



THE NEWSLETTER



July 2013

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.

Bill Spence Readies The Country Club for the US Amateur

By: Peter Rappoccio, GCSANE Newsletter Editor

In a few short weeks, the 113th United States Amateur Championship will be held at The Country Club in Brookline, Massachusetts. Golf Course Superintendent Bill Spence is no stranger to hosting major championships at The Country Club. His experience goes all the way back four decades when he began his career as Superintendent of Pebble Beach (which hosted several Pro-Am's and the 1977 PGA Championship). Most recently the Women's Amateur and the famous 1999 Ryder Cup comeback were held at The Country Club under Bill's tenure as Superintendent. I had the opportunity to catch up with Bill and get some insight into his career and his preparations for the Amateur this month.

Starting off as a UMass graduate in the early 70's, Bill became a Superintendent at the young age of 23 at Pebble Beach. After leaving Pebble, he continued his career as a Superintendent at Kansas City Country Club. There, he hosted several local and state tournaments and developed a relationship with one of the greatest players of all, Tom Watson. Tom was around the club a lot and took a great interest in what Bill and his staff did. Bill also credits Tom for valuable knowledge as to what Tour players look for in terms of conditions on a golf course. He fondly remembers spending time with Tom on the driving range and getting pointers on his golf swing. While he admits it was intimidating, he is grateful for the opportunity that few of us will ever have.

Planning for the Amateur began several years ago. It started with the implementation of a new master plan by Gil Hanse. The plan was designed for the membership but he and the club prioritized the additions for the event. The club also installed a new irrigation system which has given the club more versatility in its watering. The practice facility and 1st tee were done by Gil and the remainder of the construction was done "in-house" by the staff.

One of the goals Bill and his staff set for themselves was to get everything done on the course before 7:00 in the morning. In order to accomplish this, planning began last

winter with a list of duties for each day. Quickly he realized The Country Club's staff of 28 was going to need a little help. A crew of 60 volunteers, comprising of local Superintendents and Assistants, will help with the duties in getting the course ready. Bill credits his former Assistant and current Oak Hill Superintendent Scott Lagana, CGCS for heading up the volunteer responsibilities.

Bill went on to say that one of the challenges with hosting a major championship in August is the weather. Many of the events Bill has hosted over the years have been in August, so he is accustomed to the unpredictability in the weather. He recalls a water shortage at Pebble in '77, which left the club with the ability to water only greens and tees. Looking back Bill says 'I was startled on how brown we really were.' In traveling to the Amateur last year he remembers how stressed the course looked at Cherry Hills and went on to say TCC will be as well.

As many of us know, 2013 has been one of the more interesting summers in terms of weather. As Bill said "interesting is probably the nicest I have heard it called". The goal of Bill and his staff is to provide a firm playing surface for the contestants. This, he said, will be a challenge given the weather and inputs needed to provide championship quality conditions for the duration of the tournament. He went on to say there will be some 'putting the pieces" back together afterward depending on what type of weather is forecasted. Bill stressed the importance of having the course as healthy as it can be heading into the nine day stretch of tournament conditions which the Amateur schedule requires.

It doesn't get any easier for Bill and his staff; they have a large member event the day after the Amateur concludes and are filled with outings and member tournaments for the next month. For those who have not been to the Amateur it is a much smaller scale event, fewer ropes, and fewer crowds. Please come out and see all the hard work Bill and his staff have done in what will undoubtedly be a tremendous event. ❖



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Ouimet Golf Marathon



Kevin Corvino and Erik Doldt (r)

For the third consecutive year Kevin Corvino, Superintendent of the Dedham Country and Polo Club will be representing the GCSA of New England in the Francis Ouimet Golf Marathon Fundraiser. The event will take place at the Stow Acres Country Club, August 7, 2013.

This will be the 21st annual event to raise funds for need-based college scholarships. Last year Kevin played 103 holes and raised \$3,250.00. This year his goal is to top last year's totals.

The goal of the Ouimet Fund is to raise \$260,000.00 from this year's event. With your help this can be done. The money raised by Kevin will help those who have worked on many of the courses of our Association Members.

Of course Kevin can't do this alone. Last year he had the help of Erik Doldt and Nat Binns. Kevin and Nat did the solicitations and made the phone calls for financial support. Erik was Kevin's caddie during the event. This year the team will continue their fundraising.

It's easy to make a donation. To do so, [click here](#). This link will bring you directly to the donation page.

Please keep in mind if you or your children received a scholarship or financial aid, more than likely someone donated their time, energy or financial support to help you. ❖

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Joe Sprague Steps Down as Executive Director of the MGA; Will Take Over as the USGA's Director of Regional Affairs for the Northeast Region

Norton, MA — After six years serving as the executive director of the Massachusetts Golf Association (MGA), **Joe Sprague** announced that he will be stepping down at the end of the month and joining the staff of the United States Golf Association (USGA).

Effective in August, Sprague will serve as the USGA's Director of Regional Affairs for the Northeast Region. In that capacity, Sprague will work directly with the USGA executive team to further the USGA's strategy to deliver value to the state and regional golf associations. He will serve as a liaison with regional and state golf associations from Maine down to Pennsylvania. He will be based out of the USGA's headquarters in Far Hills, New Jersey.

"Although we will miss Joe here at the MGA, we feel that it is a great fit for Joe and a true honor to be selected by the USGA," said **Dr. Paul Burke, Jr.**, the MGA's president. "The MGA has always enjoyed a strong relationship with the USGA and this new development will certainly help to continue to strengthen that partnership."

Sprague brings an unmatched knowledge and nearly 22 years of experience in golf administration to the USGA. As executive director of the MGA, Sprague was responsible for managing the 501(c)3 organization that services more than 350 Member Clubs and 84,000 golfers across the Bay State.

"It has been a privilege for me to work for the MGA these past six years," said Sprague. "I've said it before and I'll say it again – the MGA has the most dedicated and loyal group of volunteers of any golf association I know. I look forward to continuing my relationships with the many friends and colleagues I have here in the Northeast."

In addition to operating the USGA's GHIN Handicap and Course Rating systems for its members, the MGA – which ranks as the seventh largest state golf association in the country – also runs a highly successful championship program and oversees all USGA Championship local and sectional qualifying rounds held in Massachusetts.

The organization has also taken a lead role – in recent years – in serving players of all ages and playing levels. Under Sprague's direction, the MGA launched the MGA Member Day program in 2010.

Aimed at bringing the "MGA Championship" experience to all, any golfer who holds a current and active MGA/USGA handicap index is eligible to participate in these one-day fun events. Due to its growing popularity, the program has grown from three to 13 events since 2010.

"I am extremely proud of the MGA Member Day program," said Sprague. "The response that we have received from the participants has been overwhelming and the growth of the program

since its inception proves that it serves a need for golfers in the state."

The First Tee of Massachusetts (TFTM) program is another feather in Sprague's cap as it is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2013.

"The First Tee programming teaches important values that can positively impact the lives of all who play golf, especially children," says Sprague.

More than 65,000 Bay State youth – ages 5 to 18 – have already participated in The First Tee curriculum since 2003 through programming run at the four TFTM sites (in Norton, Lynnfield, Springfield and Cape Cod) and The First Tee National School Program.

After spending two years as a caddie on the PGA Tour, Sprague got his start in the golf administration business when he was hired by the Rhode Island Golf Association in 1992, serving eight years as tournament director and seven as executive director. Part of his stint at the RIGA was spent working under the tutelage of his father, **Joe Sr. Sprague**. In 2007, he succeeded **Tom Landry** as MGA executive director.

Sprague also served as the president of the International Association of Golf Administrators (IAGA) in 2012 and has – over the years – been named to several USGA Committees, including the Regional Associations Committee, the Joe Dey Award Committee, and the Herbert Warren Wind Book Award Committee.

In the 110-year history of the MGA, Sprague was only the sixth person to serve as executive director. **Fred Corcoran** was the first to serve (1927-36) and he was succeeded by his brothers **John** (1937-45) and **Bill** (1946-69). From 1969-1998, **Dick Haskell** served the prestigious post before handing over the reigns to Landry. ❖



Atlantic
golf & turf

Tee-Up New England 2013: Funding Turfgrass Research



In less than 18 hours after Adam Scott dunned the Green Jacket in his first major tournament victory, Tee-Up New England opened its 2nd annual online auction on April 15th at 12 noon. The "Masters" ignites the golfer's passion to get out and play especially after a long winter. When deciding on the best week to hold a round of golf auction, it seemed by far that the Monday after the Masters would be the

logical if not perfect week for it. But, if you were like many others, especially those here in New England, you were probably glued to a news screen somewhere watching the tragedy unfolding at the Boston Marathon on that Monday. To make matters worse the bombing became a full weeklong saga as police closed in on the suspected bombers. The "perfect week" for a golf auction ended up with the most incredibly prolonged distraction for the area possibly since the Battle of Bunker Hill. This put things in perspective as our hearts go out to all the injured. An attack like this changes so many lives, and we are all just very grateful that the bombing didn't involve more victims.

In 2012, our first year, we were able to sign up 56 courses to participate donating 57 rounds of golf. A year later, 95 courses had donated 99 rounds of golf and they went on the week-long auction block as noted on April 15th. As expected, bidding went slow for the first 5 days, but as the weekend approached activity started to pick up. The events in Boston seem to understandably dominate people's attention and created obstacles. Sports Radio WEEI in Boston was going to facilitate ads over the weekend for Tee-Up New England. Unfortunately the studios were on lockdown due to the bombings and the ads could not be produced. Despite the distraction, golfers from all over New England were involved in the bidding. By 6pm on the 22nd, all rounds had been bid on and some of the higher priced donations went for more than \$600 a foursome. For golfers, Tee-Up New England it is a great way to get a shot at playing some of the supreme golf courses in New England and usually for a substantial discount. With these proceeds all going toward

turfgrass research, we are proud to say that the end user (the golfer) is paying directly for some of today's much needed turfgrass research. The online auction netted more than \$16,000 for turf research. This potentially would allow the foundation to possibly add another research project each year. In 2013, the foundation is funding 12 projects in total at UMass, UConn and URI, with research expenses reaching \$153,000.

A thank you goes out to all 95 participating facilities and for supporting organizations helping with the 2013 Tee-Up New England event. It is a great start to a program that involves the entire golf community. The idea is that all golf facilities should be able to donate a round of golf as an investment in the future of the game, and in return we hope the research will benefit that course down the road. State golf associations have been a huge help in getting the word out to the golfers over the winter and leading up to the online auction. The golfer is the customer, the end user, the buyer and the beneficiary of good turf conditions. This is a new approach with funding coming directly from the golfer. We hope your course can participate in Tee-Up New England 2014! ❖

Gary Sykes, Executive Director
New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation, Inc.



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Thoughts From Your Association Manager

June 27, 2013 was a special day for The First Tee of Massachusetts, the John Deere Corporation and the TPC Network. John Deere is sponsoring a nationwide program called "Careers on Course" and the first event in the country took place at the TPC of Boston at Norton.



Photo by David Colt

Tom Brodeur, Superintendent at the TPC course, hosted the event and fellow superintendents Steve Cadenelli, Jason Adams, Jim Small, assistant superintendent Royal Healy, and sales representative Scott Mackintosh ably assisted. Also representing the TPC were assistants Kevin Crawford, Chris Split and Kyle Elliot. John Deere representatives Ron

Tumiski, Ren Wilkes, and Bill Rockwell provided their expertise from both turf management and equipment perspectives. Other participants included Alicia Pearson of SODCO and Michelle Maltais of Allen's Seed.

The First Tee participants were boys and girls from the Massachusetts and Connecticut chapters. Joe O'Brien, Vice President of Education & Opportunities and Rachel Maruno, Supervisor of Chapter Education & Services, represented the national program. They and a film crew made the trip from The First Tee national headquarters in St. Augustine, Florida.



Tom had set up stations where groups of participants learned about irrigation components, pumping systems, irrigation techniques, and computer control of the irrigation system from Kevin Crawford, Kyle Elliot and Jason Adams. At another station Tom and Steve Cadenelli explained the physiology of the turfgrass plant and the environment in which it grows, the proper application of plant protectants

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Kevin Doyle - GCSAA Updates



OK so it's a million point five degrees out and I'm sure all the GCSANE members are working hard to keep your respective courses alive, and here I am trying to ensure they can keep some very small parts of it dead.

As is often the case in my position, one short communication can alter the course of a day, and in this case especially, a newsletter article that I promised to have in on Wednesday (sorry Peter). The communication was a simple text from the 203: "EPA just cancelled registration on Chlorpyrifos!!!! Not much warning on that! No tools left for adult hyperodes where resistance exists!"

YIKES! And away we go. A flurry of emails to Field Staff colleagues of the "have you heard" nature followed by forwards to the GR and Environmental staff and we're off. After some hunting, the notification put forth by the EPA is found (linked [here](#)).

The challenge of the Field Staff position is often boiled down to explaining how GCSAA membership is "more than just a magazine." The original article written for this issue detailed the Government Relations (GR) Quarterly Briefing, which just happened to be this past Wednesday (July 17th). This is a tremendous member benefit, and the GR efforts are often brought up in conversations detailing GCSAA commitment to members. The call was an excellent opportunity to learn first-hand what is being done on behalf of every member of GCSAA by your association. Topics covered informed and clarified the association position on two of the four "pillars" of immigration reform. GCSAA and many members require affordable, yet unskilled labor to perform tasks at their facilities, which a temporary worker based program can provide. Affordable worker verification programs, to ensure labor being used by our members is legal, and verifiable at a sensible cost has also been deemed critical to our industry by GCSAA's GR Committee and Board of Directors, your peers. Point one. The Farm Bill being bounced around like a Ping-Pong ball in Congress is of importance to golf! Hopefully you are aware by now, but pesticide applications on or near a water body of the U.S. requires a federal permit, an NPDES permit. As was discussed on the call, there is still no definition of a water body of the U.S. or what exactly defines "near." So repealing the need for such an action on the part of the members of GCSAA is very significant, and details of the work being done on your behalf were discussed on the call.

So why has my article changed? Due to this one text message, the same GR machine that is working on the above action items is in full swing investigating the EPA decision. Maybe you don't utilize temporary worker programs. Perhaps you're not pressed with legal worker identification issues. But do you have bugs? Do your bugs have resistance issues? Might they attain such status in the future?

Dow has responded to this issue noting that no changes in golf products or labels result from this measure. They were old labels, and products no longer manufactured by Dow. Generic production of the chemical is also not affected. So a happy ending to another GR fire drill, at least for now. ❖

Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Field Staff Representative

GCSANE

Calendar of Events 2013

August 26

**Marlborough Country Club
Superintendent Championship**

September 23

**Essex County Club
S & B Tournament**

September 25

**Wedgewood Country Club
Assistants meeting**

October 1

**Black Rock Country Club
Pro/Super Championship**

October 7

**The Ledges Golf Club
Monthly Meeting**

October 15

**Sterling Country Club
New England Supt. Champs**

November 4

**Milton-Hoosic Club
9-Hole Tournament**

Association Manager - continued from page 5

and how the recycling of products is accomplished. Tom also explained the function of equipment used for specific course maintenance functions. Ron Tumiski and Jim Small demonstrated how to change a cup, the verticutting process, mowing a green and ball mark repair. Royal Healy and Scott Mackintosh presented a classroom setting where the kids



learned more about the growing of turfgrass and how the plants function. Ren Wilkes and Bill Rockwell explained how equipment is developed, and maintained and the potential fields of employment associated with equipment manufacturing. Tom and Chris Split explained the Audubon program es-

tablished at the course and led groups on the course to view the wetlands maintenance program, native vegetation management, wildlife preservation and interesting features of the TPC property.

After lunch, presentations were made by head golf professional Dave Corrado, general manager Dan Waslewski and food and beverage manager Ben Chatham. Each did a good job explaining their roles at the club and answered questions from the attentive group.

Joe McCabe, executive director of the The First Tee of Massachusetts said the day was a valuable chance for participants to gain experience and career knowledge about the golf industry.

As an observer of the day's events I have to say it seemed like the kids were very interested in learning about things they had no idea existed before the day began.

Two of the lucky participants will have the opportunity to shadow Tom Brodeur during the Deutsche Bank Championship in August.

A brief clip of the event was shown during the broadcast of the John Deere Classic, July 8-14, 2013. ❖



By Don Hearn

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Some Etiquette and Opinions

Introductions

The proper way to make an introduction is to introduce a lower-ranking person to a higher-ranking person. For example, if your green chairman is Mr. Jones and you are introducing your assistant Carl Smith to him, the correct introduction would be "Mr. Jones, I'd like you to meet Carl Smith." If you forget a person's name while making an introduction, don't panic. Proceed with the introduction with a statement such as, "I'm sorry, your name has just slipped my mind." Hopefully, this wouldn't happen if it's your assistant being introduced, but strange things can happen at any time. Omitting an introduction is a bigger faux pas than salvaging a botched introduction.

Even if you have impeccable social graces, you will inevitably have a professional blunder at some point. When this happens, apologize sincerely without gushing or being too effusive. State your apology like you mean it, and then move on. Making too big an issue of your mistake only magnifies the damage and makes the recipient more uncomfortable.

Making Positive Impressions

How you present yourself to others in the business world, and at your club or course is very important. People will often form a first impression about you within seconds of your first meeting. Here are some tips to help make a good impression.

- Stand straight, make eye contact, turn towards people when they are speaking and genuinely smile at people.
- Dress appropriately. You don't have to wear a starched shirt, a golf shirt will work or a clean, ironed sport shirt will do. Whatever is your mode of dress is your business, but don't look like a slob. If you want to be treated like a professional, you have to look like a professional.
- When meeting someone for the first time, be sure to

shake hands palm to palm with a gentle firmness.

- Kindness and courtesy count!

People

How you treat people says a lot about you.

- Learn names and learn them quickly. A good tip for remembering names is to use a person's name three times within your first conversation with them. Also, write names down and keep business cards. People know when you don't know their names and may interpret this as a sign that you don't value them. Keeping business cards is a good idea since you can transfer a person's information to your contacts at a later time. That way, when it's time to meet again, you'll have the information at your fingertips.
- Self-assess: Think about how you treat your golfers, board members, peers, and subordinates. Would the differences in the relationships, if seen by others, cast you in an unfavorable light? If so, find where the imbalance exists, and start the process of reworking the relationship dynamic. In other words, treat everybody respectfully.
- What you share with others about your personal life is your choice, but be careful. Things can come back to haunt you. Personally, I believe it's bad practice to do business with club members. I know many of them have experience with taxes, insurance, legal advice and other areas that we all need support with. I also know it's human nature for many to "tell tales out of school." Your business is personal and should stay that way.

By Don Hearn



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Melrose Leadership Academy

The Melrose Leadership Academy supports the professional development of GCSAA member superintendents by providing individuals the opportunity to attend the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show. The program is set up to provide up to 20 scholarships every year. The academy is open to applicants who meet the following **eligibility requirements:**

- Must be a GCSAA Class A member and have been for five or more years
- Have not attended the education conference in the past five years or more

Applications for the 2014 Melrose Leadership Academy will be open through Sept. 15, 2013.

The history

The Melrose Leadership Academy was established in 2012 by Ken Melrose, retired CEO and chairman of the board of The Toro Co., and is supported by a \$1 million gift to the EIFG from The Kendrick B. Melrose Family Foundation. This program will have a positive impact for each superintendent selected and ultimately, the game of golf.

Selection process

The selection process is designed to provide a class representative of the diverse elements of the GCSAA membership. The selection criteria takes into account qualifications, interest and financial need, and to the extent possible, will be focused on less experienced superintendents who will bene-

fit most from the educational opportunity. Applicants should be able to demonstrate an increasing level of responsibility in their profession by working to advance in their careers, and the potential for continuing to play a leadership role with GCSAA and their GCSAA affiliated chapter. Work experience, scope of personal interests, level of community involvement, and recognition of leadership abilities through receipt of honors/awards may also have significant impact in the final selection process.

Applications for the 2013 Melrose Leadership Academy will be accepted beginning July 15 and will close Sept. 15.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.eifg.org/education/melrose-leadership-academy/>

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