

# TEE TO GREEN

Published by the  
Metropolitan Golf Course  
Superintendents Association

## President's Message

### Water Restriction Breakthrough . . .

and more

**F**irst and foremost in this month's president's message, I'd like to congratulate—and we all should thank—Ted Horton and Joe Alonzi for their role in changing the regulations that govern golf course water use in Westchester County during drought conditions.

In the past, golf courses were classified as private property, which meant that, during water shortages, we were required to shut off water completely on fairways or adhere to strict watering schedules. And many of us know how devastating that could be.

Now, with the change in law, we will share the same benefits as industry in a water emergency, being asked only to cut a certain percentage of our water use. That means we will have the flexibility to decide how to best conserve this valuable resource.

Many thanks to Ted, who most of you know is now at Pebble Beach in California, for beginning this invaluable effort in 1985 and to Joe for continuing the fight and seeing that it became law. This measure will not only save grass and frazzled nerves, but also, I feel, many jobs. More on this in an upcoming issue.

#### On Scholarships

Another worthy mention is our Scholarship program. We (continued on page 2)

## Special Feature

### The Secret to a Glitch-free Irrigation System

*Irrigation Specialist Robert Healey Offers Expert Advice on How to Keep Your Irrigation System Up and Running*

**A**n irrigation system is probably the most critical—and costly—piece of equipment a golf course operation could have. Yet few superintendents treat their systems with the same reverence as an ordinary piece of equipment. They'll have a full-time mechanic—no irrigation specialist—to tend to equipment that, all told, is probably less costly than their irrigation system.

These mechanics will give fairway and greens mowers tender loving care: washing them after each use, checking their oil daily, greasing them, lapping their reels, sharpening or replacing their blades. The irrigation system, however, receives little attention—until something breaks. Then superintendents complain what a lousy system they have.

The irony: If a mower or another piece of equipment breaks, you'll suffer little if any permanent damage to the course, even if you can't get parts for days. If your irrigation system goes down for two or three days during the heat of the summer, you can be sure you'll suffer substantial turf loss—and worse, put your job on the line.

The net out: Treat your irrigation system like any other piece of equipment: Give it periodic inspection and maintenance to ensure proper—and lasting—operation. Here are some tips on how to put a program in place.

#### Step One: Pinpoint your system's Achilles' heel.

Identify the reasons your system can go down, and prepare for them. Your pumping system, for instance, is a prime candidate for failure. I strongly recommend having an emergency backup PTO pump that will connect your tractor to piping previously installed in your pump house. This will enable you to bypass a failed pumping system and, at a minimum, provide water to your tees and greens.

#### Step Two: Modify your irrigation system's isolation valves.

The purpose: to minimize the area of the course that needs to be shut down in case of a mainline pipe break.

#### Step Three: Maintain an irrigation parts inventory.

This will (continued on page 4)

## Also in This Issue

- ② Special Golf and Social Events
- ② Members in the News
- ③ The Multi-Faceted Paul Gonzalez Hosts Invitational
- ⑦ Golf Highlights



## Water Regulation Breakthrough

all can be proud that nine scholarships, totaling \$8,000, are being awarded this year. Our selection standards are quite rigorous and are based on the thorough and timely completion of our application, which must be accompanied by transcripts, personal and work references, and a show of community service.

Several of the 19 applications we received were from turf students, but most were from students pursuing other disciplines. All of our applicants were children of Met members, although spouses and members, themselves, are also eligible.

Remember, those Christmas party raffle tickets are a great way for you to contribute to this worthwhile effort.

Watch for scholarship award announcements in an upcoming issue.

### On The PGA Championship

I'm looking forward, now, to The PGA Championship at Winged Foot August 14-17, hoping the weather is with us—as well as a whole lot of volunteers. For those not able to help out, our association will be marshaling the eighth hole. If you're lucky enough to find the time to attend, stop in and say hello.

### 3 More Left

I've just decided the perfect name for this message in my computer's file manager: "3moreleft." Yep, I have only three more President's Messages. Are you thinking the same thing I'm thinking??? Whew!

JOHN J. O'KEEFE  
President

### Upcoming Events

#### MetGCSA Social Event

##### MetGCSA Summer Social

Tuesday, August 26  
Fairview Country Club  
Greenwich, CT  
Host: Rich Marcks, CGCS

#### Upcoming Association Golf Events

##### MetGCSA Championship/Met Area Team Championship Qualifier, Round 2

Tuesday, September 2  
Country Club of Purchase, Purchase, NY  
Host: Bob Miller

##### Met Area Team Championship

Monday, October 6  
Country Club of Darien, Darien, CT  
Host: Tim O'Neill, CGCS

#### Special Area Golf Events

##### The Northville Long Island Classic

Friday – Sunday, August 8 – 10  
Meadow Brook Club, Jericho, NY  
Host: John Carlone, CGCS

##### The Walker Cup

Saturday – Sunday, August 9 – 10  
Quaker Ridge Golf Club, Scarsdale, NY  
Host: Tony Savone

##### The PGA Championship

Thursday – Sunday, August 14 – 17  
Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY  
Host: Bob Alonzi, CGCS

Special Note: Thanks to Bob's efforts, MetGCSA members will be allowed to gain entry to the tournament with their membership card and a photo I.D. A GCSAA Gold Card is also valid.

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### Notable Notes

#### Members on the Move

**Steve Cadenelli** is the new superintendent at Cape Cod National GC, Chatham, MA. Previous position: Superintendent, Metedeconk National GC, Jackson, NJ.

**Wayne Urban** is the new superintendent at Farmingbury Hills GC, Wolcott, CT. Previous position: Superintendent, Mill River CC, Stratford, CT.

**Ed Walsh** is the new superintendent at Mansion Ridge GC, Monroe, NY. Previous position: Superintendent, Essex County CC, West Orange, NJ.

#### Retired

**Bob Bruce**, a longtime Met member, has earned Life A status, retiring from Salem Country Club after more than 30 years' service. We wish him all the best.

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## Canyon Club's Paul Gonzalez Hosts Invitational

**S**unshine, excellent playing conditions, and plentiful food and drink made for a perfect day," noted Elmwood Superintendent Scott Tretera of the June 4 Invitational held at the Canyon Club in Armonk, NY.

From all accounts, it was a day to remember—and one that host superintendent Paul Gonzalez won't soon forget.

He explains: "Being viewed by your peers, along with green chairmen, club presidents, and pros from all over the Met area can be somewhat disconcerting—particularly after having had the experience of hosting a club manager's meeting in September '95 on the heels of a drought. Needless to say, I was nervously excited about this one."

Paul is going into his fifth year at the Canyon Club. And though he's one of the younger area superintendents, he's chalked up more experience than many longer-tenured supers. "I've been working on golf courses since I was 11," he says, starting at Edgewood Country Club in Rivervale, NJ, under then superintendent Uncle Bill Gaydosh, who's now at Round Hill Club in Greenwich, CT.

It was then, while working for his uncle Bill, who he readily refers to as his biggest influence and mentor, that Paul knew he would make a career in this field.

"I had a ball working at the club with my two brothers during summer vacations. It was even better after I turned 16 and my uncle actually paid me for my hard work," says Paul.

In 1985, Paul attended Rutgers with his sights set on a two-year turf degree. But with some prodding from USGA official Jim Snow, he stayed four years, earning a B.S. in Plant Science. While in school, Paul continued his hands-on experience working on the crew at Hackensack Golf Club in Oradell, NJ, from 1986 to 1990. The following two years, he worked as assistant at Brae Burn Country Club and then Montammy, at the same time starting—and almost completing—a master's in computer science at Iona.

### A Profitable Sideline

A true computer guru, Paul says he plans, someday, to go back and finish the M.S. he started. But degreed or not, Paul has already made a significant contribution to the computer industry. When Trims, the golf course operations computer program, was introduced in the middle to late '80s, Paul felt he could do better. He and Joe Pishtay, his assistant at the time who also had an interest in computers, formed a corporation, GCS Systems, Inc. and, together, created a windows-based software program that they felt was more complete and user friendly for fellow superintendents.

To get the necessary financial backing, the young entrepreneurs took



***"When you find a job you love,  
you never work another day for  
the rest of your life."***



on partners. But the two sides differed so much in their views about specific aspects of the program that, before its release to market, Paul and Joe sold their 50-percent share to their partners.

Launched in 1995, the GCS program—which is also sold by Toro—is currently being used by numerous area superintendents. "This is just the way I wanted it," says Paul. "We developed the program, made some quick money by selling it off, and never had to deal with the marketing headaches."

### So Many Interests, So Little Time

In his leisure, which isn't all that plentiful this time of year, Paul takes to the sea in his 21-foot Cuddy Cabin, which he's aptly named No Grass. "When I was growing up, the work of a golf course superintendent and boating went hand in hand. It was—and still is—the only true way to get away from golfers and turf, for a short time. I call



**Paul Gonzalez hosts highly successful MetGCSA Invitational Tournament.**

this the Chuck [Martineau] influence," Paul says.

But after a hard day's work, you're more apt to find Paul in his office strumming a few chords on his guitar. Though an accomplished guitarist, he reserves his performances for his wife of three years, Terry, and his yellow lab, Cosmo. "My audience will expand soon enough with children just around the corner," Paul chuckles.

### When You Find a Job You Love

Paul couldn't be more pleased with his position at the Canyon Club—and with his crew. "Starting with my assistant, Kenny Gentile, my crew is terrific. I'll put them up against any other crew in the industry," challenges Paul. "They truly make my job easier."

But just as important, notes Paul, is his working relationship with the club's owners. "There's a mutual respect there. I'm made to feel an integral—and important—part of the day-to-day operations of the club," says Paul. "And just as nice: I don't feel I have to act like a politician."

For those reasons and more, Paul is not interested in the "elite" jobs that pop up from time to time. As he puts it, "when you find a job you love, you never work another day for the rest of your life."

Ahhhh, we should all be so lucky. . .  
SCOTT C. APGAR  
Metro Milorganite, Inc.



# The Secret to a Glitch-free Irrigation System

enable you to handle the most common failures—on the spot. You might include all sizes of pipe and repair couplings, isolation valves, electric valves, quick coupling valves, swing joints, fittings, concrete for thrust blocks, a spare satellite, wire tracer, wire, wire connectors, volt meter, and other parts essential to your system.

**Step Four: Set up an irrigation inspection program.** Learn to identify and repair malfunctioning irrigation equipment before it becomes a problem. In season, it's wise to inspect the system as follows:

1. All greens weekly
2. All tees weekly
3. All fairways over two weeks
4. Pumping system daily
5. Meters daily
6. The entire course for leaks daily

## Inspection Guidelines

A thorough inspection means more than driving around to scout for leaks. It really requires that an irrigation specialist keep a vigilant watch on the system's inner workings. Here's what you should be looking for:

### *In green, tee, and fairway sprinklers . . .*

To keep the sprinklers in these areas in top form you'll, of course, want to monitor coverage, nozzle disbursement and pattern, and the pressure at discharge of nozzles. But in addition, you should:

- Check the height of the heads, making sure that the discharge is clearing the grass and that the case is not being hit by mowers. You'll also want to make sure that the turf around the head is not being scalped and that the head is still level.

- Check nozzle size once or twice a year. Use a drill bit to compare it to original size. Even brass nozzles will eventually erode and enlarge, affecting flow rate, coverage, and precipitation rates.

Check for weeping at all Valve-in-Heads and electric valves. Weeping usually indicates debris has to be flushed or cleaned out. If this doesn't work, visually check the tubes or diaphragm, and clean, blow out, or replace.

- Check low heads that are draining. This may indicate that a valve is weeping

or that you need to install check valves.

- Check satellite for zones; review scheduling; look at connections at the controller box; and check for animal damage or insect larvae buildup.

- Log all work, keeping records on nozzle size, pressure at head, radius of coverage, and speed for revolutions (especially important in two-speed heads). Major changes in the time for one complete turn can indicate developing problems in the sprinkler.

Good records can often help you pinpoint problems before a visual inspection can, revealing the start of pressure loss, radius loss, and many other subtle problems.

### *In valves . . .*

When monitoring valves, be sure to:

- Check access to all valve boxes, where applicable.

- Check flow controls.

- Check all wire connections.

- Check to ensure the electric valve shuts down and opens, both electrically and manually. If a single valve doesn't open, check the solenoid or wiring. Check your plan for wire or tube route from the satellite, and track to locate a break or weak link.

Look at areas of new construction or recent work. If the problem is electrical, it can be common wire or power.

Testing for continuity can help isolate the type of problem. If several zones are down, check the satellite for both input and output power.

Testing for continuity can help isolate the type of problem. If several zones are down, check the satellite for both input and output power. If good, check the area to the first zone for damage to power or common wires.

- Check all gate and ball valves to ensure they open and close and that all reach-sleeves are clear of debris and accessible. Leaking around the top of a manual valve indicates that the packing nut needs tightening. Leaking through the valve means that either a stone or debris is lodged between the disc and seat or that a disk is damaged. Applying more pressure does no good; open and close the valve several times to try to flush the blockage. Then, if it's still

leaking, open, inspect seat or disc, and repair or replace as needed.

Flushing the blockage will only send debris to another spot in your system.

If you're lucky enough to be on a dead-end line, now is the time to flush the end of the line.

- Check the pressure setting on all pressure-regulating valves against log data to insure they're set properly. A difference of five to 10 pounds can seriously affect intended precipitation rates.

### *In field satellites . . .*

To keep your field satellites in good working order, be sure to:

- Check connections.

- Check grounding, and test once or twice a year.

- Check irrigation schedule, testing manual operations of each zone.

- Test for continuity and voltage output and input to satellite.

- Check and clean out larvae.

- Test rain moisture or shutoff devices.

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- Consider removing and storing satellites during the winter.
- Have on hand wire tracking tools to locate weak or broken wires.

#### *In pipes . . .*

Just because they're out of sight, doesn't mean they should be out of mind. Be sure to keep tabs on your piping by scanning the course for wet spots and listening for water hammer sounds or unusual pipe noises when a zone is activated.

Though a rigorous irrigation inspection program may seem like more trouble than it's worth, time spent inspecting your system is, in the long run, time well spent. Your reward: an irrigation system that won't let you down—particularly in the heat of summer.

ROBERT HEALEY, A.S.I.C./C.I.D.  
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*Adapted from The Newsletter, a GCSA of New England publication.*

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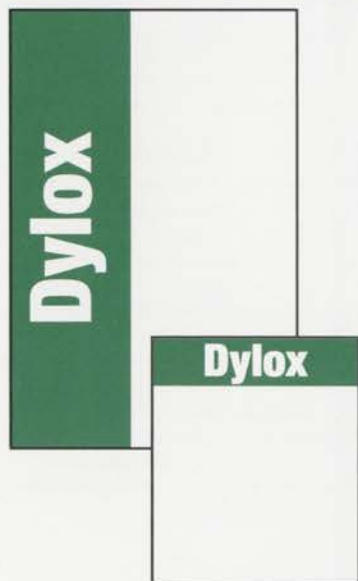


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## Hampshire Country Club Aces MetGCSA Invitational

The Canyon Club pulled out all the stops for the 1997 Invitational as 27 four-man teams competed on a beautiful day, with Hampshire taking the trophy and Jim Boosmer of the Powelton Club acing the 100-yard sixth hole with his trusty five wood to win a Seiko watch.

From lunch to the golf course to the cocktail reception—complete with an ice carving of the MetGCSA logo—it was truly a wonderful day for all who attended.

Here are the results of the day:

### Low Net Winners

54 Will Heintz's team, *Hampshire CC*  
56 Doug Vogel's team, *Packanack GC*  
58 Jeff Wentworth's team, *Pelham CC*

### Low Gross Winners

82 Les Kennedy's team, *CC/Waterbury*  
82 Scott Tretara's team, *Elmwood CC*  
84 Rick Schock's team, *Wee Burn CC*

### Longest Drive

Jim Doyle, Golf Pro, *Nevele Hotel & CC*  
Scott Stark, Amateur, *Fenway GC*

### Closest to the Line

Rick Schock, *Wee Burn CC*  
Mike Dritz, Club Official

### Closest to the Pin

Roy Pace, Golf Professional, *Wee Burn Country Club*  
Tony Grasso, Superintendent, *Metropolis Country Club*  
Steve Dunofsky, Green Chairman, *Hampshire Country Club*  
Norm Kinne, Club Official, *Nevele Hotel & Country Club*

Special thanks to Canyon Club Superintendent Paul Gonzalez, Manager Martin A. Badinelli, Golf Professional Doug Hansen, and the entire staff for a great day.

BOB DEMARCO  
Powelton Club

## Superintendents and Managers Enjoy a Day a Rockland

Rockland Country Club and host superintendent Matt Ceplo held the May 5 Superintendent/Manager Meeting under beautiful skies and conditions. The recently renovated bunkers looked outstanding. Judging by the rake marks, they were also well visited.

Those superintendents and managers who got along well on the course were:

### Superintendent/Manager Tourney

67 Scott Stark and Steve Arias, *Fenway Golf Club*  
67 John O'Keefe and Steve Margraff, *Preakness Hills Country Club*  
67 Dave Mahoney and Robert Kasara, *Siwanoy Country Club*

### Two-Ball Tourney

64 Jim Calladio, *Milbrook Club*/Tony Girardi, *Rockrimmon Country Club*  
64 Earl Millett, *Ridgeway CC*/Mike Firrell, *Razors Edge*

### Longest Drive

Jim Swiatlowski, *Montammy GC* 276 yds Jim Calladio, *Milbrook Club* #6/3'6"

DAVE MAHONEY  
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