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Tee To Green

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Tee To Green



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2018 Brings Potential for Change



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ith snow falling before the official start of winter, it was clear the off-season had begun. Of course with construction projects in full swing, snow mold applications yet to go out, and tree work around the corner, there's no longer a well-defined break in the action.

The only saving grace is that our off-season frees us from the daily struggle to keep our turf alive, so we can more easily carve out time for the numerous and valuable educational sessions, trade shows, and conferences that take place throughout the winter.

History in the Making

Speaking of making time for important industry events, I recently attended the MGA's annual meeting and dinner here at Westchester Country Club (WCC) on December 6. According to the MGA, this is the 36th consecutive year that WCC has hosted this event, which is now in its 120th year. Such history!

It has been a great honor to host both this event and our own long-running Winter Seminar. But the MGA event was particularly special to me this year since one of my mentors, former WCC General Manager Robert James, was honored with the MGA Distinguished Service Award.

Though well deserved, this is the only time this award has gone to a club manager. Hats off to an historic career. Mr. James was a great leader in our industry and is the type of GM that any superintendent would love to work for.

Opening Doors

In James's acceptance speech, he opened the door for other club employees to be thought of for future consideration. I would hope that one day soon the MGA would honor the work and service legacy of a golf course superintendent. Being recognized with such a prestigious award would, no doubt, help to elevate the status of our profession and, in turn, change the stereotypic view of the golf course superintendent as merely "the grass cutter down in the barn."



David Dudones
MetGCSA President

We have many great MetGCSA members who are at the forefront of the industry and who could one day follow Mr. James in opening that door. Congratulations to Bob James and the MGA Distinguished Service Award Committee for recognizing such a valued club leader and employee.

Looking Ahead

As we begin to build the 2018 calendar for golf and social events, please think of opening your club's doors to the MetGCSA. Giving back to our local association is always rewarding and is a great opportunity to highlight any recent construction or renovations to your club.

Thank you to our fantastic hosts in 2017: Ryan Segrue of Shorehaven, Jason Meersman of The Patterson Club, Noah McCahill of Trump Golf Links at Ferry Point, Dave Moffett of Mosholu Golf Course, Justin Gabrenas of Birchwood, and Sean Cain of Sunningdale. We are looking forward to another great season in 2018.

Wishing you and yours all the best in the New Year!

David Dudones
President

Feature

**NBC Sports Anchor
Bruce Beck to
Receive the John
Reid Lifetime
Achievement Award**

By Kevin Collins

Photo by Andrew Levine.



very year since 1986, the MetGCSA has awarded the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award to an individual who has made significant contributions to the image and integrity of the game of golf and the golf industry. The prestigious award is named for the 19th Century Scottish immigrant widely considered the “Father of American Golf” for creating the first golf club in America, St. Andrew’s, and for being instrumental in organizing the United States Golf Association. Previous recipients of the award have included such golf luminaries as Guido Cribari, Ken Venturi, Jim Nantz, and Dave Anderson.

This year’s addition to this distinguished list is multi-award-winning television broadcaster and journalist Bruce Beck.

“We came to a quick and unanimous consensus that Bruce Beck would be an outstanding choice for this year’s honor,” says Glen Dube, chair of the MetGCSA Awards Committee. “His involvement with the Metropolitan Golf Writers Association (MGWA), his commitment to and work with numerous golf charities, his love of the game, and his friendship and respect for superintendents were all factors that made Bruce the obvious choice.”

Bruce is a longtime member at Fenway Golf Club, where he became fast friends with Bob Alonzi when Bob served as the club’s superintendent.

“During my tenure at Fenway,” says Bob, “Mr. Beck—I always called him *Mr. Beck*—served on the Board of Directors, the Greens Committee, and the Golf Committee. It was in these capacities that he and I got to know each other. One of my first impressions was that Bruce wasn’t “full of himself” as you might expect from a TV personality. Instead, he was a down-to-earth, regular guy. As a committee member, he was objective and always contributed in a positive way for the betterment of the club and its members.” That first impression turned out to be a lasting one.

As a member of the Awards Committee, Bob was given the honor of informing Bruce of his selection for the Reid Award. Bruce was thrilled and recalled his friendship with Bob.



Bruce at MetLife Stadium reporting. Photo by Andrew Levine.

“I was always very fond of Bob while he was at Fenway,” he says. “I still am.”

Jersey Boy

Bruce was born in 1956, the second of three boys, and raised in Livingston, NJ, by two highly successful parents. His mother, Doris, was a true trailblazer, being the first woman to hold elected office in Essex County, where she served two terms as the mayor of Livingston. She was also the first woman to serve on the board of Saint Barnabas Medical Center. Bruce’s dad, Felix, worked in finance, specializing in mortgage banking with JP Morgan/Chase and served as president of the Mortgage Bankers Association of America. He was Chairman Emeritus of Chase Home Mortgage. According to Bruce, both Doris and Felix are still “rocking and rolling.”

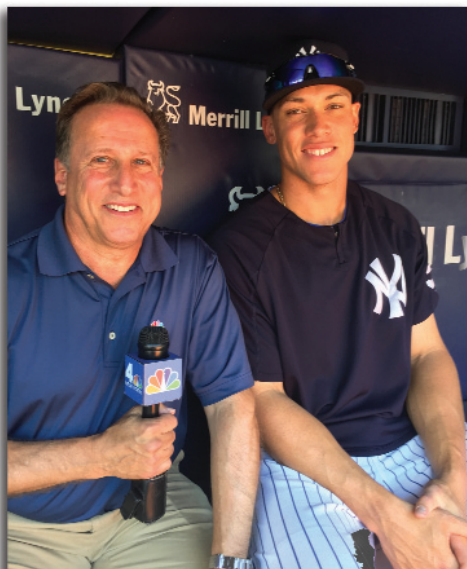
“My dad still plays nine holes of golf,” says Bruce. “And he can still break 50 at age 91!” Bruce’s own love of sports took root in high school, where he played basketball and tennis. After high school, it was on to Ithaca College.

“I was an accounting major, but my true passion was sports and broadcasting,” Bruce recalls. “Ithaca had a radio and television station where I worked as an announcer and a broadcaster. As a senior, I was the station’s television sports director.”

Pursing His Passion

Bruce’s experience at his college’s radio and television station convinced him that his future was not in accounting but in broadcasting. His longevity in the tough New York City television market is unparalleled. He started at the MSG network in 1982 and worked there until 1994, hosting the station’s coverage of the Knicks, Rangers, and Yankees while also taking on play-by-play announcement duties for college football and basketball games, as well as Golden Gloves and professional boxing matches.

In 1994, he moved to the Comcast Network (CN 8), where he hosted “Sportstalk” and “Sports Images” while juggling various freelance play-by-play responsibilities. Then it was on to WNBC-TV in 1997, where he remains to this day. Bruce can be found reporting from the sidelines during the New York Giants pre-season football. As the lead sports anchor for NBC 4, Bruce has covered five Super Bowls, three NBA finals, six Stanley Cup finals, seven World Series, the U.S. Open Tennis Championships, the U.S. Open Golf Championships, the NCAA Final Four, and seven Olympic Games, including the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio. In addition to all his other broadcasting responsibilities, Bruce hosts Sunday night’s “Sports Final” on NBC 4 New York.



*Bruce Beck with:
(Photo Left) Yankees slugger Aaron Judge
(Photo Right) Olympic swimming champion
Michael Phelps*



“I can get by with three-and-a-half to four hours of sleep,” he says, laughing.

Charitable to a Tee

Bruce has a long association with the golf industry and its many charitable initiatives. He has been involved with the Metropolitan Golf Writers Association for the past 10 years, serving as president for the past five. As president, he has been a guiding force in the MGWA's fundraising for caddy scholarship funds and the MGA Foundation.

A charity very close to Bruce's heart is the First Tee, a youth-development organization that introduces the game of golf and its inherent values to young people.

“What better way to keep kids off the street than by getting them on the golf course?” Bruce asks. “They learn the values of fair play, respect, perseverance, and cama-

raderie. And they have fun! The First Tee allows me to give back to the community in a meaningful way and stay around the game I love.”

Bruce is also active in former Giants' coach Tom Coughlin's Jay Fund Foundation, which is focused on families battling childhood cancer. Just a few of the other charities he is involved with include the March of Dimes, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Greater Hudson Valley, Derek Jeter's Turn2 Foundation, which encourages kids to choose to “turn to” a healthy lifestyle instead

Bruce's commitment to his craft has earned him numerous awards for broadcasting and excellence in journalism, including eight New York State Sportscaster of the Year Awards, eight New York Sports Emmys, two Mid-Atlantic Sports Emmys, and three National Cable Ace Awards. In 2017, Bruce was honored by his Alma Mater, Ithaca College, with the Jessica Savitch Award of Distinction for Excellence in Journalism.

The Secret to His Success

Anyone who has seen Bruce's enthusiastic and engaging reporting can tell that this is a man who loves his work.

“It's true. I love what I do,” explains Bruce. “I always wanted to be a broadcaster. When I was a teenager, I would memorize scripts and imitate Marv Albert. I love all the people I've met in sports over the years and enjoy interacting with the athletes, coaches, team officials, and all my friends in the business.”

Now in his twenty-first season as the lead sports anchor for NBC 4, Bruce maintains the same level of enthusiasm and energy for his typical 17-hour days. A typical day might include traveling to a sports facility in the morning to interview players and coaches. He'll then head over to 30 Rock to prepare for the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. news broadcasts. In between the two news slots, he may host a charity event, watch the games he'll report on, and write copy for his newscasts or his Sunday “Sports Final” show.

Bruce finally arrives home well after midnight when he walks his Labradoodle, Madison. His lovely wife, Janet, has long been asleep. Sleep, apparently, is not a priority for Bruce Beck.



Bruce with wife, Janet; son Jon with wife, Jordana, and their baby girl, Emmy; and son Mike with his wife, Calie.

Upcoming Events

Don't Miss These Educational and Social Events!

of drugs and alcohol, the Parkinson's Disease Foundation, and last but not least, St. John's Bread & Life, the largest soup kitchen in Brooklyn.

One of Bruce's most recent initiatives combines his love of sports broadcasting with his commitment to giving back and "paying it forward." In 2017, he launched the Bruce Beck Sports Broadcasting Camp at Steiner Sports in New Rochelle, NY. There, Bruce and other top sportscasters and personalities in the New York market teach the fundamentals of the industry to eager young wannabe-sportscasters. Bruce relishes his role as mentor.

"I really enjoy it," he said. "It's a way of sharing knowledge and fostering opportunities for the next generation of sports broadcasters." The camp concludes with a once-in-a-lifetime experience at Yankee Stadium, where the kids call the play-by-play of a live Yankees game.

Family Man

Despite his grueling schedule, Bruce is careful to devote time to his top priority, his family. He and Janet, his college sweetheart and wife of 37 years, live in Westchester. They have two sons, Jonathan and then Michael, who, like his dad, married his college sweetheart, Calie, last summer. Also in 2017, Jonathan and his wife, Jordana, presented them with their first grandchild, a baby girl named—appropriately for Beck—Emmy.

"When we choose a recipient for the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, we look beyond the links to the character of the person," says Awards Chair Glen Dube. "In the committee's opinion, Bruce Beck embodies everything that the award stands for: commitment, integrity, and generosity. We are absolutely delighted with our choice."

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic Territory Manager for Ocean Organics.

CAGCS January Seminar

Tuesday, January 9, 2018
Mystic Marriott, Groton, CT

Southeast Regional Conference

Tuesday – Wednesday, January 30 – 31, 2018
Ramada Inn, Fishkill, NY

The Southeast Regional Conference offers a variety of educational sessions with leading turfgrass educators and industry professionals. For further information, visit www.nysta.org or contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229.

GCSAA Golf Tournament

Saturday – Monday, February 3 – 5, 2018
San Antonio, TX

Competitors will enjoy the camaraderie and friendly competition over five San Antonio-area courses.

GCSAA Education Conference & Golf Industry Show

Monday – Thursday, February 5 – 8, 2018
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, TX

Be sure not to miss this year's event and the opportunity to network and discuss with fellow professionals the latest trends, products, and services in the turfgrass industry.

Nor'easter Event

Wednesday, February 7, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Rio Rio Cantina

421 E. Commerce Street, San Antonio, TX
Hosted again this year by the MetGCSA and seven other associations, the event will include an open bar, appetizers, and food stations. Stop by and enjoy this event located right on the River Walk!

2018 Turfgrass Advocacy Day

Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY

NYSTA welcomes all green industry professionals to attend this event. The Turfgrass Advocacy Day offers the opportunity to attend a priority issues briefing session on current legislation that could affect the

turfgrass and green industry, as well as a chance to meet with your local elected officials and later discuss issues over lunch with a government official.

Visit www.nysta.org for further information, or contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229.

2018 Nor'easter Ski Day

March 1, 2018

Killington Ski Resort, Killington, VT

Be sure to check the Vermont superintendent's website at www.vtgcga.com for registration details.

21st Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show

Monday – Thursday, March 5 – 8

Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

For 21 consecutive years, the conference and show provides turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, supplies, services, and equipment available while offering a host of informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities.

Watch for details on www.NERTF.org, or call 401-841-5490 for further information.

2018 MGA Green Chairman Education Seminar & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

As always, the Metropolitan Golf Association Foundation will offer a highly informative Green Chairman Education Seminar. After having the opportunity to hear talks from a variety of golf industry experts, your day will conclude with the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon.

Those interested in applying for the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award must submit their application no later than Thursday, February 1, 2018!

Behind the Scenes at the Annual Chapter Delegates Meeting

by Brett Chapin

Delegates From Across the Country Convene to Discuss GCSAA's Latest Initiatives and Endeavors



For the fourth consecutive year, I represented our association at the GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting held November 7 and 8 in Kansas City, MO, and at GCSAA Headquarters in Lawrence, KS.

Over the course of the two-day event, I had the fortunate opportunity to join 88 fellow delegates from 94 chapters across the country in sharing both the successes and trials we've experienced within our local associations. In addition, GCSAA staff brought us up-to-speed on the organization's latest endeavors and initiatives.

The meeting opened with welcoming remarks from GCSAA President Bill Maynard, CGCS, and GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans. Evans briefed delegates on the state of GCSAA. He thanked the delegates and chapters for supporting the GCSAA Disaster Relief Fund. To date, the fund has raised a noteworthy \$150,000. Chapters have contributed more than \$60,000.

Overall, GCSAA remains on solid financial footing. In 2017, GCSAA is projected to have \$18,066,000 in revenue and \$17,963,000 in expenses. The Golf Industry

Show remains the largest revenue generator for GCSAA. In 2017, the GIS net revenue was \$3.88 million. The association expects to have another successful show in San Antonio, TX. GCSAA continues to put its resources to work in areas that are focused on its members: research and environmental programs, field staff, career services, and advocacy and outreach, which have collectively experienced a 60-percent growth in funding since 2012.

Other presentations on key initiatives included:

Rounds 4 Research Auction

The delegates celebrated the success of the top five chapter fundraisers in the 2017 R4R Auction. Chapters are encouraged to find a "champion"—a delegate, the president, a chapter executive—someone who will spearhead the initiative in their chapter. The 2018 auction will be April 30 through May 6. Chapters just need to recruit the rounds to donate; EIFG handles the rest of the program. Call or email Mischia Wright, EIFG associate director, at 800-472-7878 or mwright@gcsaa.org.

State BMP Implementation

GCSAA is continuing to move forward with the goal of having all 50 states with BMPs in place by 2020. New York is one of 10 states to already have BMPs up and running. Three more are set to come online this winter. GCSAA fully expects to reach its BMP goal by 2020.

Government Affairs Briefing

The GCSAA Government Affairs team brought the delegates up-to-date on three key priorities:

1. Political Action Committee. GCSAA now has a Political Action Committee (GCSAAPAC) to support advocacy efforts on behalf of the membership. GCSAAPAC will distribute money to lawmakers who help advance the legislative and regulatory "priorities" outlined in GCSAA's Priority Issues Agenda. Current priorities for golf course managers include addressing such legislative and regulatory hot buttons as water management, pesticide and fertilizer use, labor and immigration, and the value of golf.

Delegates and members can get involved by volunteering to sit on the PAC board or by contributing.

2. Grassroots Ambassador Program. GCSAA's Grassroots Ambassador Program now has 305 ambassadors, each paired with a member of Congress. The ambassadors are charged with working to build strong relationships with these congressmen and women, while serving as a go-to person for lawmakers and their staff on golf course management issues.

There are still districts open for anyone interested in getting involved. Check out the Ambassador page on gcsaa.org or contact Michael Lee, manager of Government Affairs, for more information.

3. National Golf Day. GCSAA's National Golf Day has been set for April 24 - 25, 2018 in Washington, D.C. This event offers a unique opportunity for our industry to voice concerns, discuss issues, and share golf's many benefits with Congressional leaders in D.C. Last year's event featured a community service project on the National Mall and a Congressional reception at the Capitol Visitor Center. In addition, more than 150 Congressional meetings were scheduled throughout the day, a record number!

Consider attending this worthy event in support of our industry. Registration is now open.

Elections and Governance

Delegates were briefed on the proposed changes to the GCSAA Bylaws, which included updating the GCSAA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines, as well as altering the current election process.

1. The Election Process. The delegates learned about proposed bylaw changes that would alter the current election process. The changes were proposed to make the election process clearer and to put the control back in the hands of the members/delegates. These changes would affect the election of directors and the process to fill the seat of a director who either resigns or has been elected to the secretary/treasurer position. More specifically:

- Each open director position would be voted on one at a time.
- An immediate vote by ballot would be required for any vacancy that might occur due to the unexpired director's term in the secretary/treasurer election. This unexpired term would be voted on after the open position(s) for director(s).

- When there is a resignation to the board, the president would traditionally appoint a replacement. With the bylaw change, the president would appoint a replacement until the next election when the membership would then vote on the replacement.

- There were no proposed changes to the election process for president, vice president, or secretary/treasurer.

2. Governance Updates. The delegates received an update on modifications made to the GCSAA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines. In short, GCSAA revised its Code of Ethics so that all items that were not legally defensible were removed and then shifted to the *Professional Conduct Guidelines*.

Meet the Candidates

Once the business portion of the meeting concluded, we had the opportunity to listen to presentations from candidates running for national office. After the presentations, we were able to meet and greet the candidates in small breakout sessions to learn more about their platforms and philosophies. The 2018 GCSAA slate of board candidates are:

For President

Darren J. Davis, CGCS, Olde Florida Golf Club, Naples, FL

For Vice President

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, Boca Grove Plantation, Boca Raton, FL

For Secretary/Treasurer

- John R. Fulling, CGCS, Kalamazoo Country Club, Kalamazoo, MI
- Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, Westfield Group Country Club, Westfield Center, OH

For Director (6 members are on the slate for 2 director positions)

- Rory Van Poucke, Apache Sun Golf Course, San Tan Valley, AZ
- Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, La Rinconada Country Club, Monte Sereno, CA
- T.A. Barker, CGCS, Fore Lakes Golf Course, Taylorsville, UT
- Nelson J. Caron, The Ford Plantation Golf Club, Savannah, GA
- Kevin P. Sunderman, Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club, Bradenton, FL
- Jeff L. White, CGCS, Indian Hills Country Club, Prairie Village, KS

Board Appointments

- There are two open positions for director, with Kevin Breen being at the end of his two-year director term and Kevin Sunderman completing a one-year appointment.

- Both secretary/treasurer candidates, John Fulling Jr. and Mark Jordan, are in the middle of their two-year director terms, so the candidate not elected as secretary/treasurer will remain on the 2018 Board of Directors for the second year of their two-year term.

- The remaining year left on the board by the elected secretary/treasurer will be filled by appointment and since Keith A. Ihms was appointed to fill the rest of the first year of Johnny Walker's two-year director term, following Walker's resignation from the board earlier this year, the second year of that director position will also be filled by appointment.

- If the delegates approve the proposed bylaw changes to the election process, these two one-year terms would be voted on by the assembly at the Annual Meeting.

The election will take place on February 8 at the GCSAA Annual Meeting in San Antonio. If anyone would like to discuss the elections or bylaw changes, please reach out to me at green@reddingcc.org or call my cell at 203-885-3109.

Dedication and Determination

The Chapter Delegates Meeting was well planned and full of pertinent information that should be viewed by the entire GCSAA membership. Kudos to the entire GCSAA Board of Directors for continuing to take the steps necessary to ensure the association's ongoing progress and success and for keeping the membership well informed of new developments. This has been another year of positive change for the organization, and I look forward representing our association at the 2018 Golf Industry Show.

In addition to serving as the MetGCSA's chapter delegate, Brett Chapin is the golf course superintendent at Redding Country Club in Redding, CT.

Fall Seminar Sheds Light on Trends in

by Anthony Minniti

Turfgrass Management

On November 9, a cold frosty morning greeted Fall Seminar goers at The Patterson Club in Fairfield, CT. The MetGCSA and CAGCS Education Committees joined forces again this year to put together another great roster of speakers that drew superintendents and assistants from throughout Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey.

We would like to send out a sincere thank you to Patterson Superintendent Jason Meersman for his team's hospitality. We would also like to thank MetGCSA Education Chair and Paramount Country Club Superintendent Brian Chapin and his committee for working with the Connecticut chapter to put together a fantastic group of speakers.

What follows are the highlights of each presentation, with contact information if you find you'd like to delve deeper into any one of the subjects.

New Research on Plant Growth Regulators

Dr. Bill Kreuser from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln kicked off the educational sessions by discussing his latest Plant Growth Regulator (PGR) research, which has caught the eye of the entire industry recently.

The focus of the conversation was collar decline. He began cautioning that, during the season, it's easy to think that the PGRs we put down are not working, but what we are really seeing are flashes of organic matter breakdown by microbes in the soil due to environmental conditions. He emphasized that it's important to note that the rate of application has no effect on length of control; temperature, which controls metabolism breakdown, does.

Dr. Kreuser stressed that collars get a lot more traffic than greens from mowing, turning of greens mowers, and golfer foot traffic, which causes them to grow more slowly than greens. Overregulation, therefore, is very common, whether you are using too high a rate too frequently or are still applying at your summer intervals too late into the fall.

This led to a discussion on how to spray collars and greens separately, using either a spray hawk or the new technology of a GPS sprayer. Also debated was whether or not to apply PGRs at all. PGRs can break down on greens and collars at different rates, because of the different heights of cut, and in some cases, different turf types (i.e. *Poa* vs. bentgrass). If you are mowing greens daily and the turf quality on the collars begins to show signs of severe decline, it might be best to avoid applying a growth regulator at all!

Dr. Kreuser pointed to the Greenkeeper App as a way to help track your PGR applications, letting you know when to reapply based on the growing degree days for your exact location.

In the end, Dr. Kreuser talked about an algorithm he is developing that will help you determine the appropriate rate of PGR

to apply each week based on growing degrees, turf types, height of cut, mowing frequency, etc. It's intended to help you avoid creating buildup in the plant by calculating the amount of breakdown from the previous week's application.

For further information, Dr. Kreuser can be reached at wkreuser2@unl.edu or at his Twitter handle @UNLturf.

Keeping Your Turf Alive and Well Through Winter

Dr. Michelle DaCosta from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst discussed strategies for preparing your turf for winter. Dr. DaCosta began by giving us a review of the physiology of the turfgrass plant and what exactly happens when the plant undergoes cold acclimation.

During hardening off, the turfgrass plant senses changes in the amount of daylight and temperature and starts the process of cold acclimation. This process begins with what is known as controlled dehydration in which the plant expels any extra water inside the tissue. This helps the plant prevent its cell membranes from rupturing when temperatures drop and water freezes and expands within the plant.

Dr. DaCosta noted that it is important to have a decent amount of leaf tissue on the plant so photosynthesis can occur and create more sugars and antifreeze compounds for the winter. She did caution, however, that you do not want to stimulate too much growth with nitrogen, because that will expend sugars that the plant needs for winter survival.

She also noted the consequences that a 60-degree day in January—or worse, several days of warm weather during the winter months—can have on the turfgrass plant. As much as we enjoy a warm spell during winter, that can actually start to break down the protective compounds in the turf plant.

Dr. DaCosta also stressed that managing thatch levels was important to turf survival in the winter. Keeping thatch to a minimum and not providing an area for crowns to grow is key, since crowns growing in the thatch layer are very sensitive to air temperatures.

Dr. DaCosta wrapped up with a discussion on permeable and impermeable covers, suggesting that, in many instances, they can provide better protection but that there is never a guarantee that they will work 100 percent of the time.

For further information, Dr. DaCosta can be reached at mdacosat@umass.edu or 413-545-2547.

Understanding the Challenges of Sodium & Bicarbonates and Strategies to Manage Them

Greg Moore from Plant Food Company opened up the afternoon session with a very scientific and in-depth discussion regarding bicarbonate and sodium reduction in turfgrass. He began the talk with a review of soil chemistry.

An analogy he used is that to make a car run you need a good engine and a good transmission. You can have a crappy engine and a good transmission and the car will go, but you cannot have a crappy transmission and a healthy engine because you'll spend too much gas to get from point A to point B.

The same principle applies to the turf plant: In this case, soil is the transmission, and the plant itself is the engine. You need balanced soil chemistry (transmission), otherwise, you'll expend too much energy trying to keep the plant healthy.

Moore talked about the "Big 3" in soils being the nutrients calcium, magnesium, and potassium. When these are balanced, all the soil's nutrients become more available. In contrast, poor soil chemistry (i.e., high levels of sodium and/or bicarbonates) breaks down the plant's structure, prevents water penetration, and causes inefficient nutrient availability and uptake. This, in turn, prompts excess, and costly, fertilizer applications.

Maintaining proper levels of calcium, magnesium, and potassium tends to improve soil structure and prevent nutrients from becoming tied up in the soil by bicarbonates. We were presented with a series of chemical extraction soil tests to analyze and discuss, all with the final message that acids are the cure for bicarbonates, including acid rain.

So how can you maintain proper levels of bicarbonates in soil? Moore talked about applying calcium, typically granular lime or gypsum to maintain proper levels of bicarbonates in soil. He also suggested conducting water tests several times a year and decreasing the water pH by either injecting acids into your irrigation system or applying one of the sprayable acidic fertilizers that are on the market as part of your program during the season.

For more information, Greg Moore can be reached at 315-491-5859 or gmoore@plantfoodco.com.

Recent Trends in Turfgrass Disease

Dr. Richard Buckley from the Rutgers Plant Diagnostic Laboratory opened up our afternoon session with a discussion on trends in plant diagnostics. Dr. Buckley has been with Rutgers since 1991 and has seen a wide variety of turf issues.

It is a commercial-oriented lab with 52 percent ornamental samples, 40 percent turf samples, and 8 percent field crops/fruits. Out of all the samples that Dr. Buckley has analyzed in his lab over the past 26 years, the following is the spread on the outcomes: 6 percent insect, 35 percent biotic disease, 29 percent abiotic disease, 15 percent nematode, and 15 percent identifications.

He stressed that the quality of the samples being sent for analysis is key in ensuring a reliable outcome. For instance, because nematodes can be spread out across the course, he suggests sending in multiple turf samples. Chances are, he notes, you'll get a plug or two with no nematodes.

Dr. Buckley also emphasized that samples should be labeled with as much information as possible. Even if a piece of information seems unimportant or too small to note, it can actually end up being the key to diagnosing the problem.

Finally, he talked about the complexity of various diseases and turf ills, noting, for instance, that there are 36 different species of *Pythium* that can cause damage on turf. Another reason to be sure to send quality samples for analysis!

Dr. Richard Buckley can be reached at clinic@njaes.rutgers.edu or 732-932-9140.

Understanding and Avoiding Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases

The last speaker of the afternoon was Dr. Matt Frye from Cornell. He shared information on insects that are both a health hazard and often difficult to detect: Ticks. Closely related to a spider, ticks have eight legs and are frequently found in the woods and along their perimeters.

Deer ticks are among the most prevalent in our area and can carry Lyme Disease, which is currently the number-one vector-borne disease in the United States. Nymphs are most active in the spring, which is when golfers tend to be out in full force.

Dr. Frye discussed ways we can communicate the risks of ticks to our membership. Tick encounter cards are available from Cornell University's website (https://ahdc.vet.cornell.edu/docs/Non_Vet_Tick_Submission_Form.pdf) and can be made available in the Pro Shop. He also recommended posting signs on the golf course.

In addition, Dr. Frye emphasized the importance of proper tick removal if one is found on your body. Squeezing the tick while removing it can cause the tick to regurgitate the bacteria into your bloodstream. He also strongly recommends that golfers and particularly golf course workers wear treated clothing to reduce the risk of a tick bite.

Finally, Dr. Frye offered instructions on reducing tick populations through timed, targeted chemical applications May through October. Many insecticides that turf managers already use have ticks on the label. Follow the label instructions for rates and intervals.

To learn more, feel free to contact Dr. Matt Frye at mjf267@cornell.edu.

Anthony Minniti, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at The Creek in Locust Valley, NY.

Connecticut Takes 2017 Met Area Team Championship at Westchester

by Andy Drohen



The Winning Connecticut Team (left to right): Kevin Collins of The Tradition GC at Wallingford, John Garcia of Atlantic Golf & Turf, Ed Grant of K & J Tree Removal, Neil Lajeunesse of Dunning Custom Soils, John Parmelee of Indian Springs GC, Andrew Hannah of Shuttle Meadow CC, Mike Dukette of Harrell's, Eric DeStefano of Twin Hills CC.

For the fourth time in the past 11 years, the team from the Connecticut AGCS emerged from the Met Area Team Championship victorious. In what was arguably the closest win in the 37 years of the championship, Connecticut won by a single shot over Long Island and New Jersey! In fact, the top five teams were separated by only three shots!

The scene of this memorable outcome was Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY. Our host, Director of Golf and Grounds and current MetGCSA President David Dudones, along with his management staff consisting of Joe Gikis, Aaron Crouse, and Andrew White, had Westchester's Championship West Course in tremendous shape with greens running at U.S. Open speeds!

Players from as far away as Maryland and Cape Cod made the journey to Westchester and had nothing but rave reviews about the conditions! Westchester put on an amazing brunch and dinner before and after the golf, making for a great end-of-the-year get-together for the 13 superintendent chapters and affiliates that attended.

Westchester, a Walter Travis design, opened in 1922 with almost 1,500 members, each paying a \$25 initiation fee! Westchester played host to The PGA Tour for more than 40 years and recently hosted the LPGA's PGA Championship. Dave has undergone a major tree management program over the past few years, opening up vistas and sightlines that had been lost. He's also done some green restoration work and added fescue areas, making Westchester one of the top courses in the Met area!

The team from Connecticut included Mike Dukette, Eric DeStefano, Ed Grant, Andrew Hannah on the Gross side and Kevin Collins, John Parmelee, John Garcia, and Neil Lajeunesse on the Net side. The two-man team of Collins and Parmelee fired the lowest Net score of the day at 67, and solid performances by the rest of the team's pairings helped secure another Connecticut title!

Thank You to Our Sponsors

Once again, the Met Area Team Championship was made possible by our seven major sponsors who have stepped up year after year to make this one of the best events across

North America! Please join me in thanking BASF, Bayer, The Care of Trees, Koch Turf & Ornamental, Ocean Organics, Syngenta, and Toro as they continue to support this wonderful event.

A Charitable Event

The Met Area Team Championship continues to raise money each year to help those in our industry going through difficult times. Over the past seven years, we have raised more than \$9,000 and have supported superintendents, industry representatives, and their families in times of need. Last year, we donated \$2,000 to the superintendents at The Greenbrier in West Virginia after the devastating floods. This year, we donated \$1,500 to the South Texas GCSA to help families affected by Hurricane Harvey. Thank you to all who support these efforts with the 50/50 raffles!

Thanks again to our sponsors and the entire Westchester Country Club staff for another successful championship event! A special thank you as well to our local GCSAA representative, Kevin Doyle, for his help with photos and to Rob Johnson of Fisher & Sons, who worked as our hole-in-one spotter! We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements over the winter!

The Complete Results

What follows is a list of team and proximity winners. Congratulations everyone!

Team Scores (Par 288)

1st / 298	Connecticut AGCS
2nd / 299	Long Island GCSA ~ low gross tiebreaker score 76
3rd / 299	GCSA of New Jersey ~ low gross tiebreaker score 77
4th / 300	Hudson Valley GCSA
5th / 301	Central New York GCSA
6th / 307	MetGCSA
7th / 308	Philadelphia AGCS
8th / 311	GCSA of Cape Cod
9th / 314	Pocono Turfgrass Association
10th / 323	Northeastern GCSA
11th / 327	Eastern Shore AGCS
12th / 328	Rhode Island GCSA
13th / 335	GCSA of New England

Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship: The Grand Finale!

by Steve Loughran

Closest to the Pin

- #5 / 4' 7" Tim Walker
Hudson Valley GCSA
(Sponsored by Ocean Organics)
- #7 / 11' 10" Blake Halderman
MetGCSA
(Sponsored by The Care of Trees)
- #10 / 8' 1" Mike Turner
Toro
(Sponsored by Koch Turf & Ornamental)
- #15 / 3' 5" Steve Wall
Central New York GCSA
(Sponsored by BASF)

Longest Drive

- Net Div. Matt Beckman
Long Island GCSA
(Sponsored by Syngenta)
- Gross Div. Andrew Hannah
Connecticut AGCS
(Sponsored by Toro)
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Low Gross Team Winners

- 75 Steve Whipple & Tim Walker
Hudson Valley GCSA

Sponsorship Team Winners

- 69 Jim Staszowski & Mike Turner
Toro

Two-Man Team High Score

- Gross / 89 John Lombardi & Dean Chase
Rhode Island GCSA
- Net / 84 Rich Sweeney & Jon Urbanski
Philadelphia AGCS

Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chair and a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a senior regional sales manager with Koch Agronomic Services in Granville, MA.

Before I launch into the final results of this year's Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship, I want to thank all who set aside time to participate in this year's special event. A special thank you, as well, to all the clubs who made their courses available to our championship contestants.

Here are our First- and Second-Flight Champions:

First Flight Champs

We saw, yet again, another great battle in the First Flight championship match. Many of the First Flight matches this past year have gone the distance, with a few needing extra holes to determine the winners. The championship match saw the always crafty veteran team of Matt Ceplo & Jim Swiatlowski face off against the steady play of Brian Chapin & Tom Weinart.

With Somerset Hills playing host, Matt & Jim found themselves 2 down with 7 to play. Battling back with some great putting and skillful ups-and-downs, they were able to square the match on the 17th hole. After halving the 18th, they went on to play their first sudden-death hole. That's all that Matt

and Jim needed to lock up the 2017 Dave Mahoney First Flight Championship.

Congratulations, Matt and Jim, for a season well played!

Second Flight Repeat Wins

In the Second Flight, we had the top two seeds go head-to-head in the finals. The teams of Tim Walker & Ryan Batz and Ryan Segrue & Jim Schell have had a few blowout matches this season. Off to a fast start on a blustery day at Tamarack, Tim & Ryan took a quick 5-up lead through 5. Even with a strong comeback from Ryan & Jim, that large deficit would prove too much to overcome and they fell to the defending Second Flight champions 2 & 1.

Congratulations, Tim and Ryan, for repeating as the 2017 Dave Mahoney Second Flight Champions!

Be sure to join us next year. Watch for the date of our season-opening Two-Ball Qualifier!

Steve Loughran, chair of the Tournament Committee, is superintendent at Rock Ridge Country Club in Newtown, CT.



“Wrapping Up” Another Successful Season!

The 2017 MetGCSA season went out with a bang on Friday, December 15, with its Christmas Party finale event.

The format for this event has been continually evolving, in an effort to appeal to more members and increase participation. More than 80 MetGCSA members, family, and friends attended this afternoon/early evening

informal affair at the Bull and Barrel in Brewster, NY, to enjoy some holiday cheer after a busy golf season.

The Bull and Barrel features their own line of highly rated craft beers, which made for a nice accompaniment to the tasty selection of heavy hors d'oeuvres.

All in all, it was a great time to wish each other a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We hope to continue to grow this fun event in the future.



New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **George Andrews**, Class C, Brae Burn Country Club, Purchase, NY
- **Dan Coughlin**, Class B, Trump National Golf Club of Westchester, Briarcliff Manor, NY
- **Tim Gerzabek**, Class AF, Helena Chemical Company, Swedesboro, NJ

Birth

Congratulations and best wishes to Brae Burn Assistant Superintendent **Dave**

Peterson and his wife, Kait, on the birth of their daughter, Leigh Madeline, born 7 lbs., 9 ozs. on November 17.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to **Mike Cook** of The Care of Trees and his family. Mike's father, Michael H. Cook Sr., passed away November 11. He was 84.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Wounded Warrior Project at Support.WoundedWarriorProject.org or by phone at 877-958-2233.



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