal tax relief for victims of the tornadoes, flooding, and hurricanes that have destroyed thousands of homes and small businesses in recent months.

The House of Representatives will soon vote on its own disaster relief tax package which currently provides a flexible, national plan to help all states – AND ALL GOLF FACILITIES – affected by disasters in 2008. Disaster relief would extend to floods, tornadoes, wildfires, hurricanes or any other disaster that yields a presidential dis-

aster declaration.

The House bill is on the fast track and a vote is expected this week. We are now engaging in a new strategy to make our voices heard with a significant volume of contacts. We're now asking GCSAA members and chapters to contact Congress and ask their U.S. Representative to include golf courses in disaster tax relief legislation pending in Congress.

The action alert on the home page of GCSAA Online (www.gcsaa.org) has been updated, and chapters and members now have two ways to contact their Representative – by e-mail/fax or phone.

Here is a direct link to the e-mail/fax alert which provides background information, a pre-drafted letter, and instructions for submitting comments:

<http://capwiz.com/gcsaa/issues/alert/?alertid=11967616>

Here is a direct link to the call alert which provides background information, talking points and directions for making the call:

<http://capwiz.com/gcsaa/callalert/index.tt?alertid=11967661>

Should you have questions or need assistance, please contact Chava McKeel, GCSAA Senior Manager of Government Relations at cmmckeel@gcsaa.org or 800-472-7878, 3619.

Thank you for taking part in this important issue. ❖

Source: GCSAA Press Release

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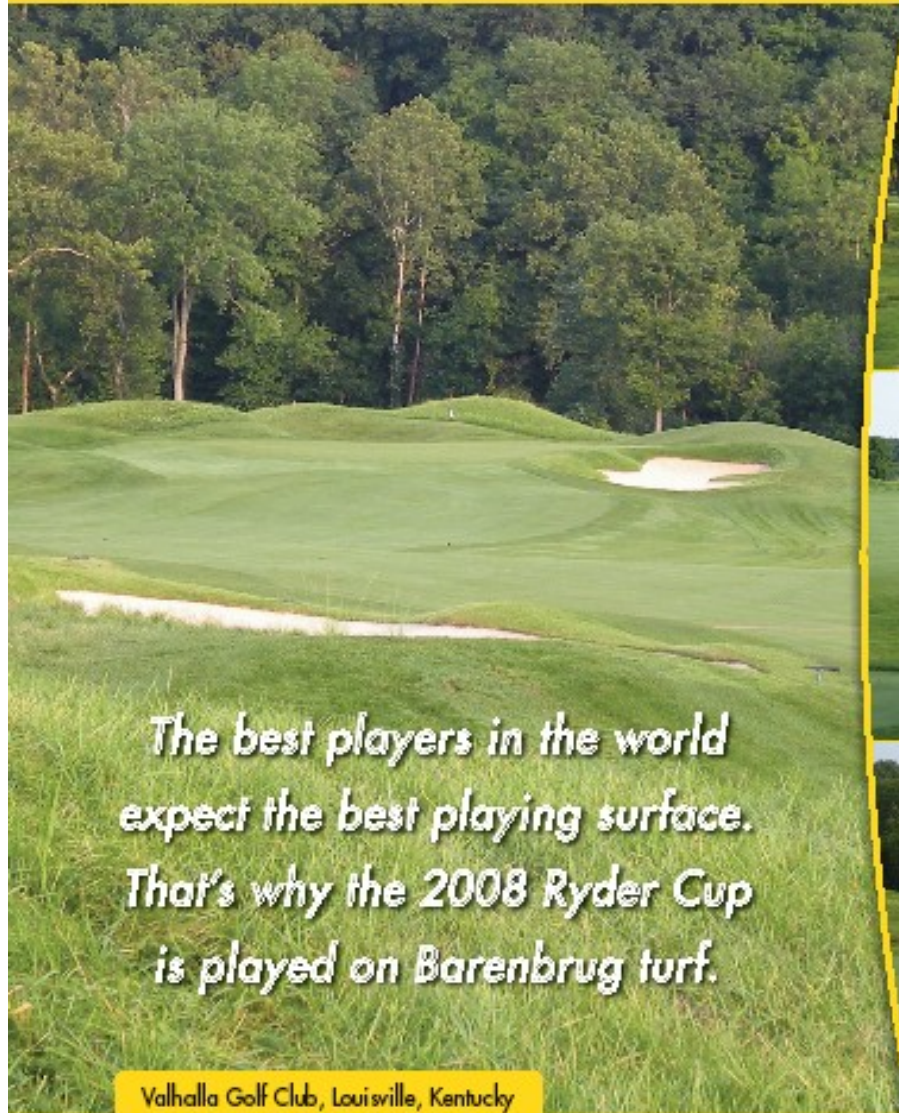
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our condolences are extended to Jim Santoro and family on the passing of Jim's mother Patricia "Trish" Santoro on September 10th.

Congratulations to Kip A. Tyler, GCSAA certified golf course superintendent at Salem Country Club, Peabody, Mass., who has completed the renewal process for maintaining his status as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). Kip has been at Salem Country Club since 1982. A 30-year GCSAA member, he initially achieved his certification in 1998. Approximately 1,900 golf course superintendents worldwide currently hold "CGCS" status.

Congratulations to Scott McLeod on his new sales position with Winding Brook Farm. His new phone number is 401-639-5462.

CALENDAR

**October 2:
Assistants Appreciation Day**
Framingham Country Club
Hosts: Superintendent, Patrick Daly, CGCS and Assistant Superintendent, Brian Daigneau

**October 29:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting**
Country Club of Halifax
Member/Guest Tournament
Host: Edward Gianni, CGCS

November 13: GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Bellevue Golf Club
9-Hole Tournament
Host: Brian Skinner

UMass Extension

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**UMass Extension Turf Program
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November 6 - December 18**

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