



# TEE TO GREEN

Published by the  
Metropolitan Golf Course  
Superintendents Association

## President's Message

### Updating GCSAA Bylaws

*Will It Really Present a 'Window of Opportunity'?*

A great deal has been written and said about the GCSAA's proposed bylaw changes to be voted on at the national meeting in Anaheim. President Bill Roberts considers these changes "critical to the continued success of GCSAA." And he makes a convincing argument for the modifications in his article "A Window of Opportunity," which appeared in the September issue of *Golf Course Management*.

Yet many of the proposed changes concern me, and I'd like to talk about three in particular. Number one: allowing the GCSAA Board of Directors to set the dues rather than putting it out to vote at the annual meeting. Number two: Shifting voting procedures from a delegate-based structure to a "one person, one vote" system. And number three: Replacing the two-thirds vote required to implement bylaw changes to a simple majority. What troubles me most about these changes is that I feel, if passed, they will put more power in the hands of GCSAA staff and the board and distance GCSAA members from the decision-making process.

In the case of the dues increases, proponents of the change argue that we trust the board with 80 percent of the association's revenues, so why not trust them to determine dues increases. They feel that by waiting until the Annual Meeting to vote on *(continued on page 2)*

## Special Feature

### What a Maintenance Facility Tour Won't Teach You

*Two Superintendents Share Some of the Lessons Learned in Designing, Constructing—and Lobbying for—a New Maintenance Facility on Their Course*

Few things are more important to a successful golf course maintenance operation than a well-designed and equipped maintenance facility. Yet few things are more difficult to win support for—much less execute—than replacing or modifying a sorely inadequate shop.

Two member superintendents—Mike Mongon of Arcola Country Club in Paramus, NJ, and Greg Wojick of Greenwich Country Club in Greenwich, CT—have successfully completed building projects on their course. What they offer here are not the obvious pointers you can pick up from touring their maintenance facilities, but rather lessons you're not likely to learn until you're in the thick of the process.

Their intent: to save you time—and unnecessary steps—when trying to justify, design, and then build a maintenance facility on your course.

#### Mike Mongon, Arcola Country Club, Paramus, NJ

**Lesson #1:** Don't get pigeonholed into salvaging your old facility—unless you're proof-positive it's the best way to go. Suggest that the club allow an architect or engineering firm to conduct a feasibility study. They'll be able to give expert opinions and options.

At Arcola, we hired a project manager and engineering firm to evaluate all buildings and devise a plan of attack for the project. They not only supported the idea of building an entirely new facility, but also eliminated the need to

rely on a volunteer committee of club members to make day-to-day decisions on the direction of the project.

**Lesson #2:** A sprinkler system—at least in New Jersey—can be your ticket to a new maintenance facility, because over the long haul, it'll end up saving your club thousands of dollars.

At Arcola, for example, our fire sprinklers cost us \$60,000 to install, but the club now saves an average of \$12,000 a year on insurance premiums. So in five years, the sprinkler system will pay for itself, and the club will continue to reap the financial benefits. *(continued on page 4)*

## Also in This Issue

- ② Meetings Seeking a Site . . . Oversight Cited
- ③ Protective Turf Covers: Friend or Foe?
- ③ Field Day Notes . . . Member Notables
- ⑦ Results of Season's Final Golf Meeting and Second Annual Class B Outing
- ⑦ Ski Club Outings and Educational Events
- SPECIAL INSERT With Field Day Exhibitors

## Updating GCSAA Bylaws

dues increases, we risk missing out on valuable *business* opportunities because we won't have the funds readily available. Well frankly, I feel if we relinquish this vote to the board, we'll indirectly be giving up our say on what programs and business involvements are critical to our success and the success of the association.

In the past five years, GCSAA has managed to increase membership from 7,500 to 11,000 and revenues from \$4 million to \$10 million. Impressive numbers. But to do that the association's staff has grown from 28 to 61, and now they're proposing hiring field staff to the tune of \$460,000 per year. And guess what? A dues increase of \$40 to \$50 a year will be necessary to fund the program. Do you want the board to make this and other similar kinds of decisions without your input?

Then there's the proposal to abandon the delegate vote. The argument here is that the one-person, one-vote system is more democratic and will generate more interest in the elections and in GCSAA issues. Sounds logical, but let's face it, few members attend GCSAA annual meetings to cast a vote, and I'm convinced few more would bother to submit a mail-in ballot. At least now, our delegate, Bob Alonzi, is able to carry 70 votes to the Annual Meeting. Do you really think 70 of you would cast a vote—let alone attend the GCSAA Annual Meeting—each year, when at our own Annual Meeting November 19 only 25 percent of the membership turned out to vote in *our* Board of Directors?

Finally, allowing a majority rather than a two-thirds vote to institute bylaw changes is, to me, just another way to put

more authority in the hands of GCSAA staff and the board and less in the hands of the membership.

If majority rules, it will be far easier to drive bylaw changes through that will distance the membership from the decision-making process. And before you know it, GCSAA staff, not the membership, will be making all the major decisions for the association.

There's no denying GCSAA has done a lot to raise the status of the superintendent, but couldn't we continue in that direction without adding staff and implementing bylaw changes that pull control away from the membership—and drive up costs?

A meeting was held December 9 with representatives from several other local associations to discuss the bylaw changes. After careful review, the consensus was that GCSAA should redo these proposals and rethink our direction.

GCSAA Past President Steve Cadenelli will be at our Winter Seminar January 6 to discuss the changes and give you the opportunity to voice your opinion and ask questions. I hope all of you will attend that meeting and take some time to learn about the changes that can affect your future and the future of GCSAA. If you have any questions or comments, speak to me or to Bob, who, as our voting delegate, is well informed on the issues. And attend this year's Annual Meeting January 30 at 8 a.m. in Anaheim. Your participation, after all, is "critical to the continued success of GCSAA."

TIM O'NEILL, CGCS  
President

### Info Alert

## Meetings Seeking a Site

**W**e still have meetings without a meeting site for next year. Anyone interested in hosting a meeting should contact Matt Ceplo, 914-948-5023, or John Carlone, 516-766-1838.

## Sorry About the Oversight

**M**etedeconk National Golf Club was inadvertently left off the list of contributors to the Tri-State Research Foundation in the last President's Message. Sorry Steve, and thanks for contributing.

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## The Pros and Cons of Protective Turf Covers

After eight years with protective turf covers, Larry Pakkala of Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT, offers a few cautions—and many encouraging words

Geotextile covers have been in use now for the better part of 10 years. And for most, the pros seem to far outweigh the cons.

On the plus side, turf covers:

- shield turf from severe cold and desiccation
- promote faster green-up in the spring
- extend the planting season for those who have to seed late in the fall or in the very early spring
- protect greens from play that can result in winter injury

On the downside, turf covers:

- are labor intensive to install and remove
- can cause serious disease problems if you fail to apply protective sprays before bedding the greens down for the winter

I began using them at Woodway in 1984 on three problem greens—ones that are slow to green up in the spring

and difficult to grow grass on during the season because of root competition and severe shading from nearby oak trees. When I first took over at Woodway, these greens were sparse, and I'd struggle to get the grass to come in by June. The turf covers—along with a little root pruning—have helped tremendously, but a few problems *did* crop up, particularly during the past few mild winters. Let me explain.

As you know, covers work best when we have a cold winter with little fluctuation in temperature and a good snow cover. But the conditions in January and February of '90 and '91 got so mild that grass—and disease—began growing under the covers. If I hadn't picked them up to have a look, the outcome could have been truly disastrous.

Normally, the worst you can expect is a little snow mold, so you spray for that.

Last year, in fact, I made three applications for snow mold under my covers: one in late November, another in late January, and a third in late March. But guess what? I still had some disease.

When I took the covers back in January and March, temperatures had been 45° to 50° F with a number of days in the 60s. Then I realized it wasn't snow mold we had brewing here, but something that looked a lot like Necrotic Ring Spot.

This is typically a spring and fall disease that occurs when temperatures are 60° to 70° F. But during mild winters, like the ones we've had, I realized it could easily reach those temperatures under the geotextile covers. And sure enough, when I sent samples to be tested, my suspicions were confirmed. I had Necrotic Ring Spot on *Poa Annua* greens! And for the past two springs and falls, I've had Necrotic Ring Spot on only the greens I cover.

To take care of the problem, I've decided to treat my covered greens this winter for both snow mold and Necrotic Ring Spot. Here's my plan:

1. Spray greens with Rubigan at 4 ounces per square foot.
2. Topdress heavily.
3. Fertilize with 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
4. Put down covers.
5. Monitor covered greens closely, and spray again—and mow—if needed.
6. Remove covers somewhere between March 31 and April 5.

In the end, I feel turf covers' unique heat-capturing and moisture-conserving ability offer far more benefits than drawbacks—particularly for problem greens like mine. My only word of caution: Check under those covers at least once a month during the winter. By the time you read this article, it might be time to take a peek!

LARRY PAKKALA, CGCS  
Woodway Country Club

*For more on turf covers, take a look at two pieces that appeared in the September 1992 issue of Golf Course Management: "Protective Covers," and "Use of Covers Spreading Widely."*

### Notable Notes

## Field Day Notes

More than 300 turf and landscape professionals attended the October 13 MetGCSA Professional Turfgrass Field Day at Westchester Country Club to view the event's special clinics, equipment demos, and numerous exhibitor booths.

Special thanks to Field Day Committee Co-Chairmen Al Tretera and Jeff Scott and the 16 other committee members whose hard work made the day a success. They are: Joe Alonzi, Frank Buschini, Sean Cain, Will Heintz, Tracey Holliday, Byron Johnson, Bob Lippman, Mike Maffei, Earl Millett, Tim O'Neill, Larry Pakkala, Bill Perry, Bill Ross, Fred Scheyhing, Steve Sweet, and Scott Tretera.

We'd also like to thank Westchester Country Club for hosting the event and Dar Par Sales for supplying us with two-way radios for the day.

Last, but not least, we'd like to thank the exhibitors whose participation made the field day possible. As we've done in the past, we've enclosed a list of exhibi-

tors in this issue with their area of specialty and phone number. Once again, we encourage you to show these people the same support they showed us during our field day.

### Congratulations

Joe Mikulewicz, the assistant superintendent at Ardsley Country Club in Ardsley-on-Hudson, NY, was married October 10 to Dina Caldara.

### Birth

Congratulations to Jeff Scott of Apawamis Club in Rye, NY, and his wife Kathy on the birth of their son Jeffrey Michael Scott Jr. November 17.

### In Memoriam

We regret to announce the death of John Callahan Sr. John was a long-time commercial member and owner of The Cardinals, Inc., in Unionville, CT.

## What a Maintenance Facility Tour Won't Teach You

**Lesson #3:** Plan for the future. Before settling on the square footage of your building, don't forget to project future equipment purchases and storage or space needs. It's better to start off with a little extra space than to invest a lot of money in a facility you'll soon outgrow.

Our plans included heating additional work space and installing insulated block at our present cold storage facility to enable us to expand our heated work space as needed.

**Lesson #4:** Design in a buffer zone. Whether you call it a reception area, secretarial office, or computer room, it's time we get away from having visitors enter through our maintenance facility's equipment repair area—or directly into our office.

At Arcola, we have a reception area to the right, as you walk in the main entrance of the maintenance building. It's where we keep our files, and it's equipped with a computer, printer, and phone system—a perfect setup for secretarial support.

### The Arcola Facility: Facts and Figures

**Project Duration:** October 1990 to July 1991

**Facility Specs:** Three buildings: two constructed on new site, one on existing site.

Building 1 is 3,900 square feet and includes a sizable equipment repair area with hydraulic equipment lift, a grinding room, men's and ladies' lockers and showers, a lunch/meeting room, a utility room, a reception/secretarial area, and a superintendent's office.

Building 2 is 4,000 square feet of equipment cold storage.

Building 3 is 3,000 square feet and is divided into two sections. The larger area is devoted to storage of fertilizer, irrigation supplies, and less frequently used equipment. The smaller area is used exclusively for pesticide storage.

**Cost:** \$400,000

### Other Buildings Part of the Construction

**Project:** A \$700,000 clubhouse dining hall, \$400,000 pro shop, and \$500,000 cart barn/employee dormitory.

**Lesson #5:** Don't automatically assume your current building site is the best site for your new building. It may be in your best interest, for instance, to build in an area that's more accessible to the course or in one that's farther away from neighboring homes so that you'll comply with noise ordinances.

At Arcola, we opted to build on a new site for a couple of reasons. First, our new location allows room for growth. And second, the club, guided by site evaluations, decided that the facility's old location would be a more reasonable site for the construction of a cart barn/employee dormitory.

**Greg Wojick, CGCS, Greenwich Country Club, Greenwich, CT**

**Lesson #1:** Use environmental regulations to your advantage. An outdated shop or storage building is subject to the scrutiny of environmental regulatory agencies, who can require sometimes costly modifications to bring the building up to code.

Our facility at Greenwich was so outmoded that complying with existing and future environmental regulations would have required much more than a few low-cost quick fixes. The Hall-Kimbrell Environmental Compliance Assistance Program, which the club agreed to subscribe to, helped us map out where our facility was lacking and offered a credible proof source for doubting Thomases.

**Lesson #2:** Do your homework—and lots of it. You can't be too prepared when it comes time to sell—and spec out—the maintenance facility of your dreams.

Make the rounds at newly constructed maintenance facilities—with a key decision maker or two from your club so they could see firsthand where your facility is lacking.

Contact allied associations, such as the GCSAA, NGF, and USGA. They have articles and case studies on file that are chock-full of new construction specs and hints and cautions.

When it came time to pitch our maintenance facility, I was expected to spell out everything from the basic configuration to how an ideal facility should be

equipped and furnished.

**Lesson #3:** There are few things more disruptive to a maintenance operation than building a new facility. Be prepared, for instance, to periodically pull several staff members off the course to pinch-hit for a construction worker.

In addition, if you accept responsibility, as I did, for managing the project, don't underestimate the time it will take away from your golf course duties.

During our nearly year-long project, almost one-third of my time was spent overseeing the day-to-day operations. I was fortunate to have good support staff. If you can't say the same, it might be worth hiring extra help for the duration of the project.

### The Greenwich Facility: Facts and Figures

**Project Duration:** October 1991 to October 1992

**Facility Specs:** Two wood-frame buildings constructed on existing site.

Building 1 is a two-story, 4,800-square-foot facility with heating and air conditioning. On the lower floor, there's a maintenance shop, equipment storage area, grinding room, fireproof oil/grease storage room, painting/steam cleaning room, men's and ladies' restrooms with shower, laundry area, staff lounge with kitchen and lockers, offices for the superintendent, mechanic, and assistants, and a storage room. On the upper floor, there is 1,200 square feet of additional storage.

Building 2 is a one-story, 4,800-square-foot cold storage structure for equipment, fertilizer, and seed with outside, as well as inside, loading platforms.

Other features: Paved service yard with covered storage bins for sand, topsoil, crushed stone, and other materials. Two gas pumps—one for diesel, the other for regular fuel. Washdown area with sump pit for collecting grass clippings and in-ground separator tank.

**Cost:** \$900,000

### Other Buildings Part of the Construction

**Project:** A \$1.1 million, 7,612-square-foot staff dormitory.

**Lesson #4:** Lobby for a "dream team."

The president of our club assembled a building committee of members with expertise in the construction and financial industries who added value to all aspects of the project—from conducting contractor negotiations to watchdogging the design and construction phases.

**Lesson #5:** When it comes to hiring an architectural or general contracting firm, the low bid isn't necessarily the best bid. Remember, these are the people who can make or break your project.

To aid in the decision-making process, we set up a matrix for each bidder that included the company's Dun & Bradstreet ratings, cash on hand, years and type of experience, and numerous other hiring criteria.

When considering general contractors, for instance, we were particularly interested in the cash-on-hand category. After all, you wouldn't want to endanger the timeliness of the project by hiring a

company that might delay material purchases because of a lack of funds.

**Lesson #6:** Keep close tabs on the project. To ensure success in both the design and construction phases, it's a good idea to hold weekly meetings at your building site. At Greenwich, our meetings were attended not only by building committee members but also by the architect, the general contractor, and, when appropriate, by subcontracting companies.

During these meetings—39 in all—the committee grilled everyone involved to make certain each aspect of the project was going according to plan.

Early on, the committee also held 21 separate planning meetings, where we hashed out project details and interviewed prospective contractors.

**Lesson #7:** Fine-tune your communications skills.

In addition to fielding the numerous questions from contractors and committee members, during the course of the

project, I was expected to give formal presentations to the committee and, early on, to the membership, write weekly financial reports and periodic newsletter articles on the status of the project, and arrange all meetings. Equally important, was keeping my staff up-to-date on what was happening and how it would affect their daily activities.

To cap the project off, on Labor Day, we invited the membership to tour—and ask questions about—the facility.

**Other Reading:** "Barn or Turf Care Center: Which Do You Have?" USGA Green Section Record, November/December 1992. "Maintenance Facility Planning," Golf Course Management, November 1992.

You might also want to pick up a copy of the GCSAA textbook *Golf Course Maintenance Facilities: A Guide to Planning and Design* at Booth #3996 at the national conference.

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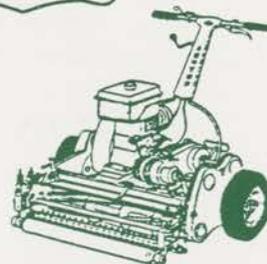
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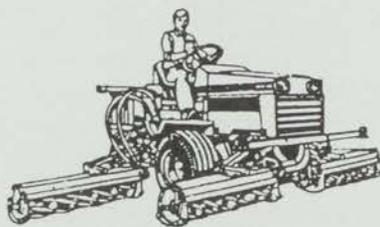
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## Superintendent/Green Chairman Tourney Draws 99 Players

Despite nippy temps, 99 golfers played this year's Superintendent/Green Chairman Tourney held October 20 at Wee Burn Country Club. Thanks to Rick Schock and his staff, the playing field was in excellent shape. And Manager Steve McVay and Golf Pro Roy Pace assured a well-run day with superb service and food. Here's how the players stacked up:

### Low Gross

- 72 J. Carlone/G. Schwartz  
*Middle Bay Country Club*
- 73 J. Alonzi/M. Aronstein  
*Westchester Country Club*
- 76 S. Niven/P. Sandor  
*The Stanwich Club*
- 76 R. Schock/J. Robins  
*Wee Burn Country Club*

### Low Net

- 65 R. Alonzi/M. Stuart  
*Winged Foot Golf Club*
- 66 T. Polidor/J. Currie  
*Heritage Hills of Westchester*
- 67 J. Streeter/H. Hyman  
*Woodbridge Country Club*
- 68 F. Scheyhing/D. Adams  
*Mount Kisco Country Club*

### Closest to the Pin

- #7 Don Adams, *Mount Kisco CC*  
#15 Mike Aronstein, *Westchester CC*

### Longest Drive

Tracey Holliday, *Sterling Farms GC*

## Second Annual Class B Outing

*The Winners in the Four-Man Team-Best Ball Format*

Everyone was a winner at the second Annual Class B Outing held October 26 at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY: Thanks to Alpine Tree Care, which generously donated \$300, everyone who played golf received a prize.

But the following first place team were the *real* winners of the four-man team-best ball: Frank Buschini of Quaker Ridge GC, Chuck Denny of Century CC, Bill Ross of Fenway Golf Club, and Tom Watroba of Quaker Ridge GC.

Special thanks to Superintendent Joe Alonzi, who had the course in tip-top shape for the event. Watch for a notice toward the end of the 1993 season for the time and place of the next Class B Outing.

STEVE SWEET  
Westchester Country Club

### Upcoming Events

#### Educational Events

##### MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 6  
Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY  
For further information, call John Carlone at 516-766-1838.

##### 62nd Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference and Industrial Show

Monday-Wednesday, March 1-3  
Springfield, MA  
For further information, call the Massachusetts Turf & Lawngrass Association, 413-549-5295.

#### Social Calendar

##### Ski Club Outings

Tuesday, December 29 at Hunter Mountain  
Tuesday, January 19 at Jiminy Peak  
Tuesday, February 9 at Windham Mountain  
Tuesday, February 23 at Hunter Mountain  
All those attending should meet at the main lodge at 9 a.m.  
For further information, call Jeff Scott at 914-967-2100, ext. 149.

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