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> Designer TERRIE DUNKELBERGER

> > Photographer BILL PERLEE

Advertising Manager ROB ALONZI, 914-478-5713

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The Whippoorwill Club.

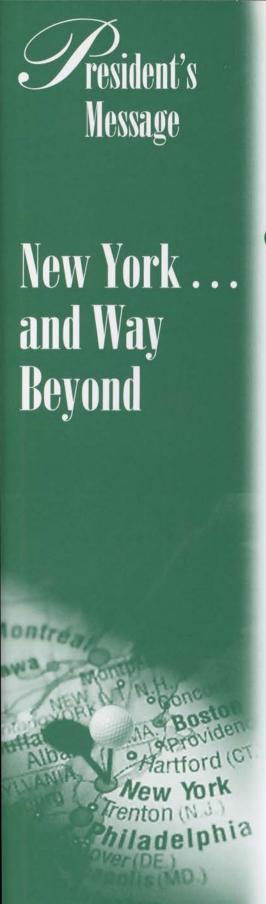
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his message focuses on a number of issues specific to the New York area superintendents, true. But in reality, there's something here for everyone. In fact, in every point I make, the takeaway message is the same:"United we stand, divided we fall."

What we do individually as superintendents affects the whole of the profession. If we, in some way, make a good name for ourselves in Connecticut, superintendents in New York, New Jersey, and even other parts of the country will look good as well. If we blunder ... if we ignore all-important industry rules and regulations and our negligence is exposed, our actions will reflect poorly not just on us, but on the entire industry.

So members outside New York, please do read on. I think you'll find value in the notes and news that follow.

#### More About Phosphorus

Westchester County is still moving ahead with its ban on phosphorus. There have been two public comment meetings, and a public hearing was held on June 4. Right now the bill is being reviewed by the Committee on Environment and Energy. The County board could have voted to pass the proposal as written, but they didn't. This is a positive step.

Some of the major components of this bill are that you will need to have your soil tested by a certified lab to show a deficiency before you can apply phosphorus. It does seem that new seedlings will be exempt, as well as flower and vegetable gardens, so you can keep that box of Miracle Grow.

We will keep you updated. Rest assured that our industry has been well represented. We definitely have some strong issues with this bill. It will affect the management of all golf courses in Westchester County.

#### Make Yourself Heard

It's ironic, but as I was mulling over the phosphorus issue, I got a call from Paul Trader, who is with the Cornell Cooperative Extension here in Rockland County. He was calling regarding IPM. It seems one of the new legislators is having speakers from various industries come together to discuss how they're



Matt Ceplo, CGCS MetGCSA President

each putting IPM into practice. I'm glad to see that they're speaking to industry professionals about their practices before jumping the gun and enacting legislature that's based on emotion, rather than fact. Legislators do listen. The issue is being available to make our practices and positions heard.

What, specifically, can you do? Some of the same things I've advised before: Become involved in organizations like The Audubon, GCSAA's Environmental Institute, or any other environmental group where you can communicate to others precisely what you do-and how you do it responsibly.

At the very least, don't do anything to attract negative publicity. Make sure you are up to date with all laws regarding pesticide use. Keep your license and records current. Use proper disposal measures. Keep your staff well trained, and inform golfers about the positive environmental impact you're having on your community. Watch your gasoline tanks, and keep those records current. The worst thing you can do is think you're an island and that what you are doing won't affect the rest of us.

#### Find the Balance

I love watching the Masters on television. This year's tournament was shaping up to be the best. The greens were so fast and so hard that there was no way to get the ball close to the hole. I couldn't wait till Sunday. (I have more free time on Sunday to become a couch potato). I turned on the TV, and the first shot I watched hit the green and stopped on a dime. I couldn't believe it. It was immediately apparent they had watered the greens. At first, I was disappointed. I guess the sadistic part of me wanted to see the players struggle. After a few minutes of watching, I realized slowing down those greens was not such a bad thing after all.

Why do we get satisfaction out of watching Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelsons make bogies—or our members four-putt a tough pin position? Isn't that totally counterprocontinued on page 11



# Just When You Thought You'd Seen

More Disease Concerns for Superintendents

by Dr. John Kaminski, Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Pathology, University of Connecticut

t's pretty safe to say that there isn't a superintendent around who hasn't done battle with a turfgrass disease or two. Like people, turf gets . . . well . . . ill from time to time. Most things, we're schooled to handle. The problem is when an unidentifiable or aggressive new strain of disease takes hold—a disease that baffles even the most astute turfgrass researchers.

In the article that follows, Dr. John Kaminski, assistant professor of Turfgrass Pathology at the University of Connecticut, talks about two new turfgrass threats, along with their telltale signs and potential controls.

Figure 1: Following incubation, abundant W. circinata var. circinata can be observed in the thatch and on the surface of the leaves. Turfgrass diseases are often a large source of concern and frustration for golf course superintendents in the Metropolitan area. As the level of maintenance increases and mowing heights decrease, putting green turf becomes more susceptible to a variety of pathogens and abiotic stresses.

Throwing fuel to the fire are the large populations of annual bluegrass commonly found on many golf courses. While annual bluegrass continues to offer an excellent putting surface when healthy, its susceptibility to a variety of diseases and reduced overall health during the heat of the summer makes managing the species unpredictable at times.

Damage to putting greens at several of the region's golf courses in 2006 has raised the level of concern heading into the 2007 season. As many of you are aware, Pythium was particularly problematic, resulting in the severe decline of putting surfaces at numerous Met area courses—and, in some cases, resulted in major renovation or complete reconstruction of greens.

In addition to the unusual outbreaks of Pythium, numerous golf courses in the Northeast (and also throughout the country) experienced outbreaks of a disease caused by a pathogen related to the *Rhizoctonia* species.

Although not fully understood, these two diseases stand out among those to watch out for as we head into the summer stretch. Here, you'll find the most up-to-date information we have on identifying and treating these turfgrass ills.

#### **Brown Ring Patch**

Brown ring patch, also referred to as Waitea patch, is a "new" disease of annual bluegrass putting greens that has recently appeared in the Western, Midwestern, and Northeastern United States. This disease is caused by a species closely related to *Rhizoctonia oryzae* and *R. zeae*, which are known to cause sheath and leaf spot or high-temperature brown patch in the U.S. The formal name of the pathogen (named after its observed sexual state) is *Waitea circinata* var. circinata (Wcc).

#### Signs of Trouble

During the spring and early summer months, disease symptoms appear as yellow rings, ranging from a few inches up to a foot in diameter (see Fig. 2). Although infected annual bluegrass generally does not entirely collapse, turfgrass thinning and/or plant death can occur. Interestingly, under hot, dry conditions, disease symptoms generally disappear. The disease may recur in the autumn when temperatures favoring growth of the pathogen develop.

Abundant mycelia can be seen on the foliage, down in the crowns, stolons and in the thatch when the soil is moist (see Fig. 1). It can be rather fluffy and extensive under wet conditions. The pathogen tends to colonize both the above-ground parts of the plant and the thatch, which can result in sunken rings where the thatch has broken down.

The disease has been observed at daytime temperatures ranging from 50°F to 90°F, with optimal temperatures of 70°F to 85°F. Because it can actively colonize thatch, the disease may be more severe on putting greens with excessive organic matter accumulation.

#### Plan of Attack

Unfortunately, there are no tried-and-true remedies for Brown ring patch-yet. While researchers are hard at work on a concrete course of treatment, right now our recommendations for control are based on in-vitro testing of fungicides in the lab, a limited field study in California, and anecdotal evidence and reports from superintendents.

In the lab, at UC-Riverside, a number of isolates of the pathogen were screened on Petri plates against Chipco 26 GT, Banner MAXX, Cleary's 3336, Heritage, and ProStar fungicides. With the exception of Cleary's 3336, all fungicides evaluated in this study were effective in suppressing mycelium growth. Like its close relative, R. zeae, Wcc appears to be naturally resistant to the benzimidazole fungicides.

Superintendents throughout the country have reported mixed results for Wcc control with fungicides. ProStar, Heritage, Medallion, and Endorse fungicides seem to consistently provide the greatest level of control.

Since Wcc is often in the thatch layer, adequate application volume (≥ 2 gallons of water per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>) and/or watering materials into the upper thatch layer may be important. If the disease is already well established in the thatch or turf, multiple applications may be needed to completely stop the pathogen. In severe cases, recovery from damage is slow due to the amount of crown damage and thatch degradation. Preventive or early curative control is likely to be most effective.

#### Foliar Pythium Blight

The summer of 2006 was met by several outbreaks of Pythium on golf course putting greens. Unlike typical Pythium blight, however, initial symptoms resembled those of summer patch and were very slow to progress (see Fig 3). The disease appeared to be limited to annual bluegrass and, during the initial phase, formed patches rather than generally thinned areas or streaks along swales and other areas where water flowed.

#### On Closer Examination

Microscopic examination of the diseased areas, however, revealed the presence of mycelium resembling a Pythium spp. in the thatch and also around individual leaf blades. Pathogen isolation from a number of courses resulted in the culturing of several different Pythium species previously reported as being associated with Pythium of turfgrasses.

As the summer progressed, the disease expanded from distinct patches to symptoms more typical of Pythium blight. Extensively infested putting surfaces thinned, and in severe cases, streaks of the disease were observed in areas where surface water moved across the putting green. During this phase, field attempts to control the disease with a variety of fungicides were met with limited success. Fungicides applied to plugs from the

putting surface and incubated in a growth chamber, however, did appear to suppress growth of the pathogen.

#### A Lack of Control

A major concern with the outbreaks of Pythium on putting greens in 2006 was the inability—or reduced efficacy—of fungicides generally thought to provide excellent control. Limited in-vitro trials, however, did not reveal pathogen resistance to commonly used Pythium fungicides.

From that you could conclude that conditions favoring the development and growth of the pathogen were too extreme, at that point, for the typical fungicides to have a significant impact on the disease.

Many of the golf courses experiencing severe outbreaks of Pythium were similar in that they all had native-soil, pushup greens with little to no internal drainage. As is typical of most golf course putting greens, sand topdressing had accumulated to a depth of several inches. While it appeared that surface drainage had been improved, excessive moisture was observed at the sand/soil interface.

#### So What Can I Do?

After all is said and done, the sad truth is that little is known about either of these diseases. As with all new or emerging problems, unlocking these mysteries takes time.

Site visits and samples sent to our diagnostic lab have, however, revealed a number of similarities on problem greens. Based on my observations to date, here are some general conclusions and recommendations I've formulated for keeping your turf safe and sound.

Increase your aerification and thatch removal programs. Probably due to member pressure and playability concerns, aggressive aerification has been reduced and, in some cases, substituted with topdressing programs.

Although topdressing is an excellent cultural practice and can help dilute a thatch layer, it is a poor replacement for aerification.



Figure 2: Symptoms of brown ring patch on annual bluegrass (photo courtesy Steve McDonald, Turfgrass Disease Solutions).



Figure 3: Initial symptoms of Pythium outbreaks were difficult to diagnose in the field and in many cases resembled summer patch.

Punching holes not only assists in managing thatch, it increases water penetration and gas exchange, reduces compaction, and stimulates rooting.

In addition to large-core aerification in the spring and fall, don't hesitate to punch smaller holes in the putting surface at other times during the season. These smaller needle tines offer some of the same benefits as using large tines but cause little disruption to surface smoothness and playability (although this will probably be argued by your members).

Consider installing internal drains. In addition to thatch management, many golf courses that started an aggressive topdressing program now have several inches of sand directly above the original native soil (see Fig. 4). While water movement through the sand may be rapid, infiltration through the native soil is limited if you don't have additional internal drainage in place.

During the summer months, these conditions can lead to increased opportunities for turfgrass diseases and other abiotic stresses. Several companies now offer drainage installation with minimal disruption to the putting surface. If your greens drain poorly or are consistently moist, the installa-



Figure 4: Several inches of sand topdressing atop native soils limit water flow and create ideal conditions for both biotic and abiotic disorders.

tion of internal drains is likely to improve turf quality . . . dramatically.

Act on disease problems before they gain a foothold. Pythium blight should not be difficult to control if you protect your turf with an effective *Pythium* fungicide, such as mefenoxam or propamocarb, as soon as the heat and relative humidity increases.

Programs incorporating fosetyl-Al or other phosphonate products should be initiated early in the season—before symptoms develop. Don't rely on these products for curative control of *Pythium*.

Keep in mind... the problems mentioned above were observed on a select number of golf courses in the region, so chances are they won't be widespread this season. Nonetheless, be on the lookout for any unusual decline in turf quality, and have a local diagnostic lab identify any troubles you may experience.

To keep up to date on what's happening around the region, check out the University of Connecticut's turf disease diagnostic updates at www.turf.uconn.edu/inthefield.shtml.

# **Chapter News**

or those who haven't visited www.MetGCSA.org in a while, you're in for a pleasant surprise. The Met has launched an exciting new website designed to put relevant industry and association information right at your fingertips!

Here's a sampling of what the site has to offer: an online member directory, current and archived issues of *Tee to Green*, a monthly calendar noting any and all relevant events in the Met area, information about upcoming Met meetings, weather updates, employment opportunities, vendor website links, and a Board of Directors section with email links to all board members.

Also in the works: a section devoted to sharing noteworthy industry articles. If you read an article that you feel would benefit your fellow members, we encourage you to forward the details to me at kbenoit@glenarborclub.com.

### Have You Logged on Lately?

#### MetGCSA's New Website Is Up and Running

#### **About Your Password**

Some of the information on our website is password protected—for example, our member directory, member news, and your user profile, which lists contact information similar to that in our member directory.

If you haven't already logged on to access these password-protected areas, it's easy to do. In fact, to help you get started, we've already established a username and password for you. Right now, your username is your first initial (typed in lowercase), and your password is your last name (also typed in lowercase).

We also encourage you to complete your user profile, which currently lists only your name and place of employment. To update your profile—and change your password, if you'd like—simply go to the "Update Profile" tab through the "Members Only" drop-down menu. Once there, you'll understand what to do. Our hope is that all our members take a moment to complete—

and when necessary, update—their user profile. This offers an easy way to keep fellow members informed of any changes in your contact information.

#### The Wave of the Future

This website is going to be a very important part of the future of the MetGCSA. Once you see all that this site has to offer, we're confident you'll find it well worth a visit—a frequent visit, we hope.

Of course, for our website to continue to thrive, we need the support of our membership. That means providing helpful feedback on how we might improve the site and the information it has to offer. Please don't hesitate to contact me, again, at kbenoit@glenarborclub.com. All comments—positive, negative, or in-between—are welcome. Enjoy the site. I hope to be hearing from you.

Ken Benoit, CGCS GlenArbor Golf Club

# The Poa Annual Makes a Return Trip to The Powelton Club

by Chip Lafferty

fter a four-year hiatus, Bob DeMarco is pleased to once again host the Poa Annual Golf Tournament, NYSTA's annual turfgrass fundraiser, at the historic Powelton Club in Newburgh, NY. Be sure not to miss it. The date's July 9—and fast approaching.

#### A Work in Progress

Bob's been the club's superintendent for nearly 27 years . . . which sounds like a long time until you realize that Powelton's been around 114 years, earning it the distinction as one of the oldest courses in the country.

A Devereaux Emmet design, this 90-acre course has, over the years, acquired the signature of at least two other golf course architects: Robert Trent Jones, who partially rebuilt holes #6 and #7 in the late 1950s, and then Geoffrey Cornish, who in the mid-'80s helped guide course renovations required to make way for the expansion of I-84's Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. After relocating the 17th hole and four tees, Cornish went on to establish a long-range plan for a variety of course enhancements, including mounding and bunker and tee renovations.

In the year 2000, the course was added to the National Register of Historic Places—a fortuitous honor. "About that time," says Bob, "I had caught wind of a possible expansion to Route 9W that would affect another four holes and the maintenance facility. "They'll have a tough time coming near our property now," says Bob. And so far, so good. Seven years later, the only changes made to the course were made by choice.

During his tenure, Bob's installed an allnew irrigation system, conquered challenging drainage problems, converted a stream to a pond on the 16th hole, and hydraulically dredged the irrigation pond on the 18th hole, removing 6,000 cubic yards of silt.

Most recently, Bob worked with an outside firm to reconstruct nearly all the tee surfaces, and in a move to enhance turf conditions, he's initiated the removal of what he terms, "nuisance trees," taking down about 20 large willows and Norway maples.

"Since I've last held a meeting here," says Bob, "the club's invested \$4.5 million in renovating and expanding the clubhouse. With an additional half million, we were able to do the tee work and get a start on renovating our maintenance facility. It's a work in progress," says Bob, with a smile.

#### Right Back at You

Bob broke into the business by working on the grounds crew at Southern Dutchess Country Club, a nine-hole course in his Beacon, NY, hometown. He enjoyed this experience so much that he enrolled in UMass's Winter Turf School. After receiving his degree in 1976, he was hired as Powelton's assistant. In 1980, he left the club for a superintendent's position at Kutchers Country Club in Monticello, NY. Two seasons later—in December of 1981—he returned to The Powelton Club, this time as superintendent.

Bob's commitment to the profession has extended beyond the care of his course. A member of the Hudson Valley GCSA since 1977, he joined the association's board of directors in 1982, serving as the group's president in '86 and '87.

Bob also served three years on the MetGCSA board. Though still an active member, Bob ended his board service in 1998. "If nothing else," says Bob, "I have a clear understanding of what it takes to make professional organizations work."

#### Just for Fun

As busy as Bob is, he can always sneak in time for family and fun. He enjoys spending time with this wife of 32 years, Elayne, who's recently returned to work as a registered



Bob DeMarco

nurse after a fall that resulted in back surgery! Bob's son, Geoffrey, is now a freshman at Siena College outside Albany, NY, where he's a member of the school's hockey team. "It doesn't seem that long ago that I was managing his travel hockey team," says Bob, who's proud to note that his son's team made it to the nationals this year.

While Bob enjoys hockey, his true wintertime passion is skiing. Once the temps start to drop, he's on the slopes as much as possible.

But for now, you're most apt to find Bob on the course prepping for this worthy upcoming event. His word to the wise: "The course may play to just over 6,000 yards, but don't let the length fool you. The greens are small and sloping, making accurate iron shots paramount if you want to score well."

Don't miss this trip. It is, after all, in the name of research—something the turfgrass profession can never have too much of.

Chip Lafferty, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.

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# Whippoorwill to Host the Met's July Invitational

by Kevin Collins

his year's annual Invitational Tournament will be held July 23 at The Whippoorwill Club in Armonk, NY. Making this event all the more special is Whippoorwill's grand plan to hold this event in honor of its long-tenured superintendent, Chuck Martineau, who is retiring after 37 years of service. Chuck will join the club's new superintendent, Paul Gonzalez, in hosting the not-to-be-missed festivities.

#### Whippoorwill Then

Like the club's soon-to-be retired superintendent, The Whippoorwill Club has a long and storied history. (We won't get into Chuck's storied history here. For that, see me after the meeting.)

The land for the club was formally a 500-acre estate known as "Afterglow Farm" and was acquired by the original membership in the mid-1920s to establish a summer colony and a golf club. Donald Ross was hired to design the course and construction of the 18-hole layout, which was completed in 1927.

Fred Ruth, a developer and consultant who had recently been involved with the Fishers' Island Club project, was hired to guide The Whippoorwill Club in developing its property. Once on the job, Ruth advised club members to abandon the Ross course and bring in architect Charles Banks to design and build a distinctive 27-hole layout. Ruth knew Charles Banks's capabilities, having worked with him in completing construction of the famous Fishers' Island Club after the untimely death of course architect Seth Raynor, Banks's friend, partner, and mentor.

Unfortunately, due to limited capital, only 18 holes were ultimately completed by Banks. The planned clubhouse was never built. And due to the depression, Whippoorwill was forced to operate as a semiprivate club throughout the '30s. By the start of World War II, gas shortages had put an end to golf at the course entirely.

In 1942, Louis Calder, a local realtor who

developed home sites around the club, purchased the property and paid off Whippoorwill's debts, keeping the club intact until after the war. The course was restored in 1946, and golf was in full swing again by the spring of 1947.

Recounting the club's state of affairs, Chuck says, "Even though the course was waist-high in grass and weeds, the greens were maintained prior to the restoration, so fortunately, all was not lost."

#### Whippoorwill Now

Today, The Whippoorwill Club is considered the "premiere" Charles Banks golf course, characterized by its rolling terrain and magnificent greens complexes. The putting surfaces are boldly contoured and surrounded by steep drop-offs and deep grass-faced bunkers.

In the late '90s, the club embarked on a complete bunker renovation, one of the first completed in the Met area. A new pump station and double-row irrigation were added. More projects followed. As Chuck remembers, "We reconstructed every tee, hole by hole, enlarging them and squaring them off. At all times, our intention was to keep the integrity of the original design."

Other projects included rerouting the cart paths, adding new bunkers, and restoring the greens to their original size. Chuck remarks, "My favorite project was completed in 2006. We restored Banks' original 'Biarritz' design on the Par 3 eighth hole. The putting surface measures 10,000 square feet with the telltale swale running through the middle of the green."

All restoration work was done under the watchful eye of Architect Tripp Davis and Chuck. "We have about nine greens to go to get them back to their original dimensions, but now it's all in Paul's hands," Chuck says with a smile.

Clearly, the hard work has paid off: The course has been listed among *Golfweek* magazine's "Top 100" Classic Courses since 2003.



Paul Gonzalez, CGCS

#### A Shapshot of Chuck

Chuck got the golf course bug working on his family's nine-hole course in Massachusetts as a young man. It wasn't until he received an honorable discharge from the Marines in 1963, that he pursued any type of formal training. He enrolled in UMass, completing an agricultural degree in 1966. His first superintendent's job was at Northampton Country Club in Massachusetts. In 1968, Chuck worked a brief stint at Century Country Club with Jim Fulwider Sr. before taking over at The Whippoorwill Club in 1969.

Chuck's resume and longevity in the business are impressive. He's been a superintendent for 40 years and a Met member for nearly that long, serving as the association's president in the early '80s and sitting on one committee or another for every year after. Chuck's been a loyal member of the GCSAA for 42 years, and a life sponsor of Duck's Unlimited, a wetlands conservation organization.

When asked to cite his proudest professional achievement, Chuck was quick to point to his time on the board as the Met's president. "Working with the board," says Chuck, "my goal was to focus on the future of the association. We refined our membership classes, restructured *Tee to Green*, created a new chapter logo and image, hired an executive director, and added both assistant

"My brother Mark and I lived with Bill just about every summer, working alongside him at Edgewood Country Club. It seemed like Bill and his friends had a great time, all the time. It didn't take me long to know I had found my life's work."

and affiliate members to the Board of Directors."

Whippoorwill members honored their long-time superintendent at a retirement party they held this past October, presenting Chuck with an honorary lifetime club membership.

But Chuck's term isn't over just yet. Until the end of 2007, he's serving as a consultant to the club. When he's footloose and fancy free, Chuck has big plans, like spending time with his wife, Vicki, and enjoying two of his passions, fly fishing and golf.

Good luck in all your future endeavors, Mr. Martineau.

#### Now About Paul

Don't let his age fool you. He may be in his 30s, but Whippoorwill's new superintendent, Paul Gonzalez-like his predecessor—has also had a long and storied career. "I've been working on golf courses every summer since I was 10," says Paul. "Fortunately for me, I had an uncle in the business." Paul is referring to Bill Gaydosh, who recently retired as Round Hill Club's superintendent. "It's Uncle Bill's fault I'm in the business. I could have done anything, but I wanted to work for my Uncle Bill. My brother Mark and I lived with Bill just about every summer, working alongside him at Edgewood Country Club. It seemed like Bill and his friends had a great time, all

the time. It didn't take me long to know I had found my life's work," says Paul.

Pleased with their working relationship, Paul followed his uncle to yet another club in New Jersey, the Hackensack Golf Club, where he worked as Bill's second assistant from 1986 to 1990 while earning a B.S. from Rutgers in Plant Science.

From there, Paul went to Brae Burn—the start of his Westchester County career—broadening his experience under then Superintendent Dennis Flynn. One of Paul's lasting memories of Dennis was born not on the golf course, but rather on a sailing trip. Explains Paul, "Dennis was an avid sailor and had me manning the sails as he steered the boat. The hand crank I was using to trim the sails flew out of my hands and into Long Island Sound. If looks could kill! I don't think Dennis has ever forgiven me for that one," Paul adds.

After Brae Burn, Paul worked for Mike Leary at Montammy. "Mike was a great guy and I learned a lot from him," Paul remembers fondly. "I've been very fortunate. Growing up in the business, I've had the pleasure of having true gentlemen as role models. My Uncle Bill, Chuck Martineau, Fred Scheyhing, and Mike Leary were my mentors. They're guys who not only were great at what they do, but also knew how to laugh and have funeven in the toughest of times."

In 1992, at the young age of 25, Paul

assumed the reigns at The Canyon Club. In his 14 years there, Paul provided the membership with great course conditioning and smooth, fast, healthy greens.

Paul met his wife, Terri, at Armonk Bowl in the early '90s, and they married in 1994. "We went out every night and had a great time—until we had kids," Paul laments. Paul, Terri, and their children—Brandon, 8, and Brytanny, 5—live in Mahopac, NY. "Every weekend is a block party," says Paul. "It's a great place to live."

Becoming the superintendent at Whippoorwill, succeeding one of his longtime mentors, is a dream-come-true for Paul. He assumed the reigns November 1 of last year. Paul laughs, "The only thing that comes remotely close to the high I'm feeling right now was beating Mike Scott in the Two-Ball in 2006."

On a more serious note, he adds, "I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't have great assistants and great crews. I owe a lot to Nick Lerner, who's currently Bonnie Briar's superintendent, and I'd be remiss if I didn't mention my last assistant at The Canyon Club, Steve Turchick, who is currently at Branton Woods."

The Invitational beckons.... Don't miss the fun!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America.



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#### We're Baaaaack!

# **Old Oaks Welcomes Back Summer Social**

by Kevin Collins

he MetGCSA Summer Social returns again this year to Old Oaks Country Club on July 31. The Summer Social has proved to be the Met's most popular event of the season. Last year, more than 150 attendees had the time of their lives—and the rare opportunity to forget about life for a while.

Our hosts for the evening are Old Oak's long-tenured superintendent, Mark Millett, and his lovely wife of 35 years, Mary Pat. Mark and Mary Pat are one of the most generous and kindhearted couples you would ever want to meet. Their penchant for getting people together for parties and social events at their home has gone a long way in keeping many friendships in our association strong.

turning point for Mark was working on the crew of Northhampton Country Club, where his cousin, Chuck Martineau who recently retired from Whippoorwill (see Spotlight, page 6), was then superintendent.

Convinced that he'd found his calling, Mark next moved to Fenway Golf Club, where he quickly ascended to first assistant under then Superintendent Al Tretera. After five years at Fenway, and an education from UMass at Stockbridge, Mark became the superintendent at Westchester Hills, where he honed his turf management skills, as well as his golf game. When prodded on his career best round, he vaguely recalled a 68 while he was at Westchester Hills, where he remained the superintendent until 1981, when he accepted the position at Old Oaks.



Mark Millett

#### The Climb to Old Oaks

Mark's been the club's superintendent since 1981, but his interest in golf—and turfgrass management—began long before, when he was in high school in Turner Falls, MA. He played on the golf team and worked summers on area golf courses, starting out—along with his superintendent brother Earl—on a nearby nine-hole golf course, the Thomas Memorial Golf and Country Club. The

#### A Little Bit of Paradise

The facilities at Old Oaks are truly magnificent. The clubhouse—once the mansion of investment banking executive William A. Reed—is spectacular, while the view from the pool area, behind the main building, is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Rebuilt in 1970, the pool was featured in the 1976 movie, *Goodbye Columbus*. A little bit of paradise right here in Westchester County.

Photo by Dan McKean

#### My Personal Account

I had such a good time at last year's summer social. The DJ was great, and lots of people were up dancing. I recall Fred Scheyhing and Tony Grasso out there "shaking it" for a good part of the night, with their wives, of course. What amazed me is that I know that both of these gentlemen spend about two days a week in physical therapy, which only proves that this event has a "healing" effect on its participants.

At one point last year, Bob Steinman, Paul Gonzalez, and I engaged in a "wasabi eating" contest. Boy, did I get burned on that one—quite literally—right between my right and left nostril. Ahhh, the foolish things we guys do when we get together.

My final fond memory of last year's Summer Social was the fact that only Dave Mahoney and I wore shorts. I remember checking with Dave before the party to get his opinion about the acceptability of shorts. Enough said.... It's an Irish thing.

Hope to see you there on the 31st. Knowing full well what the golf season brings, I think everyone will be looking forward to it.

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America.

# 2007 Met Events Update

ere's what's new in our 2007 Meeting and Social Calendar. We hope you're planning to attend these not-to-be-missed association

Questions? Comments? Looking to book your club for an event next year? Feel free to contact the appropriate committee

For professional events, contact either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Blake Halderman at 914-946-1074 or Ken Benoit at 914-241-0700. Our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs are Tom Leahy (914-941-8281) and Bob Nielsen (914-234-3779). Both are available to discuss any upcoming social events.

#### **Family Picnic**

Watch for a mailing!

#### **Poa Annual Tournament**

Monday, July 9 Powelton Club, Newburgh, NY Host: Bob DeMarco

#### **MetGCSA Invitational Tournament**

Monday, July 23 The Whippoorwill Club, Armonk, NY Hosts: Paul Gonzalez, CGCS, and Chuck Martineau

#### Summer Social

Tuesday, July 31 Old Oaks Country Club Purchase, NY Host: Mark Millett

#### **Education Meeting**

Wednesday, August 8 Brae Burn Country Club, Purchase, NY Host: Blake Halderman, CGCS

#### **Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier**

Tuesday, September 11 Colonial Springs Golf Club Farmingdale, NY Host: Mark Chant

#### Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament

Tuesday, October 9 Tuxedo Club, Tuxedo Park, NY Host:Tim Garceau

#### **Annual Assistants Championship**

Thursday, October 11 Dellwood Country Club, New City, NY Assistant Hosts: Brian Chapin, Jake Parchen, Hunter Horton

#### **Met Area Championship**

Monday, October 22 Bethpage State Park, Black Course Farmingdale, NY Host: Craig Currier

#### **Annual Meeting**

November (Date TBA) Mosholu Golf Course, Bronx, NY Host: Erik Feldman

#### **MetGCSA Christmas Party**

Saturday, December 15 The Stanwich Club, Greenwich, CT Host: Scott Niven, CGCS

#### **Educational Events**

#### Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, July 31 Horticultural Farm II, New Brunswick, NJ The field day will focus on research currently taking place at the Turf Research facility. Among the studies are:

- · Anthracnose management on Poa annua
- · Current efforts to convert Poa fairways and greens to bentgrass
- New bentgrass cultivars for greens/
- · Irrigation management studies on bentgrass
- Advances in disease, insect, and weed

Registration for field day activities runs from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Tours are conducted from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch from 1 to 2 p.m. For further information, call 215-757-6582 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

#### **University of Rhode Island 76th Annual Turfgrass Field Day**

Wednesday, August 22 C.R. Skogley Turfgrass Research Facility Kingston, RI

The field day offers the opportunity to tour turf plots showing research trials being conducted at the university. In addition, attendees will have access to the largest gathering of regional product distributors outside the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show.

Registration for field day activities runs from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Turf plot tours run from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. And exhibitor booths are open from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

For further information, call 401-874-2791 or visit www.uriturf.org.

### **Member News**

#### New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new members: Guy Gurney, Class SM, Orange County Golf Club, Middletown, NY.

Timothy A. Hetrick, Class A, Hollow Brook Golf Cub, Courtlandt Manor, NY. John Pagan, Class AF, All Pro Horticulture Corp., Farmingdale, NY. Peter Webb, Class C, Rolling Hills Country Club, Wilton, CT.

#### In Memoriam

All those who played Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, PA, when Richard Valentine was the club's superintendent will be sorry to hear that Richard passed away Friday, May 23 at 78 years old. In addition to being a prominent and highly regarded figure in our industry, Richard Valentine was a special person. Our condolences to his family.

# Centennial Draws a Crowd for Two-Ball Qualifier

e had a large and exciting field teeing off at Centennial Golf Club on April 25 for the MetGCSA's annual Two-ball Qualifier. Although this spring was slow to start, we sure did catch a beautiful day to spend in the hills of Carmel. In addition to the great weather, Glen Dube and his staff had the course in wonderful shape—compliments from the players were continuous—and the rest of the Centennial staff was also a pleasure to work with. Many thanks to everyone at Centennial for hosting our event.

#### You Win Some, You Lose Some

With such a large field of contestants, that could mean only one thing: Some teams wouldn't qualify! Lucky for our returning First Flight champions, Tim Garceau and Ernie Steinhofer (who get the #1 position in the bracket), they didn't have to qualify because they shot a Net 74, which was four shots off the last qualifying score. This year, we had 10 teams score within one shot of each other, with one of those teams failing to make the cut.

Other notable scores were the team of Dave Dudones/Grover Alexander, who last year, shot a qualifying Net 80 and, this year, somehow (somehow = sandbaggers!) shot a Net 58. They ran away with First Place. The most interesting was Andy Drohen/Tom Ashfield. Although they shot a Gross 70 to take home First Place, they qualified by only one shot with a Net of 69. It will be interesting to see if their 1.2 combined index can hold up against the 25's. I don't think so!

#### Notable Wins of the Day

In all, we had a very competitive race in both the Gross and Net divisions, and most importantly, it was great to see all these players vying for the limited slots in this season-long event. Dudones/Alexander took home First Net, followed by Scott Ferguson/Jim Weiland (the team to watch in the Second Division) with a score of 61. Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera and Tony Campanella/Bill Middleton, who both shot 63, took home Third and Fourth respectively.

In the Gross Division, we had Drohen/ Ashfield in the lead with Charlie Siemers/ Anthony Hooks just one shot back. A few shots back were Matt Ceplo/Jim Swiatlowski (Ceplo chipped in to birdie the hardest hole on the course with his partner still in his cart) and Chris Smith/Greg Moran, who were tied with 75s.

#### **Stay Tuned**

It is going to be an exciting season-long event, so please be sure to visit our website at www.metgcsa.org for the complete lineup of Two-Ball qualifiers in the First and Second Flight brackets and for up-to-date standings.

If you are in the event, note that all matches should be completed by the following dates: Match 1 ~ June 22

Match 1 July 27 Match 2 ~ July 27 Match 3 ~ August 29 Final ~ September 28

#### **Event of the Day Results**

#### **Gross Team Winners**

- 63 Andy Drohen/Tom Ashfield Agrium Advanced Technologies/ Quaker Ridge GC
- 64 Charlie Siemers/Anthony Hooks Lesco, Inc. /Pelham Bay/Split Rock GC
- 75 Matt Ceplo/Jim Swiatlowski Rockland CC/Montammy GC
- 75 Chris Smith/Greg Moran Hudson National GC/Matrix Turf Solutions

#### **Net Team Winners**

- 58 Dave Dudones/Grover Alexander North Jersey CC/Hudson Hills GC
- 61 Scott Ferguson/Jim Weiland Mahopac GC/Shorehaven GC
- 63 Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera Metropolis CC/Harrell's Turf Specialty
- 63 Tony Campanella/Bill Middleton Hampshire CC/Emerald Isle, Ltd.

#### Closest to the Pin

#3 Lakes Mike Reeb, 6' 4"

CC of New Canaan

#5 Lakes Jim Calladio 2' 1"

E/T Equipment Co.

#3 Meadows Scott Niven 12' 3"

#5 Meadows Mark Fuller 2' 2"

#5 Meadows Mark Fuller

Connecticut GC

#### **Longest Drive**

#9 Anthony Hooks
Pelham Bay/Split Rock GC

- Blake Halderman, CGCS



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# Super/Manager Tourney Generates Friendly Competition

he last day of May brought in near 90-degree temperatures, but the MetGCSA still had a nice turnout at Scarsdale Golf Club for the Superintendent/Manager Tournament. This was our first limited-field event in many years, and we successfully had 48 players teeing it up on a Thursday afternoon. I would like to thank Scarsdale Golf Club's General Manager William Minard and especially Superintendent Matt Severino for hosting such a wonderful event. The golf course was in immaculate condition, and the dining facilities and food were exceptional.

#### Action in the Superintendent/ Manager Division

As far as the action goes, we had the Alonzi brothers ruling the Net Division in the Superintendent/Manager group. Word has it that Bob Alonzi played more than five holes by himself and still managed to come in second with his partner Steve Arias. Joe Alonzi, partnering with his manager, Bob James, shot a 61 and took home the First Place trophy. Bob may have lost to his brother, Joe, but I say if you can play by yourself and still place in the Net Division, you must be doing something right—if you know what I mean! Good luck to teams who face the Alonzis in this year's Two-Ball Championsahip.

In the Gross Division, my good friend Glen Dube and I, playing in the same four-some, went head-to-head for the title; although we had no idea at the time these scores would hold up. Steve Vando and I had one of those days with lots of up and downs, lots of bogey putts, and very few birdie putts, but somehow, we managed to come in with an ugly 79 for Second Place. We were defeated by a much more solid, lots-of-birdie-putts-missed round of 78 by Glen Dube and his partner, Scott Klemme.

# Competitive Play in the Non-Manager Division

Among the "non-managers," we had Scott Curry (an ex-Scarsdale Golf Club assistant using his local knowledge) and George Corgan winning the Gross Division with a score of 75. In the Net Division, Tony Girardi and Jim Calladio took First Place with a 63. Scott said Big George was getting

a bit heavy, and I believe it, considering Scott hit a bomb on 18 to win the contest for Longest Drive. He also took home one of the Closest to the Pin prizes and probably shot between 75 and 77 on his own ball. Nice round!

For a complete rundown of the winning scores in both divisions, see the results below.

#### A Few Final Notes

Thank you to everyone who braved the heat and especially those who dragged their managers out for the day. The camaraderie among clubs was wonderful. I would also, again, like to thank the Scarsdale Golf Club for hosting this event and allowing us to play among the members on a weekday afternoon. We are planning to have more of these limited-field events, so please be sure to get your entries in as soon as possible.

#### Superintendent/Manager Team Results

#### **Gross Team Winners**

- 78 Glen Dube/Scott Klemme Centennial Golf Club
- 79 Blake Halderman/Steve Vando Brae Burn Country Club

#### **Net Team Winners**

- 61 Joe Alonzi/Bob James Westchester Country Club
- 62 Bob Alonzi/Steve Arias Fenway Golf Club

#### Member/Member or Guest Team Results

#### **Gross Team Winners**

75 Scott Curry/George Corgan Lake Success GC/Steven Willand

#### **Net Team Winners**

63 Tony Girardi/Jim Calladio Rockrimmon CC/E/T Equipment Co.

#### Closest to the Pin

#2 Scott Curry, Lake Success GC	4' 1"
#5 Charlie Siemers, Lesco, Inc.	1' 9"
#11 Blake Halderman	4' 2"
Brae Burn CC	
#15 Jeff Wentworth, Pelham CC	3' 9"

#### **Longest Drive**

#18 Scott Curry, Lake Success GC

- Blake Halderman, CGCS

#### President's Message continued from page 1

ductive? The game is hard enough as it is. We don't have to make it any more difficult. I must admit, I've never really watered the greens to make them soft. If the grass needed water, I watered it. So what if my greens were like concrete.

Now I've got an all-new perspective. I'm thinking if Augusta can soften up its greens for Tiger Woods, maybe I could soften up ours for our members and guests. Makes sense, doesn't it? All within reason, of course.

#### Speaking of Greens...

May 1-12, with the help of Meadow Brook Superintendent John Carlone and the Long Island GCSA, we co-sponsored the maintenance of the "Greens at Rockefeller Center." We gathered 20 volunteers to water, clean, rake, and prep the golf exhibit that fellow member Ron Cutlip designed.

Ron created replicas of the last three holes of the TPC at Sawgrass, including the famous Island Green. He spared no expense, even going so far as to bring palm trees up from Florida to set the atmosphere.

Clearly, the exhibit was a showstopper. Every time I was there, more than 100 people were waiting to try their luck. Anyone who got a hole-in-one received a free set of clubs, complements of Callaway Golf. According to Ron, they went through quite a few sets.

Because of all the traffic, that particular hole was done exclusively with artificial turf. Our real task was to keep the two bentgrass greens and surrounding areas alive and well. This proved more difficult than we expected. One of the greens eventually succumbed to the heavy traffic and heat and had to be resodded. That meant that the two volunteers who would typically show up at about 6 p.m. to water, clean, and rake bunkers, had to do double time a few nights to returf the area.

Hats off to our volunteers. They all did a great job. If you missed the exhibit, Ron will be at our September meeting to give a presentation on his Greens at Rockefeller Center.

#### One Last Thing

If you weren't able to make the meeting at Scarsdale, you missed a good one. The day was perfect, and the course was outstanding. Congratulations to Superintendent Matt Severino, Manager Bill Minard, and Golf Pro Bill Smittle for a great day of golf and camaraderie.

Well, it's time I got going. I need to make sure that six-inch rough gets cut.

#### Matt Ceplo

President

# Brae Burn Brings on the Met's Annual Education Meeting

by Bill Perlee

ugust 8 is the date set for the Met's sixth annual Education Meeting, which Brae Burn Country Club Superintendent Blake Halderman will be hosting this year.

Those who have attended in the past know that education meetings are all about ... well ... education, so there's little opportunity to even take a peak at the course. Pity, this time, since Brae Burn is about to act on a Master Plan that will forever change the 43-year-old course. Designed originally by Frank Duane, a disciple of famed Golf Course Architect Robert Trent Jones Sr., the course will undergo renovations, starting this fall, that will include green expansion, bunker work, ponds, tree work, and drainage.

"We are working with Golf Course Architect John Harvey," says Blake, adding, "He was a logical choice since, like Duane, he had worked under the watchful eye of Trent Jones Sr.

Come this fall, Blake will clearly be busy, but he's no stranger to the rigors of construction. He was on board for the grow-in phase of Trump National in Briarcliff Manor, NY, where he was superintendent before Brae Burn—from 2000 until 2004.

#### All in the Family

Blake began his career at the ripe old age of 15, working at Angus Lea Golf Course in New Hampshire for Russ Niven, who, yes, is Superintendent Scott Niven's father. Blake later worked under Curt Niven, Scott's brother, when Curt bought Angus Lea from his father. "It was a great experience," says Blake, who was one of only three crew members working to maintain the nine-hole course.

Having gotten hooked on the idea of a career in golf course management, Blake enrolled in the turf program at the University of Rhode Island and interned at The Stanwich Club under Scott, completing the Niven trifecta. Broadening his scope beyond the Niven clan, Blake interned next at Muirfield Village with his current Two-Ball partner, Glen Dube.

Convinced that his future lay in the Metropolitan New York area, Blake landed at Woodway Country Club as an assistant to Larry Pakkala. When prompted for a thought about Blake's meteoric rise, Larry said, "It does not surprise me that Blake has gone so far in his young career. He is the type of guy you can't help but like. He's a doer; he gets it done in a way that makes you feel confident you're in good hands. I can't tell you the fun we had when he was my assistant."

After two-and-a-half years at Woodway, Blake accepted his first superintendent's job at Minisceongo Golf Club in Pomona, NY, moving on to Trump National just three years later.

Blake's diligence—no surprise—extends beyond the job. He's been a member of the MetGCSA since 1995 and, three years ago,



Blake Halderman, CGCS

joined the Board of Directors. His charge, at the moment, is Tournament Committee cochair—no small undertaking as he strives to improve attendance at our monthly meetings.

#### Blake's Other Side

Away from the job, Blake is busy at home with his wife, Kristen, and his young family: 4-year-old Emma and 2-year-old Brendan. "We enjoyed skiing with Emma last year and hope to get Brendan into it soon," Blake says with pride. Right now, Blake's attending soccer games and dance recitals, but it won't surprise anyone if he passes on his love of competition and golf to his kids before too long.

Back to business ... be sure to join fellow Met members August 8, for an evening of education and camaraderie.

Bill Perlee, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY.

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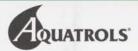


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- Westchester Turf Supply, Inc. Bob & Dave Lippman "Serving the Fine Turf Profession" 845-621-5067 / Fax: 845-621-7180 westturf@comcast.net
- © Wilfred MacDonald, Inc. Glenn Gallion 19 Central Boulevard S. Hackensack, NJ 07606 888-831-0891 / Fax: 201-931-1730

William A. Kelly & Company, Inc. Charity Kelly / Eric Kelly / Tom Olver Construction Manager, General Contractor 914-232-3191 / Fax: 914-232-3812 wakelly@bestweb.net

Winding Brook Turf Michael Krudwig 240 Griswold Road, Wethersfield, CT 800-243-0232 / Cell: 860-883-0475

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