

Published by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association

President's Message

What a Difference a Decade Makes

S omething happened the other day that got me thinking. A superintendent was talking about being quoted in national print for a turf tip that many of us have put into practice for the past 15 years. Some of our practices have held up over time. Then there are others that point to just how much the industry has changed, particularly in the past decade. . . .

• Irrigation practices and equipment certainly have changed. Remember watering greens using a hose and sprinkler? First we'd water the front nine greens, then drag the hoses and sprinklers to the back nine. Same process for tees. Fairways didn't have any irrigation at all. We were lucky.

Now, most of us can water any area of the golf course from our central, which is usually in the office. We have fence-to-fence irrigation, weather stations to help us determine when to irrigate, and computers to time and coordinate our irrigation practices. • Chemicals weren't always the solution of choice. I can remember a superintendent who used to wash the mycelium from the turf when he had pythium. We used cultural practices to fix many of our turf problems for years.

cause it's environmentally responsible. When we did choose to use chemicals years ago, the *(continued on page 2)*

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Special Feature

Local Perspectives on the International Conference and Show

his year, we set our communications committee loose at the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show and asked them to share with us their unique perspectives—and any newsworthy observations—from their travels through the educational sessions, trade show, and planned social events. Here's what several of them came back with.

Mike Cook, Alpine, the Care of Trees

Something Funny Happened on the Way to the Big Show

It never rains in sunny, Southern California.... Sure! Rain by the buckets, mud slides, roads closed, and people being saved from raging rivers by helicopters. That was my welcome to Southern California on Thursday to attend the GCSAA Convention, Conference, or is it the "show"?

Anyway, we made our pilgrimage safe and sound, arriving via freeway—maybe stopway is more appropriate—to Anaheim to be joined by thousands of sweater-vest-wearing golf course superintendents and distributors from around the world. (Okay, I was wearing one too.)

Conference highlights included the trade show booths, row after row with

everything from foot massagers (priceless at 3 p.m. Friday) to Blues Brothers impersonators and guys climbing trees indoors (always one of my favorites!). Yes, again, I was *not* one of the lucky ones to obtain a club car/carryall bag for the fourth year in a row.

Nighttime was the time for entertainment. Friday was the by-invitation-only "Noreaster" (appropriately named) hospitality reception, where golf course superintendents—and distributors throughout the Northeast enjoyed food and drink, as well as each other's company. Who could have missed that roundtable discussion being led by the "Pope," Bob Alonzi!

It was a pleasure to see so many relaxed, with wives and children, showing me that family is *(continued on page 6)*

Also in This Issue

- (2) Member News
- (5) Spotlight on Our Upcoming Meeting Sites and Their Supers
- (9) Who Made the Winner's Circle at the GCSAA Golf Championship

Meeting Reminders: Don't miss the season's kickoff and Two-Ball Qualifier at The Powelton Club April 27 and our Superintendent/Manager Tourney May 11 at Elmwood Country Club.

What a Difference a Decade Makes

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results were often impressive. Lead Arsenate, Chlordane, Phenol Mercury all provided 6 to 8 weeks' control; today's replacements provide only 2 to 3.

• Equipment is another story. Many used to cut fairways with F-10s, the rough areas around tees with a scythe, and rough and green banks with gang units or Blitzers. Chemicals were applied with a hand-triggered, walk-behind spray boom called a Spray Hawk. Let's face it, the equipment we have today is far superior—and the prices reflect that.

Our practices, as a result, have also changed. If you watched last year's PGA, with 50 people cutting fairways by hand, you can see why we call Bob Alonzi "The Legend." Talk about times changing! • How about education? There was a time when you worked your way up through the ranks. A lot of us grew up around the industry and only went on to school after working for several summers with our dads, uncles, or cousins.

The way things are now, it seems you need not only a turf degree, but also a business degree. I, for one, feel like I spend more time doing budget analyses and project reports than I do getting out on the golf course and reviewing the effects of our maintenance programs.

Keeping Pace

The rapid pace of change and increasing complexity of our jobs have left us no choice but to become a better-educated lot these days. We're more savvy about technology, budget processes, people management, and of course the environment. And with the help of our local and national associations, we've gained greater credibility as true professionals.

But we can't stop there. We have to continually educate ourselves to stay in touch with the latest and greatest turf management practices and technology.

And that's no easy task. We've got so many tools at our disposal that it's tough to absorb even a small number of them.

But don't let innovations—the ones that can really enhance your work life and your course's conditions—pass you by. Staying current is the key to doing your job effectively—and maybe even surviving this crazy business.

On that note, here's wishing each and every one of you the best of luck—and turf conditions—in the coming season! EARL F. MILLETT President

Notable Notes

New Members

Be sure to welcome new members:

Russell Balling, Class C, CC of Purchase, Purchase, NY Brian Benedict, Class C, Century CC, Purchase, NY John Ferraro, Class C, Wykagyl CC, New Rochelle, NY Seth Greenwood, Class C, Anglebrook GC, Lincolndale, NY Domenick Italiano, Class B, Doral at Arrowwood, Purchase, NY

Michael Keohan, Class AS, CC of Vermont, Waterbury Center, VT

Keith Kraham, Class AF, Bruedan Corp., Chester, NY Chip Lafferty, Class C, Wykagyl CC, New Rochelle, NY Sean Moran, Class AFS, O.M. Scotts Inc., Farmington, CT Eric O'Neill, Class C, Middle Bay CC, Oceanside, NY

Births

Congratulations to:

on February 17.

Apawamis Club Superintendent **Bill Perlee** and his wife, **Lorah**, on the birth of their son, Bryan Henderson, on February 7. Southward Ho Superintendent **Bill Bodemer** and his wife, **JoAnn**, on the birth of their daughter, Constance Marie, on February 17. E. Gaynor Brennan Superintendent **Mike Sullivan** and his wife, **Cheryl**, on the birth of their daughter, Erin Diane,

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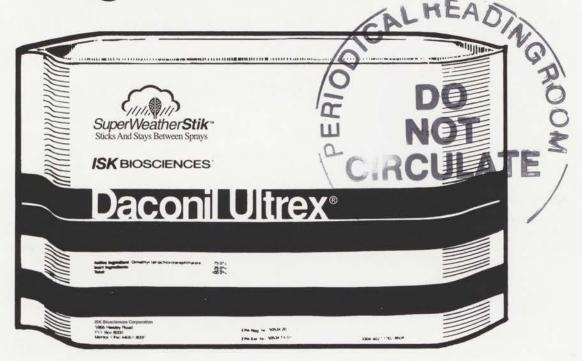
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Advertising Manager TONY GRASSO, 914-949-0375

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Spotlights

Met Makes a Return Trip to The Powelton Club for Season's First Golf Meeting

uperintendent Bob DeMarco kicks off his 17th season at the historic Powelton Club in Newburgh, NY, as host to the MetGCSA's April meeting.

Those of you who played the course during the Met's last visit in 1993, know that you have a golf challenge ahead of you. Explains Bob: "It's a fun course that plays tougher than the just-over-6,000 vardage might indicate." With small sloping greens perched within reach over undulating terrain, this course demands accurate iron play to score well. Bob hopes to make a showing in the Two-Ball challenge with partner Gary Arlio. The pairing made it to the semifinals in 1996.

During his tenure at The Powelton Club, Bob's seen the 90-acre course through numerous renovation projects. Since '93, one of his more significant undertakings has been a complete bunker restoration/reconstruction project. "The project was a pleasant surprise," he notes. "We had an understanding architect and an excellent

shaper. The three of us worked well together and accomplished all of our goals-and then some."

While working to improve the surface and internal drainage in the bunkers, they also addressed many of the course's traffic problems, rebuilt three tees, and tackled one the course's most challenging drainage problems, with great effect. Explains Bob, "By installing a flume-type outflow drain with flash boards, we now have the ability to lower the water table in this problem area by almost two feet. This has been our biggest maintenance accomplishment since the irrigation system, he adds."

Committed to His Work

Bob made his way into the business after working on the grounds crew at Southern Dutchess Country Club, a nine-hole course in Beacon, NY, where he grew up. His experience there inspired him to enroll in UMass's Winter Turf School. After completing his degree in 1976, he signed on as Powelton's assistant. In 1980, he left the club for a super-



Powelton Club Superintendent Bob DeMarco

intendent's position at **Kutchers** Country Club in Monticello, NY. Two season's later.

he circled back to Powelton-this time as superintendent.

Bob's commitment to the profession is obvious: He served on the Board of Directors of the Hudson Valley GCSA for 12 years and is currently in his third year on the MetGCSA Board, co-chairing our Tournament Committee.

Bob's other, equally obvious commitment is to his family: his wife, Elayne, and 10-year-old son, Geoffrey. Bob coaches his son's little league team and spends summer evenings pitching batting practice in the backvard, which just happens to be Powelton's maintenance vard.

A sports enthusiast, Bob's personal favorites are skiing, golf, running, and hiking.

BILL PERLEE The Apawamis Club

Elmwood Gears Up for Superintendent/ Manager Tournament

cott Tretera will host the MetGCSA credits with showing him the ropes. annual Superintendent/Manager Tournament on May 11 at Elmwood Country Club, where he's in his 6th season as superintendent.

Scott's roots in the golf course management business run deep. His father, Al Tretera of Turf Products Corp., was superintendent at Fenway Golf Club during Scott's growing years. "He had me out on his course with the weed eater when I was 14 years old," Scott beams. "Come to think of it, I'm pretty sure he owes me some back pay."

The road to his first-and currentsuperintendent's position at Elmwood began in earnest when Scott signed on for a year with Superintendent Chuck Martineau at Whippoorwill in 1986. His next move was to Old Oaks, where he spent six seasons-three of them as assistant to Mark Millett, who Scott

During that period, Scott carved out some time to complete the Rutgers Turf Program, rounding out his education.

Changes Afoot

Lately, Scott's been putting his knowledge to the test in executing a multi-year master plan for renovating various areas of the 62-year-old course. So far, he's rebuilt three greens and 18 new greenside bunker complexes.

At least as challenging as any of these projects, however, was cleaning up after a freak storm rolled through his course last summer. "The damage from that storm had to be seen to be believed," says Scott. "More than 90 trees were knocked down, and another 60 were damaged-all in a matter of minutes.

With all the work afoot, the course is playing tougher than ever. "Elmwood is



Elmwood CC Superintendent Scott Tretera

tight," cautions this 9handicap superintendent. "This, coupled with firm condi-

tions and small greens, make scoring difficult at best."

After-Hours Excitement

When Scott's off-duty at the golf course, he's frequently on-duty at the Mount Kisco Fire Department, where he's a volunteer engineer. Looking a little bleary-eyed at a recent MetGCSA event, he explained that he was fighting a fire at 2 o'clock the previous morning.

He assures us, though, that he'll be rarin' to go May 11. See you all there. BILL PERLEE

- The Apawamis Club

Local Perspectives on the International **Conference and Show**

indeed the most important thing we have, no matter where we are.

So we all leave with the eagerness and expectations to have a healthy and prosperous year, allowing for a few ups and downs, but always with the thought of returning to the next show.

By the way, how do they get those GCSAA newspapers printed so fast and under your door the next morning?

See you in Orlando with the answer.

Tim O'Neill, Country Club of Darien A Bird's-Eye View

This year's Conference and Show set new attendance records and displayed the largest equipment and supply show in the world. More than 22,000 people registered for the annual extravaganza held February 2 - 8 in Anaheim.

With educational forums and trade show displays throughout the day and high-profile sessions at night, attendees were treated to nonstop action. The



excitement really started Wednesday evening at the opening session. PGA Tour Pro Peter Jacobsen delivered the opening keynote address. A true entertainer on and off the course, Jacobsen gave us a lighthearted perspective on course architecture and the game and the Common Ground" in the February issue role superintendents play in its success. His comments drew rave reviews from all who attended.

Thursday's Government and Environmental General Session featured former Vice President Dan Quayle who talked a little about our profession and a lot about politics. The night also included the presentation of GCSAA's highest environmental steward award to GCSAA Chief Operating Officer Joe O'Brien. The award recognized O'Brien's role in coordinating the nation's first set of environmental principles for existing and new golf courses. This unprecedented effort drew together such organizations as the Coalition Against the Misuse of



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Pesticides, USGA, National Wildlife Federation, Architects, Friends of the Earth, and the EPA to collaboratively agree on a single standard for environmental responsibility. (For a look at O'Brien and his work, read "Finding of Golf Course Management.)

Another highlight: the GCSAA Annual Meeting. George Renault, of Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, MD was elected president. A friend of many Met area supers, George has played in our Met Area Team Championship on the Mid-Atlantic GCSA team. Take a look at George's plans for the coming year in the March issue of GCM. George succeeds Paul McGinnis of Alta Mesa CC in Mesa, AZ. Paul will serve the year as immediate past president.

Other newly elected officials are Vice President David Fearis of Blue Hills CC in Kansas City, MO, and Secretary/ Treasurer R. Scott Woodhead of Valley



View GC in Bozeman, Mont.

Elected to two open director positions are Ken Mangum of Atlanta Athletic Club in Atlanta, GA, and newcomer Jon Maddern of Elk Ridge GC in Atlanta, MI. Remaining on the board for the second of their two-year director term is Tommy Witt of Wynstone GC in N. Barrington, IL; Samuel Snyder VII of Hercules CC in Wilmington, Del.; and Michael Wallace of Hop Meadow CC in Simsbury, CT.

Friday evening was the Noreaster hospitality reception. Successfully orchestrated by Connecticut's past president, John Napier of Stanley Golf Course in New Britain, CT, this event brought together 11 golf course superintendent chapters: the Met, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Hudson Valley associations, as well as the New England, New Hampshire, Northeastern, Rhode Island, Maine, Cape Cod, and Vermont GCSAs.

Last, but not least, was the GCSAA annual Gala Banquet. The event featured an emotional and inspirational presentation of the Old Tom Morris Award, GCSAA's highest honor, to former U.S. Open Champ turned CBS-TV Golf Analyst Ken Venturi. Having presented Ken Venturi with our John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award in 1988, Met area superintendents are well aware of the support he's shown our profession. During his CBS telecasts of regular PGA events, Venturi is quick to give superintendents a plug.

The night was capped off by a performance from country music's female performer of the year Trisha Yearwood. Unfortunately, by the time she made it to the stage, I was fading and still had to pack for an early flight the next day.

Plan now for next year's event to be held February 8 – 14 in Orlando, FL.

Tony Girardi, Rockrimmon Country Club What the GCSAA Is Doing for You

One thing that really struck me this year at the GCSAA Golf Course Conference and Show was just how much GCSAA has expanded to meet our various needs —locally, regionally, and nationally.

In recent years, they've organized

programs and fund-raising activities that have helped us elevate our profession to a new level. Among the many:

• The Government Relations Program has achieved the right to lobby, for the first time, allowing us to be recognized on a federal level in regard to new policies and programs.

• Last year, the Robert Trent Jones Endowment Fund, which supports scholarship programs, topped the \$1 million mark, with the help of the Platinum and Golden Tee program, as well as the silent auction held every year at the conference and show.

• The end of last year, the GCSAA Foundation launched a new endowment campaign called "Investing in the Beauty of Golf." Its charter is to fund scientific research to be conducted directly on golf courses and to enhance superintendent educational programs.

The group is aiming to raise \$3.5 million in the next three years, and it's well on its way with \$2.5 already tucked away in its coffers. Chaired by Jaime Ortiz-Patino, owner of the famed Valderrama golf course in Spain, which hosted the most recent Ryder Cup Matches, this group also includes MGA Executive Director, Jay Mottola, along with other big names in golf.

Locally, MetGCSA members John O'Keefe, Bob Alonzi, and Larry Pakkala are working to carry the message to association members. They can be contacted with questions or to channel your pledges to this worthwhile endeavor. (Read about Ortiz-Patino and the foundation in the January issue of *GCM*.) • Another notable is the creation of the GCSAA Web Site, which was developed in '96 and has launched a new-andimproved version at the conference and show. This has allowed people in the turf industry to stay abreast of the latest GCSAA happenings and industry trends.

This just scratches the surface of the latest programs GCSAA has to offer and the ongoing efforts that were recognized during the conference and show. One thing's for sure: GCSAA is working its hardest to ensure the promotion of the turf industry as a whole, and I think they're doing a good job of it.

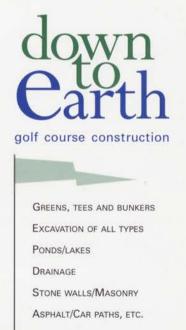
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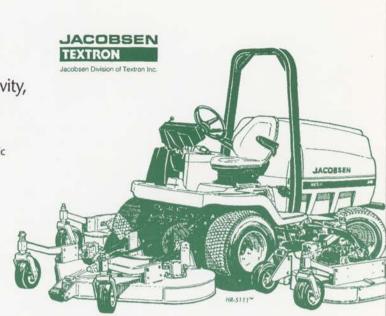
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1998 GCSAA Golf Championship Highlights

ix suburban LA golf courses were the playing fields for this year's GCSAA Golf Championship. Earning top in their flights during this first-ever rain-shortened event were Met members Gregg Stanley of Hudson National Golf Club, Jim Fulwider of Century Country Club, and John Wantz of Due Process Stables.

The Met also made their presence

Championship Flight B, 4th place

John Carlone, Meadow Brook Club, NY **First Flight** 4th place net: Scott Niven, The Stanwich Club, CT 5th place net: Les Kennedy, CC of

Waterbury, CT

Second Flight, 7th place net

Dave Mahoney, Siwanoy CC, NY

Third Flight, 1st place gross Gregg Stanley, Hudson Nat'l GC, NY

Man event. Met wins totaled more than the green, nothing but cup. And no \$1,000 in GCSAA merchandise.

Another notable: the hole-in-one scored during the championship's practice round at Pelican Hill South by Greenwich Country Club Super Greg Wojick. This wayward 8-iron missed the following championship contestants who green by 20-some yards, but as luck

Fourth Flight, 7th place gross

Tim O'Neill, CC of Darien, CT **Fifth Flight**

1st place gross: John Wantz, Due Process Stables, Inc., NJ

5th place gross: Tony Grasso, Metropolis CC, NY

6th place gross: Tim Powers, Wachesaw East Plantation Club, SC

7th place net: John Streeter, Woodbridge CC, CT

known in the Four-Ball Tourney, which, would have it, the ball hit off the barranca, this year, included a Two-Man and Four- off the railroad ties, down the slope, onto hearsay, here. Our own president, Ridgeway Super Earl Millett, Elmwood Super Scott Tretera, and Metropolis Super Tony Grasso were at the scene of the "crime."

> Congratulations to Greg and to the made it to the winner's circle.

Sixth Flight, 3rd place gross Rick Schock, Wee Burn CC, CT Seventh Flight, 4th place gross Joe Alonzi, Westchester CC, NY Eighth Flight, 7th place net Paul Pritchard, Wiltwyck GC, NY Senior I Flight, 1st place net James Fulwider, Century CC, NY Senior II Flight, 2nd place gross

Ennio Latini, Peninsula GC, NY



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James Barrett Associates, Inc. Jim Barrett P.O. Box 853, Montclair, NJ 07042 973-744-8237

James Carriere & Sons, Inc. Bill and Joe Carriere 7 Cottage St., Port Chester, NY 10573 914-937-2136

LESCO, Inc. A Team of Turfgrass Professionals Greg Moran/Mike Dukette/Ernie Steinhofer 800-321-5325

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The Cardinals, Inc. Complete Distributor of Golf Course Accessories & Supplies John Callahan: 860-673-3699

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TurfNet Associates, Inc. Peter L. McCormick Skillman, NJ 07014 800-314-7929

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Westchester Ford Tractor Inc. John Apple/Ray Beaudry Meadow St., Goldens Bridge, NY 10526 914-232-7746

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Winding Brook Turf Farm, Inc. Don Grant 240 Griswold Rd., Wethersfield, CT 06109 800-243-0232/860-529-6869