

Tee To Green

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Country Club

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Springing Into the Season



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atching the Masters on TV, I could almost forget that, in the Northeast, Mother Nature is still working hard to convince us that it's winter. Snow in April, temperatures that have hit the 60-degree mark only once or twice, and a long-term forecast calling for cool, wet weather does not bode well for turf that's trying to recover from ice damage. This is the type of spring that can drive superintendents crazy. Golfers are eager to get started, but the grass just isn't cooperating.

The past few years, we were fortunate: The ice belt stayed fairly well north of our area. Not the case this year. Damage varies from course to course, with vast differences in courses that are just a few miles apart. Some guys have only a few spots on one or two greens, and then, I know of a course that has to renovate all 18. I'm somewhere in between. I have some fairly significant areas of damage on six greens and smaller areas on four others.

This is an example of a situation where communicating with your membership is critical. Let them know exactly where you stand, and be prepared to lay out your plan to hasten recovery. Take pictures. When you look at your greens every day, it's hard to see any change in their condition. Weekly photographs will show just how much progress is being made.

In the end, there's no one answer on how to repair ice damage, but you can be sure members will rest a whole lot easier if they know you have a clear plan of action in place.

Lobbying for Our Industry

On a different note, NYSTA's Advocacy Day in Albany (see full article, page 6) was a great success. Six MetGCSA superintendents and our executive director, Ed Brockner, attended and were able to speak to lawmakers or one of their top aides. Several conversations were held with senators who have been rather acrimonious toward our efforts in the past. Surprisingly, they were not only attentive, but also offered suggestions on ways we might be able to further our efforts.



Bob Nielsen, CGCSA
MetGCSA President

Senator Mark Grisanti, the new chair of the New York State Environmental Conservation Committee, spoke to the group and jokingly remarked that he hoped to have an open door policy similar to Senator Thompson's, the previous chair. For those of you who don't know Senator Thompson, his door was *never* open to superintendents or the green industry.

One unfortunate piece of legislation that Senator Grisanti has proposed would require golf courses to obtain a water withdrawal permit if they have the capability of applying more than 100,000 gallons per day. NYSTA and the MetGCSA are asking that golf courses be placed in the same category as agriculture, which would mean that we would still have to report water use but not obtain a permit.

The regulations put in place by the DEP in Connecticut have been so onerous that golf courses have spent as much as \$250,000 in environmental studies and engineering fees to obtain these permits. The Connecticut GCSA has done a phenomenal job in trying to get golf courses exempted and is very close to reaching an agreement. I am sure you will be hearing a lot more about this in the future.

Well, as far as the start of the season goes, let's hope the weather warms up, we get rain every three days, and those seeds jump out of the ground!

Looking forward to seeing some green grass—and everyone on the links—for our next meeting!

Bob Nielsen, CGCSA
President

Feature

Meet Ed Brockner

*The MetGCSA's New Executive Director
Hits the Ground Running With a Wealth
of Experience Behind Him*

by Matt Ceplio, CGCS





he MetGCSA Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to introduce Ed Brockner, our new executive director. Officially on board January 3, Ed was selected from a pool of well-qualified applicants. His impressive resume and work experience did, however, make the decision an easy one for the Search Committee.

I personally met Ed while attending the Spring 2007 Board Meeting of The First Tee of Metropolitan New York at Mosholu Golf Course in the Bronx. Ed was, and still is, The First Tee's director of development, now sharing those duties with his new position with the Met. Ed and Executive Director Barry McLaughlin put together a great meeting and provided an informative description of The First Tee program's efforts and initiatives.

After the meeting—despite the cold, windy weather—Ed and I threw our bags over our shoulders and played nine holes at Mosholu. It was obvious then that Ed loved what he did and was extremely proud of what Mosholu had not only become, but was destined to accomplish in the future. It was also apparent that Ed was interested in strengthening The First Tee's relationship with our association. Little did any of us realize just how closely tied we would become.

A Born Golfer

It seemed Ed was destined for a career in the golf industry. At just 6, he would spend countless hours hitting balls and playing the course at Dix Hills Golf Club, a nine-hole public course just down the street from his childhood home on Long Island. "Even though neither of my parents were golfers, I will always be grateful to them for encouraging my early interest in the game," says Ed. By the time he was 12, he had graduated to a truer test of golf, playing regularly at Bethpage State Park's Black Course.

Ed competed in junior tournaments, making the high school golf team in seventh grade. By his senior year, he was Suffolk County Champion. That's when Yale Golf Coach David Paterson spotted Ed and

recruited him to Yale. Ed played on the Yale golf team all four years, while pursuing a B.A. in history. Striking just the right balance between golf and academics, Ed was twice honored as an Academic All-American for his accomplishments both on the course and in the classroom.

During his time at the university, Ed not only played golf, but also participated in a Yale program, much like The First Tee's, that was designed to introduce the game to underprivileged children in the New Haven area. Along with his teammates, Ed enjoyed bringing golf to children who otherwise might not have had the opportunity to experience the sport that had such a great impact on his life.

But that wasn't the only eye-opening and—as it turned out—influential experience Ed had in his years at Yale.

During spring break his junior year, Coach Paterson took the golf team to England and Scotland. While playing some of the greatest courses in the world, Ed fell in love with another aspect of the game: golf course architecture. After graduating from Yale in 2001, Ed pursued a master's in sports administration from Florida State University—which happened to be his parents' alma mater—and then was called on to help his friend and mentor, Dave Paterson, to serve as assistant golf coach at Yale. At that point, Ed also seized the opportunity to

complete a seminar in golf course renovation at the Harvard Graduate School of Design to learn more about the historical and practical aspects of construction.

Experiencing All Things Golf

This springboarded Ed into his first paying job in the business: He worked with Golf Course Architect Gil Hanse, gaining valuable experience on the construction crew at Boston Golf Club, which has been ranked one of the best new courses in America. Next, Ed set his sights on a position with The First Tee of Metropolitan New York. At the time, the Mosholu Golf Course, which had become the Metropolitan area's primary First Tee facility, was undergoing renovations to the golf course to accommodate a 13-story, underground water filtration plant designed to service a significant portion of New York City. Earning the distinction of having the largest living roof, the water treatment facility's nine-acre expanse will be hardly detectable beneath the Mosholu's new driving range and clubhouse, all due to be completed in 2013.

With the program in need of someone to oversee the course renovation, as well as raise funds for this youth development program intended to help inner city children build life-enhancing values through exposure to the game of golf, Ed's knowledge of the game



Ed Brockner poses with the Yale Golf Team at Turnberry in Scotland (front row, right, next to Coach David Paterson).

Ed Brockner working on the construction crew at Boston Golf Club.



and highly relevant past experience made him a shoe-in for the job. As director of development, Ed was charged, first and foremost, with overseeing the master plan developed by local Golf Course Architect Stephen Kay. Part of what made this such a positive experience was working with Golf Course Superintendent Erik Feldman who had previously worked as an assistant at Bethpage. "Erik was able to do the impossible at times," says Ed. "We never could have carried out this project without him, and it really made me realize how invaluable a capable, dedicated superintendent is to the success of a golf course."

The First Tee Number Two

In 2005, The First Tee ventured into New Jersey's Essex County. Knowing Ed's capabilities, The First Tee sought his help in developing an area in Newark, New Jersey's Weequahic Park, which was owned and operated by the Essex County Parks Department. On a small parcel of land next to the railroad tracks, Ed guided the development of a three-hole practice area with a small range, and he worked with The First Tee Board to raise funds for construction and programming. In 2006, the park's Weequahic Park Golf Course became home to The First Tee of Essex County.

During this time, Ed made valuable contacts within Essex County's administration under County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, and he developed a master plan for improvements at the three public golf courses in Essex. Through numerous presentations to the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Ed was able to secure \$7 million to renovate and improve conditions at Weequahic, Hendricks Field, and Francis Byrne golf courses.

At Byrne, a Charles Banks-designed course and former private club dating back to the 1920s, Ed worked once again with Stephen Kay to recapture many of the course's classical features, making Byrne one

of the premier public golf destinations in the state. At the completion of the project, Ed also helped to bring in experienced Superintendent Tim Christ. "Tim has done a great job of managing this operation and really keeps things going in the right direction," says Ed. "Having skilled superintendents at public courses is so important, especially considering the limited budgets."

Fortunate Encounters

"I've been extremely fortunate to have great people around me to learn from and guide me in my professional development," says Ed, naming among the many, Jay Mottola, executive director of the MGA; Charlie Robson, executive director of the MetPGA; and Barry McLaughlin, The First Tee's executive director. "These people have been extremely supportive in my work with The First Tee and, now, my new endeavor as the MetGCsA's executive director."

Also high on his list of advocates is his wife, Laura, who he married in July 2009. Laura is an art teacher at a middle school in the Bronx, and Ed and Laura live on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Aside from city life, they enjoy catching a little R&R on the beaches of the Caribbean whenever their busy schedules permit a little time away.

Effecting Change

In his short tenure with the Met, Ed has already made notable strides. "Ed has hit the

ground running," says Met President Bob Nielsen. "He is hard at work on establishing partnerships with our various vendors and affiliated organizations, and he is eager to educate both golfers and nongolfers about the superintendent's role in preserving—and enhancing—the environment and the value of golf courses to our communities."

Ed recently attended Advocacy Day in Albany and was able to observe firsthand the important role government relations plays in our profession and the impact legislation can have on golf courses. Down the road, Ed hopes to enhance the quality of our educational, social, and golf events and encourage greater member participation in both association activities and committees.

"In my short time with the MetGCsA," says Ed, "I've found the dedication and enthusiasm of the board and committee members impressive—and contagious. I am honored to work on behalf of such an outstanding organization and look forward to increasing the profile of our membership in any way I can," says Ed.

Please join us in welcoming Ed, and feel free to contact him with any thoughts or ideas you might have for improving the MetGCsA. You will find his contact information on our website, www.metgcsa.org.

Matt Ceplo, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY, and a past president of the MetGCsA.

Upcoming Events

Plan to Attend These Upcoming Events!

Superintendent/Manager or Guest Tournament

Tuesday, May 17
Country Club of New Canaan
Host: Mike Reeb, CGCS

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Thursday, June 9
Silver Spring Country Club
Ridgefield, CT
Host: Peter Rappoccio, CGCS

Summer Social

Tuesday, July 26
Fenway Golf Club, Scarsdale, NY
Host: Rob Alonzi

Family Picnic

Date TBA
Bedford Memorial Park
Bedford, NY

Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier PLUS The Poa Annual Tournament

Tuesday, September 6
Fresh Meadow Country Club
Scarsdale, NY
Host: Joe Gardner

Superintendent/Green Chairperson Tournament

Monday, October 3
Mt. Kisco Country Club
Mt. Kisco, NY
Host: Greg Gutter

Annual Assistants Championship

Thursday, October 6
Redding Country Club
Redding, CT
Assistant Host: Steve Kubicki
Superintendent Host: Brett Chapin

Met Area Team Championship

Tuesday, October 25
Galloway National Golf Club
Galloway, NJ / Absecon, NJ
Host: Scott McBane

Educational Events

16th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, May 2
Fiddler's Elbow CC, Far Hills, NJ
Join Dr. Bruce Clarke and Dr. Bill Meyer for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, and fun. Your participation in this annual fundraiser helps continue turfgrass research and breeding programs at Rutgers University's Center for Turfgrass Science.

For further information, call 973-812-6467 or log on to www.njturfgrass.org.

UMass Turf Research Field Day

Wednesday, June 15 (8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.)
UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, MA

The field day will focus on the wide range of research projects that university faculty, staff, and graduate students currently have underway at the research center and at other locations. Among the studies you'll see: the

biology and integrated management of turf-damaging insects, short- and long-term weed management, pesticide exposure, fertility, drought management, as well as a range of National Turfgrass Evaluation Program fine turf trials. The field day will also feature displays and demonstrations from turf industry vendors. A barbecue lunch is included with registration.

For further information, contact the UMass Extension Turf Program office at 508-892-0382 or by email at fieldday@umassturf.org.

Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, July 26
Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ

Save the date, and watch for details. Call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org for further information.

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Turfgrass Advocacy Day Brings to Light New York State's Legislative Challenges

by Mike Maffei, CGCS

The 12th Annual New York State Turfgrass Advocacy Day, held March 9 at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY, accomplished all that it was supposed to—and more. The 41 superintendents and industry professionals who attended—including MetGCSA representatives Brian Benedict, Ken Benoit, Ed Brockner, Matt Ceplo, Blake Halderman, Bob Nielsen, and me—made a record 60 legislative visits, driving home the significant impact current legislative initiatives have on their ability to do their jobs effectively.

Reflecting on the day's events, NYSTA Past President Steve Griffen believed the outcome was nothing short of positive. "Every component of the industry was represented, including golf course superintendents, lawn applicators, sod growers, landscape design/build managers, sports field managers, facilities and grounds managers, and sales representatives," he says, noting just how adept Advocacy Day participants have become at communicating with legislators and informing them of the impact that proposed legislation, regulations, and budget issues can have on their ability to succeed in their profession.

"The legislators now have more of an understanding of our industry and can easily recognize how burdensome certain proposed legislation can be to our livelihoods. Many are keenly aware of the importance of our industry, with its vast array of small businesses, private and public enterprises, and its impact on tourism and economic growth in the state."

The day began with an association breakfast and welcoming remarks by NYSTA President Greg Chorvas and Past President Steve Griffen. It continued with a presentation by The Vandervort Group's Legislative Associate Wayne Lair, who spoke about budget issues and the legislative climate in Albany in what is his first year representing NYSTA in Albany. Lair is successor to Jeff Lane, former government affairs lobbyist (see sidebar, page 7).



MetGCSA representatives listen to a review of the issues prior to meeting with their legislators. Clockwise from left to right: MetGCSA Executive Director Ed Brockner, Vice President Blake Halderman, board member Ken Benoit, and President Bob Nielsen.

The Issues at Hand

Prior to the legislative visits, participants had the opportunity to review advocacy strategy, as well as the legislative challenges facing the state. Industry experts presented the following eight Advocacy Day topics:

Promoting Less-Than-Label-Rate Use of Pesticides

Joseph Potrikus, Certified Sports Field Manager and Vice President of Greener World Landscape Maintenance, LLC

Potrikus explained that it is important that turfgrass managers who are trained, licensed commercial pesticide applicators have the flexibility to apply less-than-label-rates to aid their ability to reduce overall pesticide use; increase the use of reduced-risk, biological and organic pest controls; and adopt a progressive turfgrass IPM program.

NYSTA recommends that legislators **Support Bills A7600 (Magee) and S2887 (Marcellino)**, which create a new section in the Environmental Conservation Law that states that unless the labeling specifically prohibits such use, a pesticide registered for use in New York State may be used by commercial applicators in a dosage, concentration, or frequency less than that specified on the labeling. This amendment is similar to a law that allows less-than-label-rates to be used for agricultural purposes.

Pursuing Preemption of Fertilizer

Jeff Williams, Regulatory Issues Coordinator with the New York Farm Bureau

Williams explained NYSTA's **Support for Bill S848 (Young)**, which would prohibit county and local governments from adopting fertilizer regulations. If fertilizers are regulated locally, application requirements can vary from municipality to municipality and, as a result, make it difficult and costly for applicators to achieve compliance. The bill, therefore, proposes preemptive responsibility for establishing fertilizer applicator regulations to the one state agency with the expertise to do that: the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Restoring Support for Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund

Greg Chorvas, NYSTA President and Grounds Superintendent at Cantine Veterans Sports Complex

Chorvas spoke about the status of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund, which supports research geared toward providing turf management solutions that protect environmental quality. The 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 New York State budgets included a \$175,000 appropriation toward the fund's work. In 2010, however, budget cuts terminated Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund support. As a result, NYSTA is recommending that legislators **Restore the \$175,000 Line Item** supporting the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund.

Putting a Stop to Water Withdrawal Permitting

Mike Maffei, CGCS, NYSTA Board Member and Golf Course Superintendent at Back O'Beyond

In my book, and in many others, this is one of the most controversial, and damaging, pieces of proposed legislation. The purpose of this bill, in short, is to authorize the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to implement a water withdrawal permitting program to regulate the use of the state's water resources.

Current New York State law requires entities with the capability of withdrawing 100,000 gallons per day to file an annual report of monthly water use and pay a \$50 fee. The proposed bill expands the existing water supply permit program by requiring entities that have the capacity to withdraw a minimum of 100,000 gallons per day to obtain a permit from the DEC.

Regulations would require stream flow standards and new water conservation practices. "Environmentally Sound and Economically Feasible Water Conservation Practices and Measures" are specifically defined in the legislation. In the case of a golf course, complying with these regulations would mean that such things as modifying or constructing a new pump house would require the supervision of a licensed engineer.

This type of legislation has been implemented in Connecticut and, in some cases, has run facilities from \$65,000 to \$250,000 to comply.

Adding insult to injury, the New York State DEC would be able to grant or deny new permits if the above criteria isn't met and, in addition, would leave us susceptible to open-ended regulations that would allow the DEC to establish restrictions and limits on water use.

It is NYSTA's recommendation to **Oppose Bills A5318A and S3798** to avoid having increased fees and regulations imposed on an industry that is already over-regulated and overtaxed.

By the day's end, Vandervort Group's Wayne Lair believed we had made some good headway on this issue. "We are working, now, to try to get golf courses added to the agricultural exemption," he noted.

Reevaluating New York State Product Registration

Barbara Ahern, Attorney at Law, Representing Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE)

Ahern spoke to participants about New York State's problematic pesticide review process. Apparently, New York is one of the few states in the nation to conduct a second review of pesticide products after they have already been approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Lane Receives NYSTA Friend of the Green Industry Award

Jeff Lane, our former government affairs lobbyist, received NYSTA's Friend of the Green Industry Award during our Advocacy Day luncheon for his outstanding work as a vocal advocate for the green industry.

Regarding the tribute, Jeff wrote, "I was truly honored to receive the award from such a hardworking and well-respected organization as the New York State Turfgrass Association. It's been my pleasure over the past five years to represent an association that maintains such a strong presence in Albany that legislators always make sure they check with NYSTA when considering green industry issues."

Congratulations, Jeff, and best of luck in your future endeavors.

In some cases, product registrations have been held in departmental offices for as long as two years before any action was taken.

NYSTA urges the state to **Accept EPA Approvals** so that New York can benefit from the use of new formulations with improved modes of action that have lower potential for pesticide resistance and better efficacy and compatibility with the goals of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs. In an era of budget cuts, the elimination of a duplicative and costly second registration process would save the state both time and money.

Seeking the Repeal of the Pesticide Reporting Law

Scott Gallup, Golf Course Superintendent for Capital Hills at Albany

Gallup explained that the Pesticide Reporting Law requires certified applicators to submit an annual report detailing their daily application of pesticides sorted by product and address. Over the past 14 years, New York State has spent millions of dollars creating and maintaining a database of this information, which is requested only on rare occasion by researchers and then made available through a Health Research Review Board.

NYSTA recommends **Repealing This Law** and saving the \$575,000 that it will cost this year to fund this operation.

Adopting a State Definition of IPM

Rick Zimmerman, Vice Chairman for the Empire State Council of Agricultural Organizations

Zimmerman spoke to participants about the need to adopt a standard state definition of Integrated Pest Management. Right now, the state has several legislative proposals with varying definitions of IPM but with one

common thread: They're all being used to define IPM as a method using anything but pesticides for pest management.

Zimmerman emphasizes that we must push back with legislation that will define IPM properly and continue to allow for the judicious use of pesticides. NYSTA suggests that legislators **Support Bill S2775 (Young)**, which defines Integrated Pest Management as "a systematic approach to managing pests that utilizes a diversity of management options to minimize health, environmental, and economic risks and impacts. These options may include biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools to prevent pest infestations or reduce them to acceptable levels."

Keeping the New York Farm Viability Institute Well Funded

Steve Griffen, NYSTA Past President and Co-owner of Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc.

The New York Farm Viability Institute is an independent, nonprofit organization led by farmers and dedicated to serving agricultural producers regardless of enterprise, size of business, or location in New York.

The institute ensures industry success by supporting applied research, education, information transfer, technology adoption, and market analysis. In previous years, direct state funding has allowed the institute to support research of economic and environmental importance for the turf industry. NYSTA recommends **Allocating \$4 Million in Funding** for the institute in 2011-12 to expand and enhance New York's agricultural and horticultural economies.

Legislative Visits Reap Rewards

With issue presentations complete, participants met with their legislators—with great effect.

Reflecting on the legislative visits, The Vandervort Group's Wayne Lair was pleased that participants were able to bring legislators up-to-speed on a large number of issues affecting the green industry. "Hearing real-

continued on page 9

Thank You to Our Sponsors

We would like to thank our loyal sponsors who helped make this event possible. They are: RISE-Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, our premier sponsor; the Sullivan County Challenge; Scotts Miracle Gro; the Northeastern Golf Course Superintendents Association; Nassau Suffolk Landscape Gardeners Association; New York State Lawn Care Association; Helena Chemical Company; and Grassland Equipment & Irrigation Corporation.

GCSAA Annual Meeting Brings New Board and Dues Increase

MetGCSA Past President John O'Keefe Remains on Board as Director

At this year's Annual Meeting—held February 11 in conjunction with the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in Orlando, FL—delegates not only elected a new board of directors, but also cast their vote on a proposed dues increase. When all was said and done, delegates approved a bump-up of \$20 annually for Class A and superintendent members and \$10 annually for Class C members.

On the election front, **Robert Randquist, CGCS**, director of golf course and grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, FL, emerged as the GCSAA's new president. A 34-year GCSAA member, Randquist has a B.A. in metallurgical engineering from the University of Oklahoma. He serves on The Environmental Institute for Golf Board of Trustees, is a member of Palm Beach GCSA and a past president of the Oklahoma GCSA. Randquist is also a member of the Florida Turfgrass Association and the USGA Green Section committee.

Also elected to the board:

Vice President

Sanford G. Queen, CGCS, manager of golf operations for the City of Overland Park, KS

Secretary/Treasurer

Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance operations at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, CA

Immediate Past President

James R. Fitzroy, CGCS, director/superintendent at Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in North Quincy, MA

Directors

John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, director of golf course management at Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, NJ, and past president of the MetGCSA was reelected to a two-year term. (We're rooting for your continued success on the board, John!)



Robert Randquist, CGCS

Peter J. Grass, CGCS, at Hilands Golf Club in Billings, MT, was reelected to a two-year term.

Keith A. Ihms, CGCS, at Country Club of Little Rock in Little Rock, AK, was reelected to a two-year term.

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, at Hacienda Golf Club in La Habra Heights, CA, was appointed to the Board of Directors, filling the remaining year of Finlen's term, created by his election to secretary/treasurer.

William H. Maynard, CGCS, at Milburn Golf and Country Club in Overland Park, KS, remains on the board with one year remaining in his two-year director term.

See You Next Year

Plan now to join fellow professionals at the 2012 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas, NV. The Education Conference is scheduled for February 27–March 2, along with the Golf Industry Show, which will run February 29–March 1. For further information, visit www.gcsaa.org.

MetGCSA Makes Itself K Classic and National Cha

by Sean Cain, CGCS

Ask any of the competitors at the 2011 National Championship & Golf Classic what the best part of the tournament was and they will tell you the venue. The PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach, FL, the site of this year's tournament held February 4–6, was a home run. The weather and accommodations were ideal, and the four golf courses—PGA National's Champion, Haig, Squire, and Palmer courses—were in superb shape.

Though the turnout was down among both MetGCSA members and associations across the country, those who did participate enjoyed some healthy competition on the links.

The big story was that David Brown, superintendent at Flatirons Golf Course in Boulder, CO, came from six shots back with nine holes to play to win the National Championship.

The other buzz among MetGCSA members was how Steve Rabideau and yours truly won their second consecutive National Gross Four-Ball Title in the tournament's opening event on February 4. Now while we're on the subject of tournament wins, Steve and I also pulled first place in the MetGCSA Dave Mahoney Two-Ball this past summer. I'm not trying to brag or anything (well, maybe a little), but I am hoping this will inspire some of you guys who dropped out (you know who you are!) to get back in the game and give us a little competition at these great Met and National events.

Okay, enough taunting. Here's the complete lowdown on the National events' top performers.

The National Championship

This 36-hole stroke-play event was contested on the Champion Course at PGA National Resort on February 5 and 6.

David Brown, a GCSA member of 29 years, shot a 30 on the back nine of his final round of the National Championship, finishing with a 3-under-par score of 141—three shots better than runner-up Shawn

nown at the 2010 Golf mpionship

Westacott, superintendent at Jackson (TN) Country Club. Brown also won the tournament's Senior Division for the second consecutive year, but this is his first championship win after playing in the annual tournament since 1984! Quite an impressive display of golf from an amateur player.

Though we didn't have anyone place in the tournament, several Met members had noteworthy finishes. Sean Cain of Sunningdale shot an 81 in the first and second rounds, tying for 30th, while Tom Ashfield of Quaker Ridge tied for 33rd with an 82 – 81. Steve Rabideau of Wheatley Hills tied for 53rd, shooting an 86 in the first round and an 88 in the second round, and Grover Alexander of Hudson Hills posted a 97 – 87 to tie for 64th.

The Golf Classic

The Golf Classic, which featured two rounds of play using the point quota system, was played February 5 and 6 over the Haig, Squire, and Palmer PGA National courses.

Jeff Wentworth of Pelham and John Carlone of Meadow Brook had a nice showing, tying for 6th in the First Flight. Gregg Stanley of The Bridge came in 7th in the Second Flight, while Rick Schock of Aspetuck Valley finished 9th in the Third Flight. In the Affiliate Flight, Lee Kosey of Syngenta came in 9th, and Mike Cook of The Care of Trees tied for 16th place.

Team Events

In the Net Chapter Team Competition, Florida came in first with a 204. The closest Met team was Scott Niven of Stanwich, Sean Cain, and Jeff Wentworth with a score of 151.

This is an event where team members compete individually at their respective courses, and then their combined scores are computed against all the other teams in the field.

In the Four-Ball Mixer, held the day before the competition, we had a strong finish by not only me and Steve Rabideau as National Gross Four-Ball champs, but also by two of our other MetGCSA teams. In the Gross Division, Second Flight, Scott Niven and Larry Pakkala of Plant Food Company tied for 12th, while Gregg Stanley and Rick Schock came in 17th out of 51 teams in the Gross Division.

Join the Fun

If you missed out on this year's championship, there's always next year! Though the destination is yet-to-be-determined (rumor has it that it will be in either Arizona or Palm Springs, CA), the dates are set for February 24 – 26. Mark your calendar now for this fun-filled competition.

Sean Cain, co-chair of the MetGCSA Tournament Committee, is superintendent at Sunningdale Country Club in Scarsdale, NY.

Turfgrass Advocacy Day continued from page 7

life testimonials from participants gave legislators a clearer picture of just how much what happens in Albany affects people's businesses and lives. That is the number one impact of lobby days like this one."

Echoing Lair's sentiments, Jeff Williams of the New York Farm Bureau further emphasized the importance of making yourself heard at the State Capitol. "Attending the Turfgrass Advocacy Day should be made mandatory for those in the industry," says Williams. "You can spend countless hours managing your business and staff, but in reality, the elected officials at the state level also make critical decisions about how your business is run. These decisions can—and will—impact your bottom line. Communicating to legislators regarding how their decisions affect your business is a must in order to ensure that the industry succeeds."

Luncheon Address Marks Close of Successful Advocacy Day

Senator Mark Grisanti, chair of the New York State Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, closed the Advocacy Day with his luncheon address, projecting an air of optimism as he discussed many of the Advocacy Day issues and offered his views on the environmental laws that affect the green industry in New York State.

"NYSTA had another successful Advocacy Day with new faces in attendance, an aggressive list of agenda topics, and an all-time high of visits to our legislators," says NYSTA President Greg Chorvas. "My sincere thanks and appreciation goes to our sponsors (see sidebar, page 7) and everyone who took their valuable time to attend. Hopefully, our attendees found the day successful and are able to spread the word to others so that we can build on this worthwhile endeavor."

Even if you weren't able to attend this year's Turfgrass Advocacy Day, remember that you can still make a difference by visiting your assembly member or senator in their district offices or by writing them to discuss these issues. Either way, getting involved will pay dividends—for you and the industry as a whole.

For more on the issues discussed at the 2011 Turfgrass Advocacy Day, visit www.nysta.org/news/pressreleases.html. And be sure to join us next year in Albany!

Mike Maffei, golf course superintendent at Back O' Beyond in Brewster, NY, is a past president of NYSTA and co-chair of the NYSTA Government Relations Committee.



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Member News

Members on the Move

- **Chad Anderson** is the new superintendent at The Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo Park, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Brynwood Golf & Country Club in Armonk, NY.
- **Brian Gallagher** is the new superintendent at Putnam National Golf Club in Mahopac, NY. Previous position: Assistant Superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY.
- **Eric McPherson** is the new superintendent at Omaha Country Club in Omaha, NE. Previous position: Superintendent at Point Judith Country Club in Narragansett, RI.
- **Glenn Moore** has moved from Valley View Greenhouses in South Salem, NY, to Northern Designs, LLC, in North Haven, CT.
- **Dennis Petruzzelli** is a new assistant superintendent at Trump National Golf Club-Hudson Valley, in Hopewell Junction, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Putnam National Golf Club in Mahopac, NY.

• **Charlie Siemers** has moved from Emerald Tree Care Company in Scarsdale, NY, to Ira Wickes/Arborists in Spring Valley, NY.

Birth

Congratulations to Westchester Turf Supply's **Dave Lippman** and his wife, Dawn, on the birth of their daughter, Aimee Rochelle Lippman, born on March 16.

Well Wishes

Wishing **Tom McAvoy**, superintendent at Old Westbury Golf & Country Club, a speedy recovery.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to Hudson Hills Superintendent **Grover Alexander** whose mother, Linda Alexander, passed away on March 11 after a long illness.

Scholarship Award Application Deadline Fast Approaching!

Application forms for the 2011 MetGCSA Scholarship Awards are now available on the Met website, www.metgcsa.org, or through MetGCSA Executive Secretary Ineke Pierpoint at ipierpoint@mgagolf.org or 914-909-4843.

Any Class A, Life A, SM, C, Life C, AF, or Life AF member of the MetGCSA or a dependent of a member is eligible to win. If you have any questions about the application process, please feel free to contact Scholarship Chairman Blake Halderman at Brae Burn Country Club. You can reach him by calling 914-946-1074 or by sending an email to bhalderman@braeburncc.org.

The Scholarship Committee will select recipients based on leadership, maturity, scholastic capabilities, activities, and commitment to a chosen career. **All applications MUST be RECEIVED by end of business day on Friday, June 10.**

Scholarships will be awarded at an upcoming event. Watch our calendar of events in the *Tee to Green* or on our association website for the precise date and site of the event.

Tee to Green Editor Jim Pavonetti Recognized for Environmental Stewardship



In recognition of his commitment to environmental stewardship on the golf course, Fairview Superintendent and *Tee to Green* Editor Jim Pavonetti has been honored by GCSAA and *Golf Digest* with an Environmental Leaders in Golf Award (ELGA).

Awarded annually, the ELGA recognizes golf course superintendents and their courses for overall course management excellence in the areas of resource conservation, water quality management, integrated pest management, wildlife/habitat management, and education/outreach.

An independent panel of judges selected national and chapter and merit winners in three categories: public, private, and resort courses. Jim was one of four 2010 ELGA Chapter Winners for Private Facilities selected from GCSAA's 100 affiliated chapters.

Presenting partners, Syngenta and Rain Bird Corp./Golf Division, will make donations to The Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG), the philanthropic arm of the GCSAA, in the names of all national and chapter winners. Since 1993, sponsoring organizations have contributed more than \$350,000 to The EIFG and have taken part in the recognition of more than 400 golf course superintendents with past awards.

Congratulations, Jim, for being one of them!

Met Members to Contest Super/Manager Tourney at Country Club of New Canaan

by Greg Wojick, CGCS

Country Club of New Canaan is the site of this year's Superintendent/Manager or Guest Tournament. Looking forward to sharing the course on May 17 with association members is Superintendent Mike Reeb, who's hosted MetGCSA events in the past including the 2004 Assistants Championship.

Noted by *Golf Magazine* as one of "The first 100 golf courses in America," this 118-year-old Willie Park Jr. design will challenge players with elevated greens, built-up tees, and deceptive hazards.

Opened in 1893 as a nine-hole course, it was expanded to 18 holes by Alfred Tull in 1947 and then partially redesigned in the early 1950s by Robert Trent Jones Sr. Since 1995, Forse Design Inc. has been guiding the club through a renovation process that applies Willie Park Jr.'s design principles within the context of modern golf.

Giving Credit Where Credit is Due

Like a humble quarterback, Mike is proud and quick to share credit for the success of daily operations with his talented assistants, Jake Green and Marc DuBour.

"Jake and Marc make it happen," says Mike. "They reliably handle all assignments and ensure our standards for top quality."

Citing a basic drive to "make things better," Mike has, in his 25-plus-year tenure at New Canaan, overseen numerous projects aimed at enhancing the club's classic course design. These include extensive drainage work, cart path construction, pond expansion, stream stabilization, large-scale tree removal, major irrigation improvements, complete bunker renovations, and reconstruction of greens, tees, and practice areas.

Methodical and detail-oriented, Green Committee members most recently gave Mike the go-ahead on a long-awaited plan to alter the club's par 4 #10 hole by realigning the tees and rotating the green 41

degrees to accommodate a better line of play. Similar work is planned for this fall on the course's par 3 #14, while the construction of a new maintenance facility is in the planning stages.

A genuine team player, Mike praises the cooperative spirit among all employees at the club, from the top down. "'We' is the key word here," he says to describe the club's team philosophy. "General Manager James Connolly and Assistant Manager Baldamar Gama are terrific, as are our golf professional, Dan Philippon; assistant pro, Jason Peterson; chef, John Byrnes; and our controller, Manette Hutchings. We all work extremely well together."

Committed to the Industry

Having completed a horticulture degree in 1977 from the University of Connecticut, Mike initially thought he was destined for the commercial landscape trade. "But year-round positions in the Northeast were hard to come by," explains Mike, "so I migrated to golf course work and never really looked back."

His career began at Redding Country Club as assistant to Ken Burlinson and then superintendent, during the club's expansion from nine to 18 holes (one of Rees Jones' early projects). From there, Mike moved to Ridgewood Country Club in Danbury for a couple of years before accepting his current position at Country Club of New Canaan in 1985.

Over the years, Mike has demonstrated his commitment to the industry by serving on committees of the Connecticut AGCS, the MetGCSA, and the GCSAA. Mike currently serves on the *Tee to Green* committee as a valued proofreader.

On the Home Front

Mike shares a home on club grounds with



Mike Reeb, CGCS, with assistants Marc DuBour (left) and Jake Green (right).

his wife of 33 years, Jaymie, a retired pediatric nurse. They've been a couple since high school and have two grown children: daughter Alexis, 27, and son, Tyler, 25. Alexis supervises a team of teachers at a private school for autistic children in Richmond, VA. Tyler is a scout/sniper team leader in the U.S. Marine Corps, currently serving in Afghanistan after a prior tour in Iraq.

During the off-season, Mike and Jaymie enjoy spending time at their home-away-from-home in Vermont, where family and friends are always welcome for a little snowmobiling or run down the nearby slopes and a lot of Reeb-style hospitality.

May 17, Mike will be showing that same hospitality to fellow Met members and their managers. His best advice for playing the course: "New Canaan is considered a thinking man's course, not terribly long but requiring accurate placement of tee shots to approach greens from the best angle. Hit the ball carefully and straight; there's plenty of trouble off to the sides!"

Greg Wojick, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the principal in Communitool, LLC, and founder of Playbooks for Golf.

Peter Rappoccio Welcomes Invitational to Silver Spring

by Larry Pakkala, CGCS

This year's MetGCSA Invitational Tournament will be held at one of the hidden gems of the Met: the Silver Spring Country Club. Founded in 1930 in Ridgefield, CT, the club's challenging and well-maintained 18-hole golf course is a tribute to Silver Spring's property manager of 34 years, Peter Rappoccio. His high standards and drive for perfection have produced nothing short of picture-perfect conditions, year-after-year, which anyone lucky enough to get a team together for our June 9 event will experience firsthand.

Designed originally by Scottish architect Robert White, the first PGA president and cofounder of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Silver Spring has undergone some significant modifications since then. Guided by a master plan developed with the golf course architectural firm The Roger Rulewich Group, Peter has been in the throes of updating portions of the course since our last meeting at the club in 2007.

The five-year plan, scheduled for completion in 2012, has resulted in bumping up the size of the course's original tees, repositioning fairway bunkers, and rebuilding all of the greenside bunkers. Invitational contestants will notice that six holes are complete and a new putting green has been constructed, along with a short-game practice area.

Giving Back

The consummate Met member, Peter joined the association in 1975 and three years later was elected to the Board of Directors. Working his way through the chairs, he served in 1985 and 1986 as president and, over the years, has chaired or served on nearly every one of the Met's committees.

Though managing Silver Spring clearly keeps Peter busy, he still finds time to serve the association he once led. Peter's a member of five committees and remains an active participant in association events. Peter has also hosted eight Met meetings over the

years, welcoming fellow members to two business and six golf meetings.

It's no surprise, then, that in 2002, Peter was chosen to receive the Met's highest honor: It's Sherwood A. Moore Award, reserved for superintendents who have advanced the professional image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent.

True to Turf Management

Looking at Peter's track record, you would think he's never had anything other than golf course management on his mind. And he did, at an early age, caddie at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY, and then work, when he was just 15, as a crew member at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, CT. But when Peter chose a college, it wasn't a turf school. He graduated from St. Francis College in Maine with a B.A. in sociology and a minor in business and education.

It wasn't until Peter was offered a position as a rehabilitation counselor that he realized he was better suited for a career in golf course management and returned to Fairview. While working with then superintendent Ted Jozwick, Peter received a two-year degree in turf management from Rutgers and was elevated to assistant superintendent. That was in 1975. Three years later, Peter accepted the superintendent's position at Silver Spring.

Looking Back

Reflecting on his career, Peter has only good things to say. "It's been rewarding," he says, "both professionally and personally. It allowed me to be around for my two sons, Pete and Tim, and remain a large part of their lives when they were growing up."

And grown up they are. Pete Jr. graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in turfgrass management and is now the superintendent at Concord Country Club in Massachusetts. He lives in Acton, MA, with this wife, Allison, and two children, Evelyn,



Peter Rappoccio, CGCS

2, and Peter Jr., 8 months. Yes, Peter's a grandfather!

Peter's other son, Tim, is a recent graduate of The New York Law School and lives and works in Stamford as the associate director of tax operations for UBS. By the time you read this, Tim will be married to his college sweetheart, Becky. The two met at The University of Delaware, where Tim received his undergraduate degree.

Peter and his wife of 35 years, Birdie, live on club grounds in Ridgefield, where Birdie serves as a registered nurse for the school system. Birdie is active in the community. Peter, an all-around sports enthusiast, pursues his longtime passion for coaching football.

"I coached both kids' teams when they played youth football in Ridgefield and joined the football staff at Fairfield Prep in 1998 when Tim was a sophomore," says Peter. "I've been coaching the freshman squad there for 13 years. The kids call me 'Joe Pa,'" he says with a chuckle.

Funny thing is, if you know what Penn State's iconic football coach, Joe Paterno, looks like, you could actually say there's a resemblance there: the dark glasses, the nose, and most of all, his passion for helping to turn youngsters into fine young men.

Be sure to turn up June 9, and treat yourself and your pro, green chair, and president to a trip to "the country"—and a fine test of golf.

Larry Pakkala, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a sales associate with Plant Food Company, Inc., in Cranbury, NJ.

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