



THE NEWSLETTER

February 2009

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

Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

James R. Fitzroy Elected Vice President of the GCSAA

By: Golf Course Management and Rich Gagnon

The local boy has done well. One of our own was elected to the Vice President position of the GCSAA during the Golf Industry Show held recently in New Orleans.

James R. Fitzroy, CGCS, is the director of golf at Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Course in North Quincy, Mass., and has been at that facility since 1975. Previously, he was superintendent at Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton, Mass., and Cazenovia (N.Y.) Country Club. He has an associate's degree in turf management from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and a bachelor's degree in park administration from UMass.

A 42-year member of GCSAA, Fitzroy has served on the board of directors since 2005. He is currently the vice chairman of the Chapter Relations Committee and the Conference Logistics Task Group.

Fitzroy is a member and past president of the GCSA of New England and also holds membership in the Golf Course Managers Association of Cape Cod and the Rhode Island GCSA. He is a former member of the executive committee of the Massachusetts Golf Association and currently serves on that organization's course rating team. He also serves on the plant science advisory committee for the Norfolk County Agricultural High School and UMass' turf research building committee.

"It is an honor to be nominated (and later elected) for the position of vice president of GCSAA by my peers within the GCSA of New England, the



Jim Fitzroy, CGCS and 2008 Ryder Cup Captain Paul Azinger met during the Opening Session at the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans.

Photo Credit: Rich Gagnon

Golf Course Managers Association of Cape Cod and the Rhode Island GCSA. I appreciate their support and confidence. I have been privileged to serve GCSAA for three years as a director and this year as secretary/treasurer."

"Prior to being elected to the GCSAA board of directors, I felt I was an engaged and informed member. Serving on a number of committees

and as chapter delegate from the GCSA of New England, I thought I had a good sense of the services and programs offered by our national association. However, as a member of the board of directors, I have had the opportunity to view firsthand the depth and breadth of what GCSAA offers to its members. And I was certainly overwhelmed by the scope of the programs and services our association provides for our members and industry."

"As members of the board of directors, we are often questioned on what GCSAA has to offer. We can be proud of our leadership in the areas of advocacy, professional development, community, environmental stewardship and our association's ability to respond to the needs of our industry. While there may be other resources that provide some of these programs and services, these items are the core of what makes GCSAA the leader in the golf course management field."

"An area that has generated much discussion in the last year has been the disparity between the programs and services that are in the GCSAA portfolio and what is actually consumed by the members. This discrepancy served as a starting point for our field staff program, and we are certainly encouraged by the early successes this program has experienced. However, we need to develop a multi-faceted approach to educate our

continued on page 2

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Fitzroy - continued from page 1

members, employers and the golfing public about the golf course management resource that is GCSAA."

"Last year I spoke about how we grow when we move out of our comfort zone. As a board, 2007 and 2008 afforded a growth opportunity in the form of hiring a new chief executive officer. I never worked harder or was more proud to be involved with my fellow directors than during this search and hiring process. Our common goal is to now give Mark Woodward the tools and resources he needs to make his tenure as our leader the most productive time in the history of GCSAA."

"I would like to thank the Norfolk County Commissioners; my wife, Maureen; and the players at Presidents Golf Course for their continued support of my efforts to serve GCSAA. But most importantly, I want to thank my staff at Presidents Golf Course. Headed by Class A superintendent Carlton P. Miner, they have consistently performed above and beyond the call of duty while I have traveled on behalf of GCSAA. With this kind of

support, serving our association has been a pleasure."

When Fitzroy was asked what it meant to him to be elected Vice President of the GCSAA he said, "It gives me one year to catch my breath before I become President next year". We wish you the best of luck Jim and thanks for representing the GCSANE.



"I would like to thank the Norfolk County Commissioners; my wife, Maureen; and the players at Presidents Golf Course for their continued support of my efforts to serve GCSAA. But most importantly, I want to thank my staff at Presidents Golf Course."

Jim Fitzroy, CGCS



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Miller Establishes Innovative Golf Course Management Support System

By: Gary Larrabee

Paul Miller, a long time member of the GCSANE and mentor to many in the turf management field, has decided to add to his already distinguished career an innovative golf course management support system.

Miller, the former golf course superintendent at Tedesco Country Club (1977-1988) in Marblehead, Mass., and director of golf course operations at Nashawtuc Country Club (1988-2008) in Concord, Mass., has founded Miller Golf Solutions.

"This venture will provide a positive response to the challenges placed on golf superintendents during the current economic environment and beyond," Miller says. "I've been a proud professional in the golf course management business for more than 35 years. I can take that expertise and evaluate all aspects of a club's course maintenance concerns with the sole intention of helping my fellow superintendents, green chairmen and club officials collectively navigate through this difficult economic climate. My input will help them adapt to the times and prepare for the future. I will also help them attain the proper balance between course management and the club's financial realities."

After taking Tedesco's championship layout to a higher level of condition and playability, Miller did the same to yet an even greater degree during his tenure at Nashawtuc. Miller was the man in charge of making the Nashawtuc layout one of the top layouts the Champions Tour visited for 21 consecutive years through 2008. Annually, with rare exception, Nashawtuc was named one of the top four conditioned courses the Champions Tour visited.

"It was a distinct honor and privilege to work with the Nashawtuc membership in hosting one of the premier events on the Champions Tour for two decades," Miller said. "We were a great team in making Nashawtuc a gem of a course for the best senior professional golfers in the world. It's been the crowning point of my career. But now I wish to share that experience and my knowledge of golf course management for the benefit of others. I want to give something back to the game I love; a game that has given me so much. Now, more than ever, I feel I can help superintendents adapt their course maintenance practices and business strategies to reflect more realistic standards and fiscal responsibility

in these trying times."

Miller is a USGA committee member, serving currently on the Regional Affairs and Green Section Committees. He is a former president of the GCSANE. A graduate of the UMass Stockbridge School, he served as a point person in the building of the \$1 million Joseph Troll Turf Research Center on the school's campus.

At 58 years young and with all of these accomplishments behind him, Paul Miller still strives to find a way to support the game that means so much to him.

If you wish to contact Paul Miller, he can be reached at paulmiller924@comcast.net or cell phone 781-258-1700. ❖

Save the date ...

**RI TURFGRASS
FOUNDATION**

**Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation
Golf Tournament**

Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Place: Agawam Hunt

Host: Drew Cummins

More details to follow

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Azinger recalls Ryder Cup, up close and personal

By: GCSAA

Paul Azinger says he relives the 2008 Ryder Cup almost every day. The captain of the victorious U.S. team last September at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Ky., relived the highly charged event again Thursday at the Opening Session of the GCSAA Education Conference.

Azinger's entertaining rendition of the competition between the U.S. and Europe that was witnessed by 400 million people via TV highlighted the session -- presented in partnership with TYCROP Manufacturing -- that also honored a varied lineup of GCSAA award winners, the newly crowned national golf champion and a unique presentation of the 2009 Old Tom Morris Award.

Prefacing his recounting of the two years in the making of the U.S. Ryder Cup team and the resulting triumph, Azinger tossed big-time kudos to Mark Wilson, CGCS at Valhalla, and superintendents in general. Wilson introduced Azinger before his keynote address to boot.

"Mark and his crew were an integral part of our victory, the course setup and all that" he said, noting that along the way he and Wilson built a lasting friendship.

Nodding to those in the audience, Azinger praised the state of golf course management nowadays and its impact on the game and the players, especially the tour professionals.

"I think the players (PGA Tour) in general respect what you guys do," he said. "... I know I really believe that superintendents are the backbone of golf."

Offering what he called the inside stories on many phases of his tenure as Ryder Cup captain, Azinger recalled

"The thing that I will remember the most about the Ryder Cup celebration was watching Boo Weekley chug about \$1000 worth of champagne from the Ryder Cup and watching it flow into his mouth and over the biggest wad of chew I have ever seen in my life."

***Paul Azinger
Ryder Cup Captain***

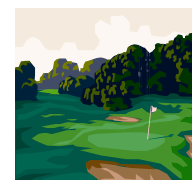
the difficult decision-making -- determining the criteria for player selection, with the idea of coming up with the hottest players at the time, and an innovative plan of integrating personality profiles into three four-man "pods."

"My job became creating the best possible environment for the players," he said, adding that he gave players ownership in the plan and in an attempt to develop their confidence in his confidence of them.

"It was also my role to take the pressure off the players and we played up the underdog role to help to that," Azinger added.

The ultimate outcome, victory, was not unlike what superintendents must do in their jobs -- delegating authority and building trust, with the final responsibility to oneself.

"... Building the best environment to be successful," Azinger said. "In the end, it all worked" ❖



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GCSAA Members elect 2009 Board of Directors

At the Annual Meeting and Election Feb. 6, held during the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in New Orleans, members elected Mark D. Kuhns, CGCS, to the office of president. James R. Fitzroy, CGCS, was elected vice president; and Robert M. Randquist, CGCS, was elected secretary/treasurer. Peter J. Grass, CGCS; Keith A. Ihms, CGCS; and John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, were elected directors. Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, and Sanford G. Queen, CGCS, remain on the board for the second year of their two-year terms. David S. Downing II, CGCS, will serve an additional year as immediate past president. ❖



The 2009 GCSAA Board of Directors: (front row) Randquist, Downing, Kuhns and Fitzroy; (back row) Queen, Ihms, Grass, O'Keefe and Finlen.

Source: GCSAA Press Release

12th Annual
**New England
Regional Turfgrass
Conference & Show**
March 2-5, 2009
R.I. Convention Center, Providence

Keynote Speaker
Tuesday, March 3,
3:15-4:00pm
Greg Gumbel

10 Steps for Safer Driving at Work

By: Ron Smith, MBA, CPSI

Nearly half of workplace deaths occur in transportation-related mishaps. Financial losses are estimated at \$60 billion a year in direct accident costs and lost productivity. The loss of life is, of course, beyond measure.

In an attempt to reduce the number of transportation-related accidents, OSHA has joined with two other organizations, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), to publish a 10-step recommendation to make driving at work safer. The 10 steps are listed below.

1) Management Involvement. The organizations say workplace road safety starts at the top. The program needs unequivocal management support in both policy-setting and allocating resources. But workers should be involved in the decision-making process, as well.

2) Written Policies/Procedures. The recommendation calls for a strict, no illegal drugs or alcohol policy during duty hours (which includes all breaks and on-call periods), and suggests dealing in policy terms with seat-belt use, distracted driving (including use of cell phones while driving), and use of personal vehicles for work.

3) Driver agreements. The organizations suggest a *written contract* with each of your drivers in which they state that they understand and will follow all relevant policies and laws. With this document in hand, no one can later say, "They didn't tell me that."

4) Driver record checks. Driving records are public information, and it's easy to get each prospective driver's record of motor vehicle convictions and accidents. The organizations suggest screening out those with poor records or certain serious violations (such as reckless driving) before hire and then instituting a point system on those you do employ. Point totals are checked at 6, 12, and 36 months after hire. Drivers who come up short are taken off the road.

5) Reporting Policy. Make it clear that even a minor fender-bender must be reported to a supervisor immediately, via processes in place in advance.

6) The vehicle element. It's well accepted that road safety has three components: the driver, driving conditions, and the vehicle itself. The organizations suggest purchasing models with "best-in-class" safety ratings from the DOT, then fully implementing the makers' preventive maintenance schedule.

This should be supplemented with a complete mechanical inspection at least annually, with all maintenance records kept on file. Insist that personal vehicles used for business also be carefully maintained.

7) Discipline. The organizations recommend a structured program of disciplinary actions based on a pattern of violations or incidents, with known penalties along the way. Some companies use a point system for this.

8) Rewards. The other side of the disciplinary coin is to reward safe driving. The groups advise building driving safety into the overall job performance evaluation, with rewards or incentives.

9) Compliance. Be sure all drivers know the law, as spelled out by various agencies, including NHTSA, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which regulates commercial trucking, the US. DOT, and other agencies.

10) Training. Because it's a skill so commonly used, most people think they already know how to drive safely. A solid defensive driving training program can show how much they have yet to learn—likely one reason the organizations recommend repeated training, supplemented by constant reminders. ❖

Images from the Golf Industry Show and New Orleans-2009

Photo Credit: Rich Gagnon



Images from the Golf Industry Show and New Orleans-2009

Photo Credit: Rich Gagnon



ANNOUNCEMENTS

• Our condolences are extended to David Barber and family on the recent passing of Dave's daughter Deborah (Barber) Munro.

• As spring approaches most of our staffs become comprised of high school and college students. Many of these students come from middle class families, possess a blue collar work ethic, and are struggling to pay bills and put their kids through college. In these difficult economic times it is important to remind your staff members that there is help for them when trying to pay college tuition. The Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund recognizes those who have worked in Superintendent operations for two-plus years and have financial need. For this past school year, The Fund awarded \$1.5 Million to 328 students across the state of Massachusetts. I urge you to remind your staff members of the Ouimet Fund and the many ways they can help students achieve their goal of a higher education. They can feel free to contact The Fund at 774.430.9090 or visit <http://www.ouimet.org/scholarships/index.html>.

• Please join the Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation, friends and alumni of URI for a complimentary luncheon at the NERTF Conference & Show on Tuesday, March 3rd from 11:30 am-1:00 pm in the Rotunda. Any questions, please call Dave Wallace at 401-641-0306.

• The publishers of *Superintendent Magazine* wanted to let you know that they now have a free posting forum for people looking to hire or for those looking to relocate in the golf market on their social community site. Please visit www.SuperintendentSite.com. This is completely free, even registration on the site is free!

• As in the past, The Newsletter continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release free of charge. This is a great way to advertise for free.

CALENDAR

March 2-5
New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show
 RI Convention Center
 Providence, RI

April 27:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
 Whitinsville Golf Club
 Golf Tournament and Education
 Host: David Johnson

April 28:
Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation Golf Tournament
 Agawam Hunt
 Host: Drew Cummins

May 11:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
 Joint meeting with GCSACC - Bear Cup
 Franklin Country Club
 Host: Michael Luccini, CGCS

June 24:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
 Member/Guest Tournament
 Segregansett Country Club
 Host: Rich Gagnon

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