



# TEE TO GREEN



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Metropolitan Golf Course  
Superintendents Association

## President's Message

### President's Message . . .

Or should I say, First Lady's Message? Yep, you guessed it: John's not writing this; I am . . . me, his wife, Margaret. Pandora's been asking for his message for weeks, but the nematodes are here and so is root pythium, hyperodes, and then there's that huge member-guest. Perfect timing. I, on the other hand, have the summer off since my work schedule coincides with the school year, so I'm enjoying my kids and what I see of my husband. (It still amazes me that both our children were conceived in the summer months.)

Having more time on my hands than John, I thought I'd help him out by filling this space in the *Tee to Green*. I just hope he doesn't think this is an "I Love Lucy" thing for me to be doing. You know, when Desi comes home from the club and makes Lucy "splain" to him the mess she got herself into now.

And I'm not quite sure what wisdom I could share with any of you. Although, if there are spouses out there like me who read this column, we must have some stuff in common. You know, the part where they're just working and sleeping. I'm always fond of the times that John remembers that the kids and I are here—if he needs us. I like to think he comes home to visit during the day because he misses us, *(continued on page 2)*

## Special Feature

### The Hidden Cost of Golf Carts

*USGA Exposes the Real Cost of Golf Carts—to the Game, the Golf Course, Club Operating Budgets, and Physical Fitness*

If it were up to the USGA, no able-bodied golfer would ever take a golf cart again. In fact, the organization's publication, *Golf Journal*, invites individual members to sign a pledge to never ride on a course unless absolutely required to. Enlistees—those who sign and mail in the USGA Walking Member Declaration—receive a walking member golf-bag tag and the privilege of requesting the gratis booklet "A Call to Feet: Golf Is a Walking Game," which the USGA published last year in conjunction with *Golf Digest* in support of its walking campaign.

On the cover is an illustration by well-known cartoonist Charles Schulz, an avid golfer himself, that shows the *Peanuts* character Charlie Brown happily pulling a manual golf cart.

Inside, the booklet not only details the benefits of walking, but also dumps on electric carts, referring to them as golf's "scourge."

What follows is an eye-opening account of golf carts' many ill effects—drawn not only from the USGA's booklet, but also from a recent *Wall Street Journal* article, "There's a Move Afoot to Spoil Golf's Good Ride," which was written in support of the USGA's campaign.

We hope you'll find this piece more than a "good read," but rather a call to action—for your club officials who have the power to limit cart use and for all of you who can get off your duffs and walk the courses you play, rather than ride.

**They inhibit your enjoyment of the golf course and the game.** Players who ride between strokes can't fully appreciate the quality and beauty of the course, nor can they fully enjoy their round. Golf is a game of rhythm, and its rhythmical character

and the ability to concentrate are enhanced by walking. On the Senior PGA Tour where players can opt to ride golf carts, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Gary Player all choose to walk. There must be a reason. *(continued on page 4)*

## Also in This Issue

- ② Events to Remember
- ③ Tuxedo Club Super Hosts Met Area Team Championship
- ④ Beard Collection
- ⑤ Area Supers Comment on Carts—and Walking as a Rule
- ⑧ Members in the News
- ⑨ Met Two-Ball Teams Show No Mercy

# President's Message . . .

but I know better. It's probably more because the bathroom at the shop is dirty and his coffee is kicking in. Or that it's so hot he craves the air conditioning. No, the real value of his home to him is the Weather Channel: 24 hours of glorious weather coverage. You have to love the music on there too: great for napping. I've actually caught John humming some of those ditties.

Over the years I've spent with John—coming close to 20 now—I've learned that his job is like a religion to him. He shows almost as much pride and joy in the part he plays in the scheme of nature as he does in his children.

Just about everyone I've met in this field feels the same way. You people are responsible for a large part of the beauty in this world, and you take that responsibility seriously.

If you're lucky it shows in your work. If you're even luckier, someone else will notice.

It's discipline at its best. Like the day Cal Ripkin set the record for

playing the most consecutive baseball games. It's basically getting up and going to work every day and staying until it's done.

Do other things suffer? Sure . . . some marriages and friendships do. Certainly your social life does. One release I'm glad my husband does find time for is the Met meetings, a time to commiserate with friends, play some golf, and just get away for a day . . . a change of pace.

Even though the summer sometimes seems to last forever, it's really over in a blink of an eye, and then winter is wonderful. It's a time superintendents can use to recharge—and mend any relationships that may have suffered during the summer.

So I guess the last bit of advice—to superintendents and their families—from this First Lady, is to hang in there. It's almost over—until next season, anyway!

(Just cross your fingers that next month isn't so busy for John, or we'll have one of the kids writing that one!)

MARGARET O'KEEFE

## Upcoming Events

### Meeting Reminders!

**Met Area Team Championship Qualifier, Final Round**  
Monday, October 7  
Pine Hollow CC, East Norwich, NY  
Host Superintendent: Gerry Kunkel

**Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament**  
Thursday, October 24  
Old Westbury Golf & CC, Old Westbury, NY  
Host Superintendent: Phil Anderson

### Golf Event

**Met Area Team Championship**  
Monday, October 28  
Maryland Golf & CC, Belair, MD  
Host Superintendent: Donn Dietrich, CGCS

### Professional Events

**GCSA of New Jersey Turfgrass, Equipment, Irrigation, and Suppliers Field Day**  
Tuesday, October 8  
Rutgers University Golf Club/Stadium Complex  
Piscataway, NJ  
For further information, contact Judy Policastro at 201-379-1100.

**NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition**  
Tuesday – Friday, November 12 – 15  
Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY  
For further information, call 800-873-TURF.

**NYSTA Service School**  
Friday – Saturday, November 22 – 23  
SUNY Cobleskill, Cobleskill, NY  
For further information about this equipment service course for golf course mechanics, call NYSTA at 800-873-TURF or Larry Van De Valk at 518-234-5572.

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## Met Area Team Championship Qualifier Travels to The Tuxedo Club

Bringing us into the “dog days of summer” was the first round of the Metropolitan Area Championships held at The Tuxedo Club in picturesque Tuxedo Park, NY.

Hosting this event was the club’s golf course superintendent of two years, Tim Garceau.

### A Gem in the Making

Established in 1886, The Tuxedo Club was originally located in the path of what is now the New York State Thruway—about 10 miles north of its present location. To make way for this major thoroughfare, the club was forced to pick up stakes and move to its current site adjacent to the Sterling Forest. That was in 1955. Today, this hidden gem—a Robert Trent Jones Sr. design—plays to a Par 71 and its length is 6,693 yards from the Championship Tees.

Stepping into the hub of the club’s turf management activity—Tim’s maintenance facility—more eye-catching than any piece of equipment are the rattlesnake skins mounted on the wall. Tim says that besides rattlesnakes roaming the outer perimeter of the course, there are black bear, which have, on a few occasions, wandered onto Tim’s property—and into the garage of his house, which backs up to a wooded area.

In his tenure as superintendent, Tim and his longtime assistant, Chris Strehl, who came with Tim from Orange County, have undertaken many improvement projects, not the least of which have been to rid the greens of moss—“We’re about 95 percent there,” says Tim—and fairways of poa, with an aggressive bentgrass renovation program. They’re also in the thick of restoring the course’s nearly 15 acres of naturalized areas, which through the years, says Tim, have been overtaken by undesirable plants and weeds.

Among Tim’s other pet projects are to gradually restore all the course’s bunkers and make sorely needed drainage improvements. “There’s a lot of rock on this course,” says Tim. “So

much, in fact, that we’ve seen quite a few pieces of aeration equipment leave here in pieces.”

Smoothing the way for these—and other—maintenance activities are Tim’s two greens chairmen, Pat Madarano and Jay Mottola, executive director of the MGA, who Tim praises as “very supportive and knowledgeable.”

Equally committed to his own staff, Tim says he believes in a well trained, involved crew who knows precisely what needs to be done—and why. “My guys have a great sense of pride and look to each other for the motivation needed to do the best job possible,” says Tim.

### The Road to Tuxedo

Accepting the position at The Tuxedo Club the winter of ’94, Tim took a somewhat circuitous route into turfgrass management.



*“The MetGCSA is a first-class organization. It’s well run and has its priorities in the right place.”*



Born and raised in Wood-Ridge, NJ, he worked his way through Bergen Community College, earning an associate’s in business management in 1979. He continued his schooling at Colorado State University, completing a bachelor’s in Landscape Management in 1981.

His first job out of school was as a horticulturist for Chemlawn, where he was promoted to manager of the lawn care division. Four years after his promotion, Tim decided it was time for a change and opted to pursue work in an area that, after college, had become a strong interest: golf.

He landed an assistant’s job at Plum Creek Golf and Country Club in Castle Rock, CO, where he stayed for two years before looking to beef up his

credentials with some tournament experience.

He accepted another assistant’s position—this time back East at Ridgewood Country Club under then superintendent Ed Walsh. “I signed on just in time to work the 1990 U.S. Senior’s Open that the club was hosting,” remembers Tim.

“Helping prep for a major tournament was an excellent experience,” he continues. “And working under Ed really helped prepare me to be a superintendent.”

Tim’s first superintendent’s position came in the winter of 1992, when he landed the post at Orange County Golf Club near Middletown, NY. “At Orange,” says Tim, “there was more hands-on management. I had to learn to do more with less than I had been accustomed to at the other clubs I’d worked for. It really helped me round out my experience.”

### Professional—and Personal—Pursuits

Today, in addition to managing the golf course at Tuxedo, Tim sits on the Board of Directors of the Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association and represents them on the board of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

Tim is also a member of GCSAA—hoping to become certified this coming year—and the MetGCSA, which he touts as a first-class organization. “The Met is well run and has its priorities in the right place,” says Tim, who cites the scholarship program as an excellent example of how Met members support one another and their families.

A family man, himself, Tim enjoys spending time with his wife of 10 years, Mariane, and two children: Austin, 6, and Sarah, 4.

Among Tim’s favorite pastimes are cross-country skiing, softball, camping, rock climbing, hiking—and, of course, a good game of golf, which you all no doubt enjoyed at The Tuxedo Club on August 5.

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## The Hidden Cost of Golf Carts

### They strip the sport of any fitness benefits.

Because the lion's share of golfers now ride rather than walk their courses, whatever fitness benefit the game used to provide has ceased to exist. "The cart-bound golfer might just as well be home on the sofa, watching the pros play on TV," writes the *Wall Street Journal* article author Frederick Klein.

"A full-sized course measures about 3½ miles. That's a good walk if done briskly," notes Dr. Kenneth Cooper, the head of the Cooper Clinic & Aerobics Center, a fitness, sports-medicine and medical-research complex in Dallas, TX. In an interview with *Wall Street Journal's* Klein, he further endorses walking versus riding by saying, "The better and faster golfers play a round on foot, the more they'll benefit physically."

**They bog down play.** Carts slow play if they carry more than one player each or are confined to paths. In fact, a recent USGA Pace Rating Survey shows that it takes more time to play a round of golf riding a cart restricted to paths than it

does to hoof it across the course.

**They beg for cart paths.** The paved paths that courses build to accommodate golf carts intrude on the game's pastoral beauty and bring to mind the asphalt jungle we come to the golf course to escape. No great course, with the exception of Pebble Beach, has a complete network of paved cart paths. And with good reason. Can you imagine Augusta National with a river of concrete along each hole?

In addition to detracting from a course's natural beauty, they deflect balls into places they ordinarily would not have gone and can create Rules of Golf problems. And though strict use of paths will eliminate the wear on a course, you end up, as we just mentioned, with another problem: slowed play.

**They're damaging to the turf.** Think about how much better your course would be if carts weren't allowed. There'd be no unsightly tire tracks running across the turf. Fewer worn and damaged areas.

Far less turf-destroying compaction. And fewer unrepaired ball marks on greens, a less obvious consequence of golf carts.

If this last one sounds farfetched, consider this: A player hits the ball to the green. The ball touches down on the front of the green and rolls to the middle where the pin is located. The player then drives the cart to either the left or right side of the green and sinks a putt, never walking back to the front of the green to repair the mark the ball made initially.

**They're not the economic boon they're purported to be.** Most clubs consider golf carts an economic necessity, but how many really sit down and add up the real costs of operating carts?

First, there's the cost of keeping a fleet of carts: the purchase or lease price, maintenance, labor costs (salary, insurance, possibly pension) of employees who handle the carts, fuel, a building to house the carts, the construction and repair of cart paths, and the purchase of

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stakes, ropes, and signs. Some courses also buy insurance against theft and casualty.

Another large drain on club coffers are golf course maintenance costs related specifically to cart damage. Additional seed, fertilizer, and soil are required to repair cart-worn areas; aerification is required to relieve compaction on green approaches where carts cross. Compacted areas are generally also more prone to weeds and, therefore, may require extra—and costly—chemical applications. Another common consequence of compaction: less water needs to be applied more frequently, adding

not only to irrigation costs, but also labor costs since hand watering is frequently required.

Then there are the labor costs involved in managing cart traffic. Those stakes, ropes, and signs must be moved every time fairways and areas surrounding greens and tees are mowed—or when wet weather dictates that the stakes, ropes, and signs be moved to redirect traffic.

It's interesting that in other countries where golf is extremely popular that game survives without income from carts. Take Scotland for instance: There might well be fewer carts in the entire

country than there are at one American resort; yet, the golf courses there aren't on the verge of closing down. Is it any wonder that playing golf in Scotland is more enjoyable and less expensive?

**They're dangerous.** There are many accidents each year, where those riding golf carts are severely—or fatally—injured.

**They cost caddies their jobs.** . . . and golfers the benefit of a player-caddie relationship. This is a unique alliance in sports that shouldn't be abandoned. After all, a player's caddie is the only one who may give the golfer advice. (How many golf carts can help you read greens?) And having a caddie allows a player to concentrate more on golf by tending to the housekeeping chores of raking bunkers and replacing divots.

The results of the USGA's year-long "Call to Feet" effort might sound disappointing—to date, only 8,000 of the USGA's 650,000 members have enrolled—yet John Morrissett, the official in charge of the program, is not daunted. "Most of the people we've heard from are very supportive of our program," he says. "And those who aren't—some club owners and pros have called accusing us of trying to take money out of their pockets—I think have misunderstood the program's intent. We're not seeking to have carts banned. We're just trying to see to it that players never be *forced* to ride. In the end, that's all we can realistically hope for."

#### End Note

If you're interested in becoming a USGA Walking Member or finding out more about the Walking Member program, send your queries to: Walking Program, United States Golf Association, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931-0708.

To receive a copy of the booklet "A Call to Feet: Golf Is a Walking Game," send a self-addressed, stamped letter-sized envelope to the same address.

## Supers Comment on Their Clubs' Cart Policies—and Walking as a Rule

**Joe Alonzi, CGCS, Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY**

"I think the USGA walking program has merit and could work. I, myself, like to walk. And we have a fair share of members who walk—even on our West Course, which has a lot of steep hills. I'm convinced that if you could get people to walk here, you could get them to walk anywhere.

"At Westchester, anyone taking a cart still has to take a caddie. We have more than 100 caddies for both courses. I suppose to really encourage walking, though, clubs would have to provide added incentive, like making it more expensive to take a cart or limiting carts to people with medical problems.

"The problem is, few clubs are willing to see the expense side of carts. All they see is the bottom line."

**Tim Moore, Knollwood Country Club, Elmsford, NY**

"The USGA's campaign is a nice effort, but unfortunately, carts have become part of the game. And let's face it, some courses aren't conducive to walking.

"At Knollwood, we have 55 caddies, and a good number of members do

walk—particularly the early morning players. But we really almost encourage carts, here, by equipping them with things like windshields and shields for your bags, which make playing comfortable in inclement weather.

"But then, we're not alone. In many parts of the country you can't play golf without a cart. The intent is to speed up play. But if you've got cart paths, you actually slow the game down. And people do almost as much walking in that situation since they've got to chase the balls they hit on the opposite side of the fairway from where the cart is parked.

"I enjoy walking, but I'm not crazy about pulling or carrying my bag—particularly after a 12-hour workday. I'll admit it: On those days, what I'd really rather do is grab a cart and go."

**Tim O'Neill, CGCS, Country Club of Darien, Darien, CT**

"At our club, we have about 60 carts and a relatively small pool of caddies. We rely a lot on high school and college kids during the summer months. That means in April, May, September, and October, when we still (continued on page 6)

## Supers Comment on Their Clubs' Cart Policies—and Walking as a Rule

get a good amount of play, we have few caddies to accompany those who might like to walk but don't want to carry their own bag.

"If a club wants to encourage walking, I feel it has to be committed to a strong caddie program. It's probably also a good idea to raise the price of carts. Here, golf carts are cheaper than taking a caddie, so there's no real incentive to walk rather than ride.

"Unfortunately, carts do a lot of damage to the course and require a lot of extra labor. When you add up all the costs, clubs probably don't generate anywhere near the revenue they think they do from cart fees.

"We all know areas of the course that get a lot of cart traffic show signs of wear-and-tear and suffer from compaction. These high-traffic areas also tend to wilt more easily when it's hot, requiring a lot of extra attention and labor-intensive hand watering. Then, too, there's the time-consuming process of putting up and taking down ropes and stakes needed to contain cart traffic. But few people recognize all this.

"At the risk of slowing up play a bit, I wish my club were more committed to cart paths—to spare the course, particularly during wet weather. Either that or invent a cart that will do for the course what Softspikes has done for our greens."

### Bob Alonzi, CGCS, Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY

"Winged Foot is already practicing what the USGA program preaches: We are strictly a walking course. Members can take carts for medical reasons only, but when a cart is required, so is a caddie. We have a strong caddie force of 120, but we're fortunate: Being centrally located makes the club easily accessible to caddies.

"I advocate a no-cart policy primarily because of the damage carts cause. They're particularly bad for old courses like Winged Foot, which was built before carts were introduced in the '50s and, therefore, wasn't designed to

accommodate them.

"In my opinion, if carts are allowed, cart paths must be provided. Usually, members aren't aware of the damage golf courses suffer from carts, and it is difficult to communicate that carts cause compaction, which, in turn, causes a host of other turf problems.

"Although the USGA's walking campaign will have some impact, most golfers will continue to ride because of comfort. If clubs make it mandatory to take a caddie with a cart, I believe it will help to encourage walking."

### Tony Grasso, Metropolis Country Club, White Plains, NY

"Everyone is under the impression that all the revenue carts generate is pure profit. But if people stopped to consider all the money spent to accommodate carts, they might think differently. For instance, in '86, Metropolis built a large cart building for nearly \$100,000. Each of our 60 carts costs about \$4,500 a piece. Then there's the electricity to charge them, and the salaries of the three guys in the cart building required to manage and maintain them.

"On the course, we have some Macadam paths, which were expensive to construct and now to maintain. We put in artificial surfaces around the tee boxes to spare these areas from compaction. Then there are the ornamental plantings we put in—and now have to maintain—to keep carts in certain areas.

"Even with all that, we still get a lot of cart damage—worn and compacted areas around tees, greens, at the ends of cart paths. All this takes time and money to repair.

"We do discourage carts, and I'd say 90 percent of our younger members take caddies and walk. Most of our senior members will take carts—and those who come in after 4 p.m., when no one's on the course, and want to get in a quick 18.

"I think the USGA's walking program is a great idea. Walking is the only way to play golf. And from a golf course maintenance perspective, I, of course, would prefer it if members never took carts out."

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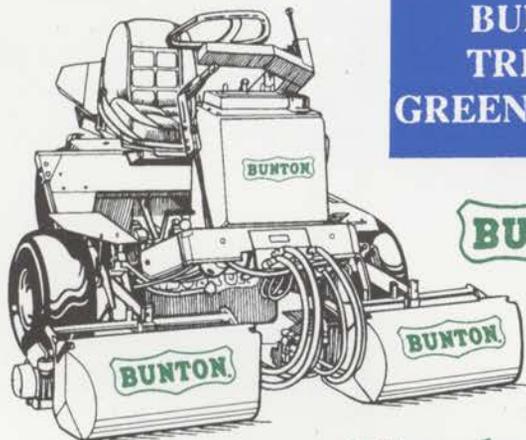
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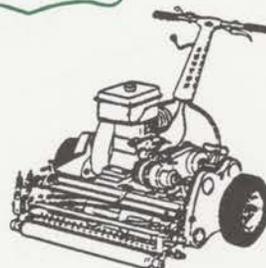
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## Westchester Country Club Recognized for Environmental Excellence

The Westchester Country Club has achieved designation as a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, a program of the Audubon Society of New York State and endorsed by the USGA. Working toward certification since 1991, Westchester is only the third in New York and the 74th course in the nation to receive the honor.

"Westchester Country Club has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property," says Maria Briggs, staff ecologist for the Audubon Society of New York.

"To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas," explains Briggs. These categories include: Environmental

Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management, Public Involvement, Integrated Pest Management, Water Conservation, and Water Quality Management.

"We are proud to have reached this status and look forward to maintaining—and further enhancing—our Audubon program," says Westchester Superintendent and MetGCSA Past President Joe Alonzi.

Good work, Joe!

### Congratulations on Two Counts!

Steve Renzetti, of Wykagyl Country Club in New Rochelle, NY, has doubly good news:

He was recently designated a Certified Golf Course Superintendent by the GCSAA. And he and his wife, Angela, recently had a baby boy. Austin William was born July 15.

Congratulations on both counts, Steve!

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## Met Two-Ball Teams Show Little Mercy

After two seasons of friendly camaraderie and close matches, the MetGCSA Two-Ball Championship has turned into a competition of brutality. A strong majority of the matches have been won by a wide margin. Little respect has been given to defending champions and teams of stature. Bob DeMarco of the Powelton Club and Gary Arlio of North Jersey Country Club is our first finals team. Tim Garceau of The Tuxedo Club and Ernie Steinhofner of The Nevele Hotel & Country Club will face off with The Stanwich Club's Scott Niven and Woodway Country Club's Larry Pakkala to determine the other finalist. Here's a recap of the slaughtering:

### Round One

- Gary Arlio, *North Jersey CC*, and Bob DeMarco, *Powelton Club*, clipped our defending champions Jim McNally, *Greenrock Corp.*, and Wayne Remo, *Rock Spring Club*, after 19 holes. While a tough match, the McNally/Remo team cruised to last year's finals.

- Bob Alonzi, *Winged Foot GC*, and Joe Alonzi, *Westchester CC*, had the "tag team" brother act working in their whipping of Ron Demkovich, *Westchester County GC*, and Tony Savone, *Quaker Ridge GC*, 4 & 2

- Tim Moore, *Knollwood CC*, and Todd Polidor, *Heritage Hills CC*, simply had too much experience and knowledge of the local conditions and customs of Bedford, thereby destroying the rookie team of Jim Calladio, *Milbrook Club*, and Tony Girardi, *Rockrimmon CC*, 5 & 3

- Dave Mahoney, *Siwanoy CC*, and Dennis Petruzzelli, *Lakeover National GC*, birdie blitzed their way to a 7 & 6 victory over Dom DiMarzo, *Sunningdale CC*, and Fred Scheyhing, *Mount Kisco CC*.

- Scott Niven, *The Stanwich Club*, and Larry Pakkala, *Woodway CC*, buoyed by Scott's 71 and Larry's final birdie, steamrolled Joe Camberato, *Sleepy Hollow CC*, and Bob Nielsen, *Bedford Golf & Tennis*, 9 & 7.

- Dennis Flynn, *Brae Burn CC*, and Peter Rappoccio, *Silver Spring CC*, had little trouble with the strong gross team of Peter Bly, *Brooklawn CC*, and John Gallagher, *Racebrook CC*, 4 & 3.

- Tim Garceau, *The Tuxedo Club*, and Ernie Steinhofner, *The Nevele Hotel & CC*, quickly disposed of the snake-bit team of John Carlone, *Middle Bay CC*,

and Tim O'Neill, *CC of Darien*, 4 & 3.

- Tony Grasso, *Metropolis CC*, and Greg Wojick, *Greenwich CC*, defeated Steve Renzetti, *Wykagyl CC*, and Scott Tretera, *Elmwood CC*, 3 & 2 in one of the few back-and-forth matches.

### The Quarter Finals

The onslaught continued with the following outcomes:

- Bob DeMarco and Gary Arlio showed no respect in destroying Bob and Joe Alonzi 6 & 4. This swaggering team then had the brashness to fax all of Westchester, proclaiming their victory.

- Dave Mahoney and Dennis Petruzzelli set up Tim Moore and Todd Polidor on a very tough and "dry" Stanwich course, dispelling them 4 & 2.

- Scott Niven and Larry Pakkala cooled off slightly in their 3 & 2 victory over Dennis Flynn and Peter Rappoccio.

- Tim Garceau and Ernie Steinhofner continued their blitz in a 4 & 3 win over Tony Grasso and Greg Wojick.

In the first semi-final match, Bob DeMarco and Gary Arlio didn't lose a hole and destroyed Dave Mahoney and Dennis Petruzzelli 6 & 4. Had it been a boxing match, it would have been called a TKO at the turn.

It appears the gloves have been taken off in this year's two-ball matches. Some interesting notes are that two of the three teams remaining qualified in the 14th and 15th seed. They also have a strong Hudson Valley flavor. Inquiries are being made!

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