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TEE TO GREEN



Published by the
Metropolitan Golf Course
Superintendents Association

President's Message

Snore, Yawn . . . The Business at Hand

Got your attention? Good. Because what I have to tell you about association business is really more than just good bedtime reading. The initiatives we have in the works are actually pretty exciting—and we have our Board of Directors and committee people to thank for our progress in these and many other areas.

One note: Please be sure to take my call to action seriously regarding the Food Quality Protection Act. Each and every one of you can make a difference.

On the RISE

In March, MetGCSA members Jon Jennings, John O'Keefe, Mike Maffei, Jeff Weld, and I attended the Northeast Alliance Issues Briefing and the Ambassador Speakers Training Session held in Newburgh, NY. Sponsored by RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), this meeting focused on the Food Quality Protection Act.

This act is designed to protect public health, addressing, in particular, any health risks to children.

Deputy secretaries from the EPA and USDA will be co-chairing a committee charged with implementing this act. Their first task is to rethink the guidelines regulating organophosphates, which includes chemicals like Dursban—one most of us have used to control Hyperodes weevil. *(continued on page 2)*

Special Feature

Two Supers Take a Ride on the Wild Side

Westchester Country Club Superintendent Joe Alonzi Tells the Tale of His Two-Wheelin' Escape From Reality With Fellow Biker and Ardsley Super George Pierpoint

In December 1997, Ardsley Superintendent George Pierpoint III and I decided to take a trip to Daytona Beach, FL. No, not by plane. . . . by motorcycle. We were headin' South for "Bike Week"—a Bikers Convention held late in February. George has been riding since 1965—always a Harley Davidson. I've been riding since 1970 and have owned three Hondas, two Yamahas, and, most recently, a Kawasaki Vulcan.

The Grand Exit

On February 25 at 6 a.m., I left my house in North Salem and headed to my office for a last-minute discussion with my staff. The air temp was 31. At 7:45, I drove to the MGA building to meet George. By 8, we were on I-287 South, the first leg of our great escape from reality.

The morning air was cold, and my toes were feeling numb. At about 10:30 a.m., I glanced at my fuel gauge and, seeing I was close to empty, pulled up to George to signal to get off at the next rest stop. My engine began to sputter as we passed a sign saying the next stop was 12 miles. Fortunately, motorcycles are equipped with reserve fuel. I reached down under the gas tank

and flicked the switch. My engine regained power. The next 12 miles seemed forever. I wasn't used to riding on reserve, so I wasn't sure the distance the bike could go.

We made it to the stop, got breakfast, and were back on the road. From that point on, we stopped only every 150 miles for a 10-minute break.

Time to Reflect

The air temp was rising, the sun was bright, and my toes felt like they were beginning to thaw. As I traveled 70 mph on two wheels, I pondered the fun we'd have in the next 10 days—and the past 40-something years of my life. I thought of my early childhood—what little I remember—in a *(continued on page 6)*

Also in This Issue

- ② Member News
- ⑤ Spotlight on Our Upcoming Meeting Sites and Their Supers
- ⑨ Powelton Golf Results and Two-Ball Qualifiers and First-Round Competitors

Meeting Reminders: July 27 Mahopac Meeting and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier. Also coming: Poa Annual Tourney, August 31, Rock Spring Club in West Orange, NJ.

Snore, Yawn . . . The Business at Hand

Because there's the potential for restrictions that could affect our ability to do our jobs, state organizations have requested that we write letters to our congressmen to ensure fair and reasonable implementation of the act.

Most of you should have received an example of the type of letter to send. If not, please contact me for more details.

At the same meeting, we also participated in a one-day training session titled "Ambassador Speaking." This session taught us how to talk to the public—calmly and knowledgeably—about pesticides.

The invitation list included most of the affiliated chapters in the Northeast, but the Met was the only one of those associations to attend. Too bad; they missed out on a great learning experience and networking opportunity.

Moss Research Revived

At our last board meeting, we voted to allocate some of our Scholarship & Research funds to support Dr. Frank Rossi's moss research. Though we all know a few tricks to temporarily keep moss at bay, many of us—me included—would welcome a long-term cure.

Dr. Rossi will begin his research by defining the extent and severity of the problem in our area. Next, he will work to develop programs we can all use to eliminate moss on our courses.

Anyone interested in participating in the study can contact me, S&R Committee Chairman John Carlone, or Dr. Rossi, himself. The more participation we get, the better the information Dr. Rossi will have to work with—and, ultimately, the

better the outcome of his study.

Dr. Rossi will keep us posted on his progress. Watch for periodic updates.

Met Sponsors One of Our Own for GCSAA Directorship

At our annual meeting, we voted to support Country Club of Darien Superintendent Tim O'Neill in his candidacy for GCSAA Director. Though the slate of candidates will not be confirmed until July, Tim's campaign is already in full swing. His campaign manager, John Carlone, has been busy. He formed a Campaign Committee—composed of more than one LEGEND—which has already met to discuss ways to help Tim on the campaign trail, including making phone calls and reviewing his promotional materials.

Tim brings a lot of experience with him: He's moved through the chairs of our association, served on the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation board since the organization's inception, and participated in committee work on the national level—to name several of his major professional contributions. We firmly believe Tim will be a real asset to the GCSAA board. And we can also be assured that he will represent the concerns of the MetGCSA.

I'll continue to keep you posted on key issues or concerns of the association. In the meantime, feel free to call me—or any board member—with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you might have relating to the association.

EARL F. MILLETT
President

Notable Notes

Recertified

Congratulations to Country Club of Darien Superintendent **Tim O'Neill** on completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a Certified Golf course superintendent with GCSAA.

Initially certified in 1988, Tim earned 15 CEUs, with at least 4.9 coming from GCSAA-tested categories. Maintaining

certified status requires that a renewal process be completed every five years since the initial date of certification.

Birth

Congratulations to Fenway Golf Club Superintendent **Scott Stark** and his wife, **Kathy**, on the birth of their daughter, Bailey Logan, on March 17.

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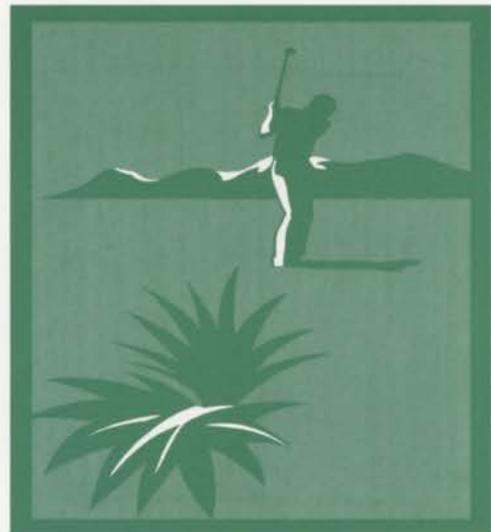
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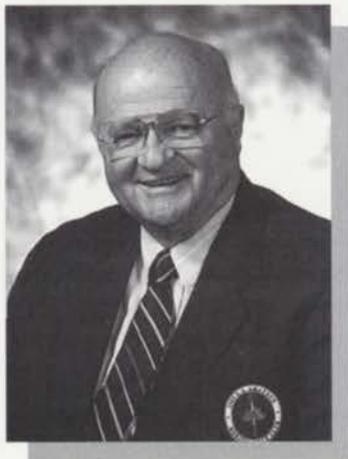
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Second-Year Super Hosts First-Ever MetGCSA Meeting: The Invitational

In only his second year as super at Sunningdale Country Club, Sean Cain decided to go for the gusto, inviting the most difficult critics a superintendent could have, his peers, to the Met's annual Invitational Tournament on June 1.

Learning from some of the best in the biz, Sean had the course well prepped for the event—and intense scrutiny—despite the driving rain the night before.

Picture-Perfect

A mover and a shaker, Sean has plenty of ideas, some of which are labor-intensive, but the end result spectacular. Since coming to Sunningdale, Sean's introduced the concept of growth regulators and clipping removal. He's also been a proponent of hand mowing collars and approaches, as well as fine trim work. Together with his crew, Sean has spent many hours cleaning up the perimeter of the course. "It started with stonewall

repair and continued on to the thinning out of brush and vines to enhance the beautiful wooded areas that accent the course," he explains.

Learning the Ropes

Sean got his start in this "crazy business," as he puts it, near his home turf in Schenectady, NY, working on the grounds crew of Mohawk Country Club under Superintendent Fred Montgomery.

Stanwich Super Scott Niven took Sean under his wing as he completed his B.S. from URI in Turfgrass Management. After two years as Scott's intern/second assistant, Sean spent five years as first assistant at Apawamis under then Super Jeff Scott. "Although Jeff couldn't come close to my downhill skiing ability," muses Sean, "I credit him with molding me into the superintendent I am today."

It Was All Downhill

Sean's goal this past winter was to "show



Sunningdale CC
Superintendent
Sean Cain

old-timers Bob 'Woody' DeMarco, Ken Lollier, and Jeff Scott just who the best skier in the

Met is." But alas, his ski season was cut short when he tore his ACL on the slopes this past December. "It was devastating," says Sean, who was also forced to take a hiatus from his other athletic pursuits: golfing, mountain biking, and basketball.

Sean's also been known to play a good game of baseball, having played first base and outfield at the Division I level at URI in the late '80s. We'll expect to see him on the ball field this summer, helping us defeat the Long Island GCSA in softball.

Thanks, Sean, for a great round at Sunningdale!

SCOTT C. APGAR

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Met Heads to Mahopac for July Golf Meeting

This promises to be an eventful year—for both Scott Ferguson and Mahopac Golf Club. Opening its doors in 1898, Mahopac has scheduled a four-day Centennial Celebration to begin on the heels of the MetGCSA July 27 meeting.

One might think prepping for two major events, back-to-back, is biting off more than you can chew; but to Scott, it's more like killing two birds with one stone. "I have to have the course in shape for the Centennial, anyway, so why not piggyback the two events," he says.

Scott's already begun preparing for the festivities. "We've been busy building a new courtyard area between the Pro Shop, clubhouse, and maintenance facility," he says. "We've regraded, ripped up the old tennis courts, and replaced turf, shrubs, and trees.

"On the course," he continues, "we've completed our usual drainage projects, embarked on a tree planting program, and leveled and rebuilt tees on approximately one-third of the course."

Experience Building

Scott's turf career began in high school when he worked his senior summer for former Aspectuck Valley Superintendent Frank Lamphier. "Thanks to Frank, I went to UMass Winter School in 1985 and continued in the business," says Scott.

The following fall, Scott secured a second assistant's position with Peter Bly at Brooklawn in time to help prep for the U.S. Senior Open. From there, Scott went to Oronoque Golf Club where he worked three years as an assistant.

Scott left Oronoque—and the work world for two years—to complete an Associate's degree in Plant Science at UMass. In 1992, with degree in hand, Scott landed a first assistant's position with Dennis Flynn at Brae Burn, his last stop before being hired as superintendent at Mahopac in 1995.

Tee Time Tip

When you tee it up on July 27, be forewarned: Mahopac is fun to play but not as easy as it looks. Describing the



Mahopac GC
Superintendent
Scott Ferguson

course, Scott says, "It's an old, partial links design that plays like a bump-and-run course,

with greens averaging about 5,000 square feet. Not bad, considering it was designed by a bunch of guys from New York City."

He continues, "I'm excited that the Met and Mahopac can celebrate together during the club's centennial week." But even more exciting to Scott is another celebration the club will be hosting: his wedding. On October 10, he's marrying his fiancée of seven years, Toni.

When Scott's not wrapped up in his wedding plans—or other club events—you're apt to catch him fishing, golfing, and, when the snow flies, skiing.

Good luck, Scott, in preparing for all your big events!

MICHAEL H. COOK JR.

Alpine, the Care of Trees

Two Supers Take a Ride on the Wild Side

small town near Rome, Italy, where I spent the first five years of my life. I thought about how lucky my brother, sister, and I were that our parents migrated to this country to give us a better life. I thought of the friends I'd told about this trip—every one of them telling me I was crazy. My sister, Tina, accused me of going through mid-life crisis; my brother, THE LEGEND, and best friend just shook his head in disbelief. My wife, Judy, who was not for this trip at all, didn't try to stop me. I think she realized how important it was for me to get this out of my system.

It wasn't until I returned that I realized how worried everyone was—except, of course, for me and George. We saw no danger in it; nor do I now.

Leader of the Pack

With George in front of me—he led the entire way, having made the trip six times before—I began to notice a pecu-

liar behavior: Every time an 18-wheeler with a large cabin went by, George would practically jump out of his seat and give it a thumbs-up. If the truck was extremely nice, he'd give it a thumb-and-pinky up. I found out later that George is very fond of large, well-kept trucks. He'd get a lot of reactions from these truckers, but the one I can't forget is the truck with the horn that simulated a train whistle. It nearly scared me off my seat. Yup, George really likes trucks.

When night came, it seemed we'd been traveling forever. We had gone 693 miles—well above our 500-mile goal. We checked into a hotel and had a quick dinner. On the way back to our room, George looked at the sky and said, "Wow, look at all the stars. I bet tomorrow will be as beautiful as today."

I slipped into bed with a pair of heavy socks to warm my still-slightly-numb feet.

Rain, Rain, Go Away

The next morning we woke up to rain. That reminded me of how quickly the weather can change. I took a long, hot shower, and we lingered over breakfast till 11 a.m., when the rain subsided to a light drizzle. After about 75 miles of wet weather, there was a break in the clouds and soon blue skies and sunshine.

Just north of the Florida border, we hit some construction and slowed to a crawl. As we drove out of it and across the Florida line, my engine began to sputter. Since I had plenty of gas, I began to worry about a more serious problem. A quick check revealed a "vapor lock" probably created by the stop-and-go driving. With the problem fixed, we arrived in St. Augustine at 6 p.m., with another 450 miles under our belts.

Biker Heaven

Saturday morning we drove to Daytona Beach where Bike Week was scheduled to



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begin. We arrived on Main Street about noon. It took us 10 minutes to get down the strip, as we passed thousands of bikes parked perpendicular to the road, handlebar to handlebar. With no parking spaces, we drove to a lot a few blocks away and hiked back.

A biker's heaven, every store on Main Street had been converted to a motorcycle accessory store. The local news that night reported that Bike Week boosted the Daytona area economy by \$240 million. It also said that they expected 600 to 700 thousand bikers through Daytona in the next 10 days.

We stayed in Melbourne, about 95 miles south of Daytona, in a house owned by a friend of George's. Sunday morning we drove back to Daytona. Main Street was closed to all vehicles except motorcycles. With the many thousands of bikes, our 10-minute ride down Main Street the previous day turned into an hour.

At the Harley Davidson dealer, we saw a wedding; wearing a vale and leather chaps, the bride and her party proceeded on bikes down Main Street.

Our next day's adventure took us on a hunt for a place George remembered having blackened alligator that was "out of this world." After an hour of trailing him through narrow back roads along the coast, we got to a sign that read "No Exit to Mainland." I thought, then, we were lost for sure, but George pulled into a gravel driveway, and there was the restaurant we were looking for. My first alligator meal was excellent, and George's ability to remember directions was even more impressive.

Day Tripper

By Wednesday morning, we'd had enough of Daytona and headed south to Key West. Driving through the Keys on a motorcycle was great, especially across the bridges and causeways. The seven-mile bridge surrounded by a coral reef and beautiful waters was particularly impressive. We arrived in Key West just as the setting sun was touching the horizon, and I thought what a great place this would be to vacation with Judy. If only she would ride a bike. I'm giving

thought to a sidecar.

We spent Thursday enjoying the weather, and by that afternoon, we headed back to the mainland. This time we took "alligator alley," traveling north up the West Coast to Fort Myers. Friday morning, we set out for our return trip, hoping to dodge the rainy weather reported up the East Coast.

Saturday at 2 p.m., we stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike for gas, less than 100 miles from home. George was hoping to make it back for his grandson Travis's first birthday party, so we had a quick laugh about the great time we'd had together and agreed to hook up soon to trade photos.

We rode together to the Intersection of I-87 and I-287, where I gave George the high thumb and pinky and headed east toward the Tappen Zee Bridge.

Home, Sweet Home

Through those 11 days, I had lots of time to reflect on things, but it wasn't until this final leg of the trip that I thought about the projects and concerns waiting for me at work on Monday morning. Right then, I still wanted to relish what time I had left of my escape from reality. I thought of the wonderful friendship I'd found in George Pierpoint. I'm happy to have gotten to know him. I thought of how truly relaxed I felt—the tension and stress gone.

As I crossed the Tappen Zee, I could feel home getting near. When a car crossed two lanes in front of me, causing me to swerve, I knew I was back. As I pulled in my driveway, my daughters Amy, Allison, and Amanda ran out to greet me, followed by Judy and my son, Chris. It was good to be home. The odometer totaled 3,702 miles in 11 days.

The solitude and time to reflect on life was worth the numbness in my right toe and the sore coccyx that won't let me sit on hard surfaces.

I won't suggest that everyone jump on a motorcycle and ride 3,700 miles, but I do recommend that you figure out what makes you feel good. Find your escape from reality and JUST DO IT.

JOE ALONZI

Westchester Country Club

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|--------------------------------------|---|
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| Scott Tretera, <i>Elmwood CC</i> | Tim O'Neill, <i>CC of Darien</i> |

Low Net Winners

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 60 Jeff Weld, <i>Bayer Corporation</i> | 62 Bill Perlee, <i>Apawamis Club</i> |
| Joe Stahl, <i>Metro Milorganite</i> | Greg Moore, <i>Rolling Hills CC</i> |
| 62 Rick Schock, <i>Wee Burn GC/Pete Kearney, Pound Ridge GC</i> | |

Two-Ball Qualifiers and First-Round Matches

Class A Qualifiers/First-Round Matches

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| #1 Rick Schock/Gregg Stanley | vs. #16 Bob Alonzi/Joe Alonzi |
| #2 Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera | vs. #15 John Streeter/Les Kennedy |
| #3 Bill Perlee/Greg Moore | vs. #14 Paul Gonzalez/John Gentile |
| #4 Dave Mahoney/Dennis Petruzzelli | vs. #13 Chuck Martineau/Fred Scheyhing |
| #5 John Carlone/Tim O'Neill | vs. #12 Earl Millett/Tony Savone |
| #6 Bob DeMarco/Gary Arlio | vs. #11 Larry Pakkala/Scott Niven |
| #7 Steve Renzetti/Bert Dickinson | vs. #10 Blake Halderman/Glen Dube |
| #8 Greg Wojick/Mike Reeb | vs. #9 John O'Keefe/Mike Mongon |

Affiliate Qualifiers/First-Round Matches

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| #1 Jeff Weld/Joe Stahl | vs. #8 John Apple/Dan Cancelleri |
| #2 Mike Cook/Ken Clear | vs. #7 Greg Moran/Ernie Steinhofner |
| #3 Dave Griffin/Al Tretera | vs. #6 Frank Amodio/Dennis DeSanctis |
| #4 John Currie/Joe Kennedy | vs. #5 Ron Shapiro/Mike Gesmundo |

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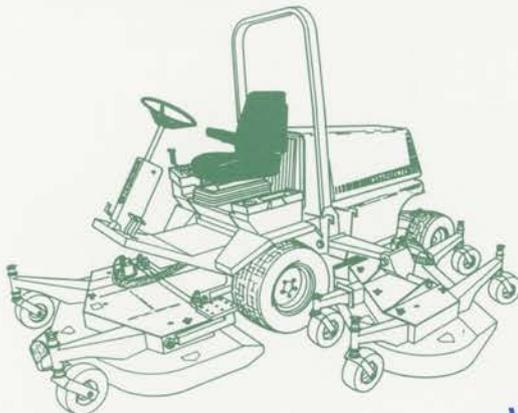
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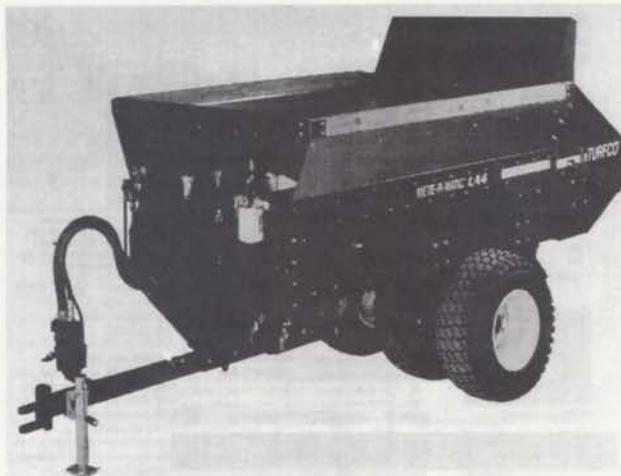
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- ☆ **Steven Willand, Inc.**
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