

SCIENCE  
STACKS

list



# Tee to Green

June 1988

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SERIALS

## Ken Venturi . . . Super Honoree

JUL 2 1988

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Right to Left: Guido Cribari, Ken Venturi, Al Radico, Sherwood Moore

Ken Venturi fought back the tears as he accepted the coveted John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award from the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents recently.

The occasion was the MGCSA's annual Invitational which attracted a record field of Club presidents, green chairmen, club professionals and supers to historic St. Andrews on Hastings-on-Hudson, the birthplace of golf in America 100 years ago.

"How appropriate that I should receive this award here," the 1964 U.S. Open golf Champion told his listeners, wiping a tear from his eye.

"It was right here in Westchester where my golf game was reborn some 25 years ago this month."

"I had reached pit bottom . . . no money . . . no incentive . . . no interest . . . my game had deteriorated to the point where I was contemplating packing it all in."

"In desperation I wrote to officials of the Westchester Classic begging for an invitation to their tournament at Westchester Country Club. I got it. Played and won a few thousand dollars, resumed my career, and a few weeks later I won the U.S. Open at Congressional in Washington, D.C. The rest is history.

Not quite. There were the encourage words of his late Dad, who told him at the time: "Son, it takes absolutely no talent to quit. Quitting is the one thing in life that requires no talent whatsoever."

Ken says his father's words burned their way into his brain, and have been with him every single moment since.

This humble servant of the game, now the voice of CBS golf, has devoted his years since that historic Open triumph to helping others less fortunate.

He has been, for example, the driving force behind the Guiding Eyes for the Blind golf Classic, staged annually at the

Mount Kisco and Whippoorwill Clubs in Westchester, which has raised \$2,500,000 for the blind in just 11 years.

"We owe everything we've achieved with this magnificent event to Ken Venturi. He's made it all possible, not only with his presence each year, but with what he contributes with his heart, mind and soul," echo co-general chairmen Jack Ward and Richard Ryan, who co-conceived the event 11 years ago.

Then there's the one-day benefit he stages annually for Camp Venture in Rockland County, which has raised close to \$500,000 in just four years for the deserving handicapped youngsters of that region.

That's Ken Venturi, whose concern for the less fortunate is matched only by his love of life and the great game we share together. He is truly one of the blessings of the game.



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## Allied Association Cooperation

### Presidential Message

As we approach our busiest and most stressful time of year, good communication between the management staff at golf clubs becomes very important. In order to provide efficient service for club members and a quality facility in every way, it is imperative that the Golf Course Superintendent, Golf Professional and Club Manager interact on a regular basis. Even though these three areas of management demand completely different types of expertise, we must communicate our plans to the other key individuals if the club is to run smoothly. There are many examples of this type of communication. One of the most common scenarios is the booking of an outing for lunch, golf and dinner. The function is usually set up by the Club Manager and then communicated to and between the Golf Pro and Superintendent, so that they can be amply prepared to do their part to accommodate the group in the finest manner possible.

When the proper information is communicated in a timely fashion, your club will emulate a good overall impression and at the same time, shed some light on the professional cooperation and excellence of your management staff. In this case everyone wins. The members or golfing public are delighted with the facility and the Superintendent, Golf Pro and Manager are secure in their positions and hopefully well compensated for their performance. If you are not meeting or communicating with your Golf Pro or Club Manager on a regular basis, give it a try. Being in the know at all times will help to make your job easier and reduce the added stress of receiving information at the last minute.

In realizing that we can only gain by helping each other out, a meeting of the leaders of our local Allied Associations (CMA, PGA, GCSA) was held earlier this year to discuss our various needs. Some of the highlights of that first meeting were as follows:

\*The need for *uniform professional courtesy* to be extended at meetings and outings held by our various groups. With the ever increasing demand for club facilities, care should be taken by the club manager to see that legitimate association functions not be considered outings.

\*The need to *share and communicate information*. For instance, each group should include the other associations on their mailing lists and when appropriate, group leaders be invited to various functions held by other associations.

\*Every effort is being made to be sure that all groups are involved in the design and content of their questionnaire as it pertains to their particular area of concern in the *Met Area Club Operations Survey* conducted by the MGA.

\*The need to *cooperate on important issues* that affect all clubs such as legislative matters, insurance, environmental concerns and the mutual support of various golf related organizations.

This somewhat new era of reaching out, cooperation and communication between our three associations could only become a reality if it is also practiced on the individual level at each club. You can do your part to help hold up our end of the bargain by extending professional courtesy and cooperating with your PGA Golf Professional and Club Manager at all times.

Scott Niven, CGCS  
President, Met GCSA

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The Stanwich Club  
1st Low Net

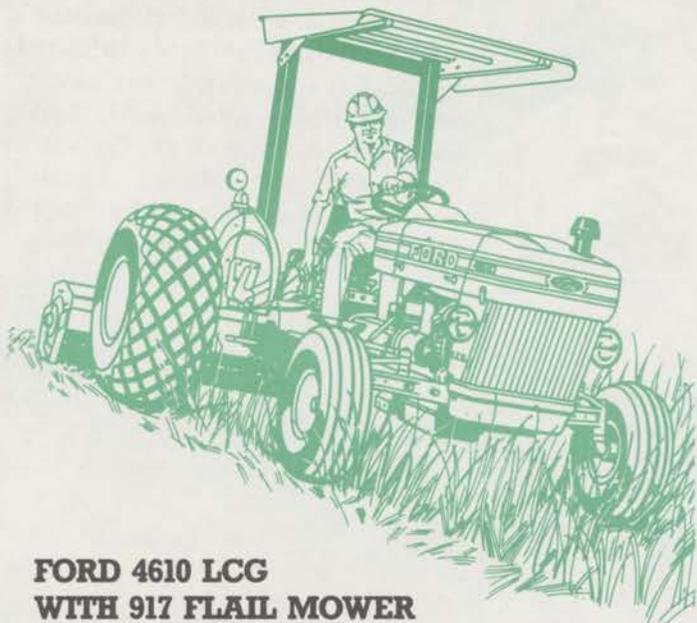


Winged Foot G.C.  
1st Low Gross

## Results of Invitational Tourney

1st Low Net	The Stanwich Club 57
2nd Low Net	Middle Bay C.C. 61
3rd Low Net	Willow Ridge C.C. 62
1st Low Gross	Winged Foot G.C. 64
2nd Low Gross	Westchester Hills G.C. 66
3rd Low Gross	The Woodlands 67
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## Family Relations

### Committee

## Holds First Meeting

By Kathy Mongon

The newly formed Family Relations Committee, composed primarily of spouses of Met, GCSA members, held its first meeting on May 19, 1988. The committee's purposes are to help keep the families of Met GCSA members involved in the association, discuss ways of getting these families to become more acquainted with each other, and to find ways to increase public relations.

In addition to helping with the annual Summer Social, Family Picnic and Christmas Party, the committee hopes to conduct more family oriented activities throughout the year. It will also be the responsibility of this committee to properly welcome new members of the association.

Another important topic which this committee and the education committee will be involved in is family support. This would involve holding seminars on family related matters such as, financial planning, career/parenting etc.

The Family Relations Committee is still in need of new members with interesting ideas. If you would like to join this committee please contact Social/Welfare committee chairman John Carlone at 516-766-1838, or attend our next meeting on Monday, July 18, at 7:30 pm at 275 Knollwood Rd. White Plains, N.Y.



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## Met GCSA Tournament Schedule

Monday, July 11, 7-11 pm	Annual Summer Social on board The Lady Joan Riverboat for a party cruise on Long Island Sound!!!
July 25	Mahopac, G.C. Mike Miner, Sup't.
Monday, August 8	Family Picnic at Woodway Beach Club a fun filled day for the family
September 20	Wykagyl C.C. Vincent Sharkey
October 6	Willow Ridge C.C. Tony Grasso, Sup't.
November 10	Ridgeway C.C. Earl Millett, Sup't.
Saturday, December 10	Christmas Party at Westchester Hills C.C.

Dear Mr. Pakkala:

On behalf of the New York State Turfgrass Association officers, directors and members I wish to thank the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents for their generous support in 1987 to the matching funds program. Your donation has been forwarded to Cornell to assist the turf research of Dr. 's Marty Petrovic, Norm Hummel, Eric Nelson, Mike Villani and Joe Neal. Through contributions such as yours, NYSTA donated more than \$30,000 in 1987 to New York State university turfgrass programs.

We look forward to working with you in 1988 as we continue to further the goals of NYSTA.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Seme  
Executive Director

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## Gene Grady Retires

Gene Grady recently retired as superintendent of Tamarack Country Club in Greenwich, Connecticut after a very successful career.

Gene started in the golf course business as a groundsman at the Old Fairview Country Club located in Elmsford, New York in 1965. Then, in 1967, he moved to the new Fairview Country Club built in Greenwich, Connecticut. After a few short years, Gene moved to Tamarack Country Club just down the road where he has been since.

When Gene first started at Tamarack he worked under Ted Jozwick who was then superintendent at Fairview and consulting at Tamarack. After a year or so Gene became the superintendent and has had a very rewarding career at Tamarack.

Gene became a Class A member of the Met GCSA in 1970 and also served on the Board of Directors in the 70's. He is also a member of GCSAA and has been for many years.

He has made many improvements in his 19 years at Tamarack that he is very proud of. They ranged from building a pond, building tees, drainage and among other projects, installing a new irrigation system. He accomplished this the old fashioned way with perseverance and hard work. Gene will be long remembered by the members of Tamarack and the members of this association by the contributions he has made.

Gene and his lovely wife Tina made their home in Elmsford, New York and have been natives of that area for many years. They recently purchased a new home in Safety Harbor, Florida where they plan to move to right after the 4th of July.

Gene's goal is to take it easy for a while, work around the house and settle into his new Florida lifestyle. Anyone who knows Gene knows that it wouldn't be long before he involves himself in something.

We wish Gene and Tina best of times in their long deserved retirement and stay in touch.

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# Trees

## NOT SO FAST

by Jeff Sobul, Associate Editor

Reprinted from *Landscape Management*, May 1988

Recent trends have sent golf course greens cutting heights down and green speeds up. But somewhere along the way, some people forgot about that little fellow, the grass plant.

Tired of being walked all over, the little green (and sometimes brown) plant started retaliating at the players who wanted those lightning speeds. Unfortunately, the superintendent was pretty much the recipient of abuse from plants and players alike.

The lower you cut turf, the more susceptible it is to disease and stress. Then, by reducing fertilization—as some courses did to improve speed—the plant is denied nutrients needed to sustain healthy growth.

Jim Hippley, superintendent at Salem (Ohio) Golf Club, provides a good example of what many supers face. "We mow at  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch because the membership requests it," he says. That, he adds, results in many sleepless nights.

Another Ohioan, John Spodnik at Westfield Country Club, finds himself in a similar situation. He also mows his greens at  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch at member request. "The 'hot 100'—June, July and August—puts a strain on the grass," he notes. "Needless to say, the turf manager must perform accordingly at his best. Sometimes that is not good enough."

Are superintendents being forced to worship the almighty stimpmeter? Or are they finding ways to keep the faith without offering sacrificial turfgrass?

Scott Niven at the Stanwich Club in Greenwich, Conn., seems to have found some middle ground. "We used to cut at  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch, nine cuts a week," he notes. "Greens were fast but deteriorated in quality. Values in excess of 10 on the stimpmeter were too fast to be fair on greens with slopes like mine.

"Now we cut  $\frac{9}{64}$  of an inch. Greens are

a bit slower (8.5-9.5)," he says, "but healthier, better looking and easier to manage."

Sometimes it's situational, with speeds and height varying according to the time of year or occasion. Such is the case at the prestigious Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.

In the past, executive director of golf and grounds Robert Mitchell has had speeds as high as 12 to 13 on the stimpmeter for the 1979 Ryder Cup matches. For other tournaments, Mitchell keeps greens at around 9.5.

Otherwise, he says, "my opinion is that the guests who come to play the Greenbrier enjoy our courses with a putting speed of 8.5. Thus, I try to keep speeds between eight and nine on our three 18-hole courses."

That means a swing away from scalping. Mitchell believes a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch cutting height is too low for bentgrass/poa greens in his region.

"I prefer verticutting, top dressing, judicious use of fertilizer and chemicals, and even double cutting," he explains.

Also, recent technological advancements are making their way onto the market. That will improve speed and texture without lowering cutting height. Most notable are the turf groomers.

Jacobson's Turf Groomer was the first to enter the market and was followed shortly thereafter by Toro's Grooming Reel and Lesco's groomer. Since these are pretty new to the market, their collective effect is yet to be felt.

### Variables

Most superintendents will continue to use existing equipment and techniques to manage greens.

Chuck Clark of The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, notes, however, that adjustments are a constant necessity. Weather conditions, he says, can change

stimp readings from morning to afternoon. "When weather conditions don't cooperate, speeds which may begin the day at around nine may end up at 11 before the day is over."

To help keep his greens (and himself) out of stress during uncooperative weather, he has added a syringing system around all the greens to help preserve them with little inconvenience to the golfer.

### Good intentions

The original intent of the stimpmeter was to determine consistency of green speed from one green speed from one green to the next and act accordingly to keep them consistent, thereby introducing skill into holing a putt.

Golf course architect Mike Hurzdan, Ph.D., would like to see skill returned to putting. He finds it ridiculous that the best players in the world would three-and four-putt from 10 or 12 feet, as they did at the 1982 Masters—the year August switched to bentgrass "on slopes designed for Bermuda," he says. "Putting became luck, not skill." Hurzdan points out that Alister MacKenzie designed Augusta's green contours with Bermudagrass in mind.

"The point is," Hurzdan believes "if putting is to be a skillful pursuing then speed and slope must be matched."

Accomplished this will take some time. Some help from the PGA and its members would be a good start. Playing pros are the most visible and influential people at pointing the way, as they did with higher speeds. They can do the same by moving back towards Hurzdan's three S's: speed, slope and skill; and a return to proper stimpmeter use.

"The stimpmeter can be a useful tool only when everyone has been properly educated to its intended use and an agreement has been struck as to how it will effect our management practices."

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