



TEE TO GREEN

Published by the
Metropolitan Golf Course
Superintendents Association

President's Message

Don't Let the Season Take a Toll on You

This time of year, superintendents are almost always operating in a state of emergency. If we're not shifting into overdrive to prime the course for a major tournament, we're fending off a fungus, waging war on hyperodes weevil, or keeping a vigilant watchout for wilt.

This year's unusually warm weather has brought that pressure-cooker period on a lot sooner, and guess what? It'll probably last a lot longer. So it's important that we pace ourselves—and our work—to keep from short-circuiting before the season's out.

To be sure the coming months don't take a toll on you—and your course—here are a few words of wisdom I've collected from some of the country's foremost stress experts:

Rule #1: Set priorities. Few people can work 17-hour days and still be productive. In fact, a chronically overloaded work schedule leads not only to extreme frustration, but also diminished performance.

The way out? *Plan* your day, rather than taking it as it comes. Identify your high-priority projects, and set them in motion while you're most alert. For instance, it doesn't make sense to spend your freshest hours answering phone messages or sifting through mail. Save those tasks for later in the day. Then, when quitting time approaches, you'll be inspired to step up *(continued on page 3)*

Special Feature

If you think faster is better, you may be . . .

Putting on the Edge of Disaster

Though most golfers expect—no *demand*—superfast greens, one the worst things you can do is succumb to the pressure. Putting greens that are lightning fast, like those at The Masters or a U.S. Open, have been specially prepared for *one week*. They can't possibly be maintained at those speeds throughout the season—and come out alive.

Your goal then, as superintendent, is to educate your membership about the pros of slower putting. There are many. The following piece should give you the ammunition you need to begin raising the cutting height of your mowers—just a notch.

The Green Speed Myth

When Architect Bill Fownes wanted to check the green speed at Pennsylvania's famed Oakmont Country Club, he would walk out to the second hole and carefully drop a ball on the back of the putting surface. If it didn't roll down the slope, off the front of the green, and into the fairway, he would tell the

grounds crew to cut and roll the green again.

At least that's according to Oakmont lore. For most of this century, Oakmont has set the standard against which all other top clubs measure their green speeds. Now comes new evidence from Architect Pete Dye that green speed in the old days may be wildly exaggerated.

Dye had motion pictures of the 1962 U.S. Open at Oakmont studied by mathematical experts. Analyzing the time lapse of putts rolling across the greens, they've concluded that Oakmont's speeds back then were about 8 on the Stimpmeter, which today is considered relatively slow.

If true, Dye's discovery is important because it might curb the chase for faster greens, golf's costly equivalent of the arms race. "The USGA is trying to raise \$10 million to find hardier turf," says Dye. "But all they've got to *raise* is the mowers—1/16th of an inch."

But golfers persist in the mistaken belief that faster is better. And just as mistakenly, club *(continued on page 4)*

Also in This Issue

- ② A Long List of Events
- ③ Meet Your July Meeting Host
- ④ 100 Tee It Up at Manager-Superintendent Tourney
- ⑤ Stanwich Takes Invitational Trophy
- ⑦ 1991 Scholarship Awards Announced
- ⑦ Green Life's Chem-Free Plan: Is It All It's Cracked Up to Be?

Meeting Reminder

Golf Meeting

Tuesday, September 24
Scarsdale Golf Club, Hartsdale, NY

Herb Waterous will be the host superintendent.

Social Event

MetGCSA 1991 Picnic

Monday, July 22, 3 p.m.
The Woodway Beach Club, Stamford, CT

Superintendent Larry Pakkala is once again hosting this annual family event. The fun and games begin at 3 p.m. with family olympics—and all the tennis, volleyball, and swimming you can muster before sundown.

Dinner's at 6 with a choice of hamburgers and hotdogs, at \$10 per person, or lobster and steak, at \$28 per person. Anyone under 18 eats free of charge. Cocktails are extra.

Reservations are due by July 17.

Special Events

Field Diagnostic Course for Turfgrass Managers

Tuesday-Thursday, August 6-8
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

For further information, contact Joann Gruttadauro, 607-255-1792.

MetGCSA Professional Turfgrass Field Day

Tuesday, September 17
Rain date: Wednesday, September 18
Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY

Don't miss this golden opportunity to scan area suppliers' wares. This year's special attractions include a Turf & Athletic Field Maintenance Clinic and Reel Mower Grinding Clinic. For further information, contact Bob Lippman, 914-248-7476, or Byron Johnson, 203-748-5069.

Northeast Autumn Classic

Sunday-Tuesday, September 29, 30,
October 1
The Quechee Club, Quechee, VT

Mark Fuller is host superintendent.

New York State Turfgrass Association Turf and Grounds Exposition

Tuesday-Thursday, November 5-8
Rochester, NY

For further information, contact NYSTA, 800-873-TURF or 518-783-1229.

Seminar

New York State Turfgrass Association Golf Course Design/Construction and Golf Day

Tuesday, August 13, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
SUNY Delhi, Delhi, NY

This seminar focuses on retaining the original design intent of a mature golf course while making the modifications necessary for modern-day play.

The event is cosponsored by the Metropolitan GCSA, Central New York GCSA, Finger Lakes AGCS, Hudson Valley GCSA, and Northeastern GCSA. Proceeds from the seminar are used to support the Delhi golf course internship.

For further information, contact NYSTA, 800-873-TURF or 518-783-1229.

Membership Directory Correction

Note this change in your directory: Bruce Moore of Eastern Land Management Inc. can be reached by dialing 800-926-GREEN.

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Don't Let the Season Take a Toll on You

your pace and avoid frittering away valuable time on low-payoff activities.

Rule #2: Take time for family and fun. People who are most successful on the job *always* take time out for family and hobbies. A Shell Oil Company executive I read about hunts game birds. He claims precision shooting clears his mind and allows him to return to work with renewed enthusiasm. (We could all use a dose of *that* this time of year.)

Though no one denies the benefit of exercise in alleviating stress, psychologists advise against participating in recreational activities that involve close competition with another person or yourself. Their rationale: If you're trying to beat your opponent at racquetball or trying to outperform your

best lap time at the pool, you're probably not truly relaxing. And if you lose or don't measure up, you'll only add to your stress, not relieve it.

Another must-do: Select an extracurricular activity that focuses on tangible objects—like woodworking, fishing, or building a model plane with your son or daughter—rather than on ideas. If you're reading a magazine, for instance, a word or phrase might trigger worry about a problem on the course. It's far more difficult to slip back into work when you're trying to reel in a fish dinner or perfect the finish on a piece of wood.

In the end, just be sure to take time out of your day—even it's just an hour—to do something you truly enjoy.

Rule #3: Don't feel guilty about taking time for yourself. Though many of us drive ourselves full throttle during the golf season because we get a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from what we do, just as many of us work nonstop to avoid an uncomfortable feeling—an almost punishing sense of guilt—because we're not doing *something* or we're home at a reasonable hour. Let's face it, we've been conditioned to associate relaxation during the season with laziness and self-indulgence. Hogwash.

Program yourself to take a time-out. Tell yourself—more often than not—“Hey, I'm going to take a lunch break—or I'm going to get out of here at a reasonable hour today.” The golf course will still be there when you get back. And in the long run, taking five—or ten—will pay off.

LARRY PAKKALA, CGCS
President

Spotlight

Here's Looking at the Site and Host Superintendent for the July Meeting

Those of you attending in the July 15 MetGCSA Golf Meeting will have the opportunity to play Pelham Country Club—one of famed Golf Course Architect Devereux Emmet's “Roaring Twenties” designs.

Under host Superintendent Tony Baviello's charge, the 70-year-old course has seen numerous changes. He and his staff have constructed nine new tees, rebuilt greens #4 and #7, reconstructed 36 traps, and built a new driving range. Tony's also initiated major drainage work to reroute the course's various “flood zones.”

Tony grew up in Irvington, NY, and like many superintendents, he got his start in the business working on part-time summer crews. His first golf course experience was at Ardsley Country Club in Ardsley-on-Hudson, NY. He worked during the summers of '74 and '75 as the night waterman and then as a crew member while he pursued a degree from SUNY Agricultural and Technical College in Delhi, NY.

He graduated in 1979 with an associate's in Horticulture and a specializa-

tion in turf management. With his horticultural degree in hand, Tony took a two-year hiatus from golf course work, accepting a position as a landscape foreman at Pound Ridge Nurseries in Pound Ridge, NY.

In 1981, however, Tony found himself back at Ardsley—this time as a foreman. He stayed there until 1983, when he landed the job as assistant superintendent at Wykagyl Country Club in New Rochelle, NY.

“Two” seems to be Tony's lucky number, because in 1985—again, two years after his start date at Wykagyl—Tony was offered the superintendent's position at Pelham.

Recently joining the ranks of certified golf course superintendents, Tony shares his expertise by serving on the *Tee to Green* Editorial Committee.

He lives on club grounds with his wife, Laura, and two sons, Christopher, 4, and David, 2 1/2. When he has a breather, Tony likes to spend it deep-sea fishing, golfing, or playing softball.

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Putting on the Edge of Disaster

members argue that their greens were faster back in the '50s and '60s. Most agronomists agree that this is not possible. In fact, USGA Green Section National Director Jim Snow cites four innovations that have, only in recent years, greatly added speed:

- It's only been in the past 15 years that clubs cut greens seven days a week. They used to be cut every other day—a big change.

- Cutting greens at $\frac{3}{16}$ ths was considered very close and $\frac{1}{4}$ th of an inch was common until the 1970s. The introduction of thinner bedknives allowed greens to be scalped below $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch.

- Clubs used to topdress greens once or twice a year; now they do it lightly every three weeks.

- Until the 1970s, we didn't have verticutters and groomers to take the excess top growth off the blades of grass.

But the real culprit is that yard-long metal rod known as the Stimpmeter, which was developed to quantify green speed. When it was introduced in the mid-'70s, the USGA surveyed more than 1,500 greens in 36 states and found that the average roll was 6 feet 6 inches on the Stimpmeter. "It's crept up over the years until the average is closer to 8 today, and 9 feels slow to some people," says Snow.

The Cons of Under-Cutting Your Greens

The result has been higher expenses for maintenance of weaker turf that's more susceptible to disease. Several years ago in the Midwest, dozens of country clubs noticed that their bentgrass greens were dying of bacteria known as C15 Decline, while the greens at neighboring daily-fee and municipal courses were unaffected. Turf-types began calling it the "Rich Man's Disease," because it hit only the wealthy courses, like Muirfield Village and Butler National, where the greens were cut too low.

Trying to maintain consistently fast greens means always living on the edge of disaster," says Snow.

Some classic, old courses have now

increased their speeds to the point that severely undulating greens are unputtable. Then members argue the greens



"Trying to maintain consistently fast greens means always living on the edge of disaster."



have "settled" over time and now need to be rebuilt. Of course, all they need to do is play the greens at the speed they were designed for.

Now, some courses are starting to post their green speeds on locker room bulletin boards. This only encourages idiotic competition among clubs for the

fastest greens in town and leads macho golfers to demand higher numbers—or the super's job.

Longtime turf authority Al Radko says good putting begins at 7 feet 6 inches. And for everyday play, it should not get above 9.

The PGA Tour aims to have its greens at around 10 feet, and the U.S. Open shoots for 10 to 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet. But those are once-a-year occasions, with the host club's maintenance program targeted for tournament week.

If there's one thing we're learning, it's that speed kills—if not the superintendent, the greens.

This article, written by Jerry Tarde, was adapted from the January 1991 issue of Golf Digest.

Scorecard

100 Tee It Up at the May Manager-Superintendent Tournament

The May 23 Silver Spring meeting attracted 100 golfers. The field consisted of 21 Manager-Superintendent teams and 58 golfers playing a blind partner format.

Not all took home prizes, but everyone had a winning day: The weather was excellent, the food superb, and the golf course magnificently conditioned. Here are the event's "heavy hitters":

Manager-Superintendent Low Net

- 1st E. Millett and D. Vasquez, *Ridgeway CC*
- 2nd C. Denny and M. Kondrat, *Century CC*
- 3rd A. Baviello and S. Burne, *Pelham CC*

Blind Partner Low Net

- 1st R. Gonyea, *Rye GC*, and P. Bilbao, *Guest*
- 2nd F. Buschini, *Brae Burn CC*, and W. Urban, *Mill River CC*
- 3rd T. Moore, *Knollwood CC*, and C. Quazza, *Haledon Nurseries*

Manager-Superintendent Low Gross

E. Millett, *Ridgeway CC*

Blind Partner Low Gross

J. Farrell, *Lofts Seed*

Longest Drive

M. Millett, *Old Oaks CC*

Closest to Line

T. Boles, *Bedford Golf & Tennis Club*

Closest to Pin (#15)

W. Mills, *Silver Spring CC*

Closest to Pin (#10)

W. Remo, *Rock Spring Club*

Special thanks to Silver Spring Superintendent Peter Rappoccio, Manager Bob Sommer, and Pro Stan Garrett for a well-planned event.

MATT CEPLO

Westchester Hills Golf Club



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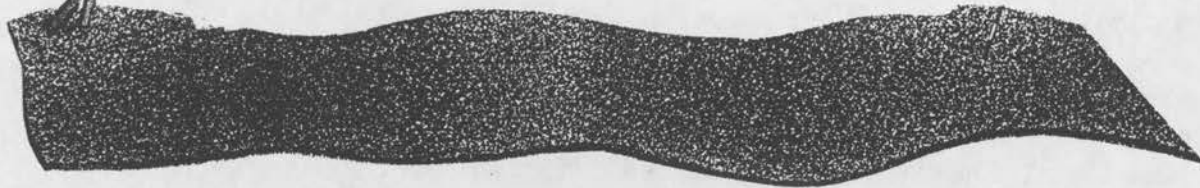
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The alliance of The Toro Company's extensive irrigation experience with the technical expertise of Motorola will provide the golf industry with a remarkably unique new control system, with applications and service support to match. The second generation of OSMAC (On Site Management and Control) has evolved substantially beyond the first version, incorporating features and functions that are needed by a large segment of the golf market. The system is extremely versatile in that it can function as either a low cost upgrade to an existing control system, or as a complete control system for entirely new golf installations.

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For additional information, call your area sales representative from Turf Products Corporation.

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Stanwich Takes Invitational Trophy

The June 10 Invitational at the Patterson Club went off without a hitch—for everyone except the Pelham team, which suffered a flat tire on the parkway and had to pick up speed to make it to the tourney on time. (Tony, we understand that Mario Andretti is looking for a pit crew director.)

The tournament was a close one: It called for a match of cards, which put The Stanwich Club in first place. Here's a look at how the winning teams fared:

Low Net Winners

- 58 The Stanwich Club
S. Niven, B. Farrell, S. Green, B. Looch
- 58 Fenway Golf Club
J. Alonzi, L. Fisher, J. Foxx, M. Rosengarten
- 59 Brae Burn Country Club
D. Flynn, S. Lowe, K. Moser, M. Nissman

Low Gross Winners

- 66 Wee Burn Country Club
R. Schock, J. Moler, R. Pace, B. Souders
- 67 Pound Ridge Golf Club
T. Powers, M. DiBuono, N. Hill, J. Rainiero
- 67 Old Oaks Country Club
M. Millett, L. Kurtis, P. Nordlow, K. Schlechter

Longest Drive

Pro: B. Miller, *Knollwood CC*
Amateur: M. Millett, *Old Oaks CC*

Closest to Pin

Pro: J. Coats, *Greenwich CC*
Amateur: N. Hill, *Pound Ridge GC*

Let's also hear it for Heritage Hills, which took the prize for the tournament's "Best Dressed" team, and Tony Grasso, who racked up winning points for "Best Legs."

Congratulations to all the winners, and many thanks to Patterson Superintendent Ray Beaudry, Manager Brendan Walsh, and Pro John O'Brien for their help in making the tournament a success.

MATT CEPLO
Westchester Hills Golf Club



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Gene Littler
Professional Golfer



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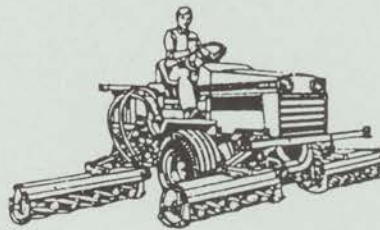
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1991 Scholarship Recipients to Be Honored

Congratulations to the following six scholarship recipients who will be honored at the Met's July 15 meeting: Robert Alonzi, Holly Ann Gonyea, Christopher Horton, Timothy Horton, Robert Pierpoint, and Stephen Tibbels.

Here's a little background on these outstanding achievers: Robert Alonzi is a sophomore at Iona College and is the son of Winged Foot Superintendent **Bob Alonzi**.

Holly Ann Gonyea, the daughter of Rye Golf Club Superintendent **Dick Gonyea**, is planning to attend the University of New Hampshire this fall.

Christopher Horton will be a junior this fall at Trinity University in Texas and is a second-time scholarship recipient. His brother, Timothy Horton, just graduated from Johns Hopkins University and is going on to Columbia Medical School this fall. Both Chris and Tim are sons of **Ted Horton**, director

of sports and grounds at Westchester Country Club.

Robert Pierpoint has just completed an associate's in Turf Management and Landscape Design from the SUNY Agricultural and Technical College in Delhi, NY. He plans to attend Penn State this fall. Robert's father, **George Pierpoint**, is superintendent of Ardsley Country Club.

Our final recipient, **Stephen Tibbels**, is a recent graduate of the University of Massachusetts Winter Turf School. He is a MetGCSA member and the assistant superintendent at Sterling Farms Golf Course in Stamford, CT.

The Scholarship Committee would like to thank Metropolis Country Club Manager **Max Sanz** for generously donating his \$200 raffle win to the Met Scholarship Fund.

The raffle was held at Silver Spring's Superintendent-Manager Tournament in May.

Chem-Free Plan

Look Before You Leap

A nontoxic soil conditioner called Green Life is making headlines. And why not? Its California-based developers claim that, when used in conjunction with an organic program, it will allow golf courses to be maintained without chemicals or fertilizers.

"When worked into the turf," says Green Life President Lewis Zettell in *Golf Course News*, "it rejuvenates the soil's natural defense system against disease and allows turfgrass to use organic material and nitrogen it fixes from the air as fertilizer." Green Lifers also suggest the product reduces water use—and eliminates the need to aerify.

Though Green Life sounds like the magic bullet the golf industry has been seeking, it's received mixed reviews from pilot-test courses. Among the gripes: yellowish and hard greens, clumps of flowers in the turf, no noticeable reduction in water use, and disappointing root structure.

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