



TEE TO GREEN

Published by the
Metropolitan Golf Course
Superintendents Association

President's Message

All Good Things Come to Pass

Have two years gone by already? Wow, how time flies when you're having fun. It's been a pleasure to be associated with the MetGCSA for the past 16 years or so—and to have served as treasurer, vice president, and president. Serving on the board is an experience I strongly recommend to all my peers. It keeps you in touch with not only the inner workings of the association, but also the many issues and concerns of our profession and industry. And more important, it puts you in a position where you can actually make a difference.

Special Thanks

Speaking of making a difference, I would like to personally thank all of the board—and committee—members I've worked with over the years. My father once told me, "You're only as good as the people you work with." Fortunately, I've had the honor and privilege of working with a group of truly dedicated professionals. What's more, I've had the good fortune of inheriting an association that had a strong foundation built by past presidents and board members.

Three other people who have been especially helpful to me during my tenure on the board are Jan Russo (former MetGCSA (continued on page 2)

Special Feature

What a Difference Internal Drainage Makes

Stanwich Club Property Manager Scott Niven Describes the Turnaround of His Course's Poorly Drained Greens

If you're plagued by poorly drained native soil-based greens, take heart. There is an alternative to completely rebuilding your greens. Stanwich Club Property Manager Scott Niven offers insight into an option that is, in his words, "quick, affordable, and far more effective than praying for dry weather." Scott's miracle cure: installing internal drainage.

In the paragraphs that follow, Scott takes us through the high points of his work to turn wet, difficult-to-manage greens into healthier, more consistently playable putting surfaces. The outcome, according to Scott: "The drainage has resulted in one of the most dramatic course improvements I have ever witnessed."

First Attempt

At The Stanwich Club, we had two greens that had absolutely terrible drainage and a portion of nearly every other green that didn't drain well. Our first attempt at correcting the problem was to vertidrain with 3/4" tines and fill the holes completely with a high-sand topdressing. We repeated this process four separate times, using 12 trailer loads of material to fill the holes. Unfortunately, during periods of heavy rainfall, the greens still puddled and remained super saturated.

This confirmed my suspicion that, although the water could now infiltrate

deep into the root zone, it still had no way to exit that critical area.

Back to the Drawing Board

This forced us to consider other options: rebuilding all the greens or installing internal drainage. We chose the less disruptive and far more affordable second option. If you have talented craftsmen on your staff, you *can*—as some superintendents have—handle the project in-house. I recommend letting the professionals do the job by hiring a firm like the one we used: Turf Drain, Inc. of Novi, Michigan.

Once you've (continued on page 6)

Also in This Issue

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All Good Things Come to Pass

Executive Secretary), Ineke Pierpoint (MetGCSA Executive Secretary), and Pandora Wojick (*Tee to Green* Managing Editor). You all know how much of an asset these people have been. Their untiring efforts and professionalism are unsurpassed. We all, as members of the MetGCSA, extend our gratitude and thanks for their hard work.

Look How We've Grown

I was told about 25 years ago, "If you want to work in an area of the country that is superior in many ways in the golf course maintenance business, come to the New York Metropolitan area." I can honestly say a truer statement was never made. Having networked with my counterparts from around the country, it's clear that this area has some of the finest golf courses—and playing conditions—in the entire world. A credit, of course, to our highly skilled and dedicated membership.

I can remember telling everyone when I was elected that we were hoping to take our positions as superintendents to the next level. Though there's still much to be done in this area, club members *are* slowly but surely understanding the significant

role our jobs play in the health and welfare of their facilities. And our compensation is finally beginning to reflect our contributions to our clubs' standing and prestige.

Our association has also, slowly but surely, boosted its financial standing—particularly with the bull market of the past few years. We leveraged the market's success, providing funding for scholarships and research. I feel strongly that, in the near future, the scholarship and research accounts will be self-sustaining.

Out With the Old, in With the New

I wish all of you the very best in the future—wherever or whatever the business brings you.

Thank you, again, for the pleasure of being a representative for this great association of people. I am pleased, now, to turn the association over to John Carlone, whose many years as a superintendent and MetGCSA board member will serve the association well in the coming two years. Please join me in welcoming John and wishing him every success in his new role as MetGCSA president.

EARL F. MILLETT
President

Notable Notes

Members on the Move

Bob Alonzi is the new superintendent at Fenway Golf Club, Scarsdale, NY. Previous position: Superintendent, Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, CT.

Les Kennedy is the new superintendent at Blind Brook Club, Purchase, NY. Previous position: Superintendent, Country Club of Waterbury, Waterbury, CT.

Mike Mongon is the new superintendent at Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, CT. Previous position: Superintendent, Arcola Country Club, Paramus, NJ.



Birth

Congratulations to Rockrimmon Country Club Superintendent **Tony Girardi** and his wife, **Christine**, on the birth of their son Matthew Anthony on September 29.

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MetGCSA Members Meet—and Golf—on New Turf

September 14, MetGCSA members were treated to a course that *Golf Digest* ranked #16 in all of New York State: Anglebrook Golf Club in Lincolndale, NY. Host Superintendent Lou Quick and his staff—assistants Seth Greenwood and Jason Gordon—did a fantastic job setting up the Par 72, 6947-yard layout for the day.

Designed by Roger Rulewich, then of the Robert Trent Jones Sr. Group, the course opened its doors in June 1997—the first shovel hitting the ground in May of '95, explains Lou, who was brought on board in time to help manage the mammoth construction project.

The Circuitous Route

Lou took the long road to a career in golf course management. He started his schooling at Texas A & M with a major in Marine Biology. Realizing that without a doctorate, he'd be "destined to become a lab rat," Lou switched his major, completing a B.S. in horticulture in 1985.

"After graduating," says Lou, "I went to work with a few indoor and outdoor landscape design firms in and around Dallas. I learned a lot—everything from tending to indoor plantscapes to running large equipment on some of the more sizable outdoor jobs." Lou adds: "This is where I picked up the organizational skills that help me on the golf course today."

GCSAA News Clips

GCSAA membership has climbed past nearly doubling in size since 1994. A staff of 115 serves this diverse group of professionals from GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS.

The 2000 Old Tom Morris Award is going to Nancy Lopez, a 48-time winner on the LPGA Tour, at the February 18 Golf General Session during the 71st International Golf Course Conference and Show.

Watch for *GCSAA NewsWeekly* a brand-new electronic publication designed to fill you in on what's happening in the turfgrass management industry. Highlights will be e-mailed every Thursday, with links provided to the full articles. Contact Ken Moum, GCSAA online editor for further information at <mailto:kmoum@gcsaa.org> or 800-472-7878, ext. 428.

Lou's good fortune in the landscape industry came to a near-screaming halt when the Texas housing market took a dive in the '80s and services like landscaping became an unaffordable luxury. "The friends I was working for eventually couldn't afford me," laments Lou.

At that point, Lou turned to Dr. Milt Engleke of The Texas Extension Center in Dallas. "I had kept in touch with him over the years," says Lou, "and he fortunately pointed me toward Stonebridge Country Club, a Pete Dye new-construction course north of Dallas."

Love at First Sight

For Lou, it was love at first sight: "I fell in love with the golf course business," he remembers, "on a tractor, seven days a week enjoying life; the greatest thing!"

When the construction was complete, Lou decided to learn the ropes of golf course management. He accepted an assistant's position at the 27-hole, daily fee course, Chase Oaks Golf Club, where he stayed for three years.

Looking for a superintendent's position, Lou again called Dr. Engleke, who this time directed him toward Bentwater Country Club in Houston. "They were looking for an assistant—and help in building their final nine holes," says Lou.

In 1994, Lou's substantial construction



the 20,000 mark, of 115 serves this



Anglebrook GC
Superintendent
Lou Quick

experience paid off. The current general manager of Anglebrook, Shigenhito Suzuki, who Lou had met during his tenure at Chase Oaks Golf Club, called and asked him if he'd be interested in a new course being built in Westchester County in New York.

The rest is history, including the many challenges of building a new course—particularly within New York City watershed boundaries and among ancient Indian camping/hunting grounds, which they unearthed on the property.

"Anglebrook is like Fantasy Island," says Lou. "We have all the resources, a great maintenance facility, and an ownership dedicated to the golf course." Their biggest goal on this brand-new course: "To keep it as Poa-free as possible," says Lou.

"I'm a big believer in our association," notes Lou, who says he especially appreciates the Met's—as well as GCSAA's—professional and proactive approach to promoting the superintendent and turfgrass management industry. Also a believer in continual self-development, Lou says, "I enroll in a full slate of courses each year—to keep from stagnating."

At Home on the Course

Lou now lives on golf course grounds with his wife, Valerie, and children Kelly, 13; Jeremy, 10; and Ian, 7. His spare time revolves largely around his family and their many extracurricular activities. "We are always going somewhere, like 4H, soccer, or something else," says this Fantasy Island super.

Anglebrook was certainly worth the trip, and we look forward to visiting again—perhaps for a future Team Championship? How 'bout it, Lou?

MIKE COOK

Alpine, the Care of Trees

Milbrook Club Hosts Annual Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting on November 4 took MetGCSA members to a nine-hole course that has undergone more capital improvements than many 18-hole clubs see in a lifetime: the Milbrook Club in Greenwich, CT. Over the past four years, the club has constructed a new clubhouse, pool house, and paddle tennis complex. On the golf course, host Superintendent Jim Calladio has completed three greensite complexes and plans to complete the remaining holes this winter. "We've also rebuilt about half of the tee boxes. We'll finish up the rest in 2000," says Jim.

Home Turf

Jim grew up in Norwalk, CT—just a half-mile from Oak Hill Golf Course, where he got his feet wet in the turfgrass industry. "After working at the course summers during high school and full-time for a year after graduat-

ing, I decided to pursue a career in turfgrass management," says Jim.

He completed an A.S. in Ornamental Horticulture at SUNY Farmingdale, which Jim explains included coursework and training in turfgrass management.

While a student, he worked at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, and at the urging of Scott Niven and then assistant John Carlone, he went on to complete a B.S. in Turf Management at the University of Rhode Island.

With a bachelor's in hand, Jim's next move was to Country Club of Darien, where he worked as Superintendent Tim O'Neill's assistant for three years. "Tim does a great job preparing assistants to become superintendents," says Jim. "It was tremendous learning experience for me."

From Darien, Jim accepted his current position at Milbrook, where he's remained since 1991.



Milbrook Club
Superintendent
Jim Calladio

In Praise of Nine Holes

"The nine-hole experience has been nice," explains Jim. "It's allowed me to take a more hands-on approach to the job. I do all the spraying, for instance." But then, with a crew of five, Jim probably couldn't have it any other way. "Everybody here wears a lot of different hats," says Jim, who's quick to praise his hard-working staff. "When our mechanic isn't busy in the shop, he jumps on a rough mower and helps out."

Jim, who's been a MetGCSA member for 15 years and a GCSAA member for 13, is closing in on his GCSAA certification. "I'm close to meeting just about every one of the requirements," he says, as he awaits a course evaluation from fellow superintendents.

But right now he's got his sights set on his annual golf trip with a few buddies to the Carolinas. "We golf, golf, golf. I play enough golf on this trip to hold me through the winter. Then I'm ready to go again by spring."

Another of Jim's favorite pastimes is trout fishing in the streams of Connecticut, surrounded by water—and stream banks that are never manicured.

BILL PERLEE
The Apawamis Club

Quotable Quote

"I always turn to the sports pages first, which record people's accomplishments. The front page has nothing but man's failures."

Chief Justice Earl Warren
(1891-1974)

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What a Difference Internal Drainage Makes

settled on how you'll get the job done, my next recommendation would be to drain one of your worst greens first. This is not only a great test for the procedure, but also an ideal way to prove to your club that the method you've chosen for draining your greens will actually solve your problem.

We ran our test in April 1997 on a chipping green that, needless to say, soon became the best-drained green on the course. A common remark from superintendents who have done just one green is, "Our wettest green be came the driest one."

I had a great opportunity to observe the results of our new drainage: Two days after our chipping hole was complete, we got a storm with two inches of rain. I quickly went to the chipping hole to see how it fared, and almost like magic, within minutes of the rain stopping, the green was firm and puddle free. There wasn't even any water in the cup!

Shortly after that day, we decided to drain our four worst greens. We completed that project during the fall of '97. During the fall of '98, we drained all the remaining greens.



Trencher making 3" x 15" excavation from plywood

The Process and Price of Well-Drained Greens

Basically, the process involved manually removing a 7-inch strip of sod with a Miltona sod cutter and then excavating a trench 3" wide x 15" deep with a walk-behind trenching machine.

We placed a 2-inch, thin-slit perforated polyethylene tubing in the

bottom of the drain line, which was then backfilled with a well-drained root zone mix that has an infiltration rate of roughly 2 inches per hour. Dr. Norm Hummel helped us identify an acceptable material.



Four-wheeled carts remove excavated material.

All the work was done on 4' x 8' sheets of plywood to protect the surface of the green. The trenches were installed on 6-foot centers across each green in a pattern perpendicular to the flow of water.

A laser level was used to guarantee proper layout of the trench lines and to ensure a minimum slope of 1 percent, which gives a fairly rapid water velocity of 1.5 feet per second.

Depending on the shape of the contours, some greens had only one set of parallel trenches, while others were laid out in a herringbone pattern to properly intercept the flow of water. All the lateral trenches were connected to a main line, which leads to an outlet at a pond, brook, existing drain line, or its own sump.

A clean-out port was included at the high point of each green for flushing the system, while an observation port was installed at a low point off the green to allow us to confirm that the drain is working properly. It's actually very satisfying to look in the observation ports after a heavy rainfall and see the tremendous gush of water leaving each green.

The final step was to replace every piece of sod exactly where it came from.

For a couple of weeks after the procedure, we needed to tamp some spots and topdress others until the sod lines were perfectly level. It's also important to aerify annually to keep the water infiltrating into the trenches.

The process was fairly painless for the Stanwich membership because it took place in the late fall, and each green was taken out of play for only the time it took to install the drains, which varied from one-and-a-half to three days, depending on the size of the green.

Immediately after a green was completed, we would roll it with our speed roller and then replace the pin. The putting was pretty good, even at that point. In fact, the finished product was so clean and smooth that I now refer to the Turf Drain staff as "the plastic surgeons of putting green turf."

When all was said and done, we figured that it cost us an average of about \$4,500 to drain each one of our greens. Compare that with the \$30,000-dollar figure for completely rebuilding a green, and you've got yourself one heck of a deal.



Laser level confirms trench grade; sod tamping begins.

Lessons Learned

After completing our first four greens, we discovered that we could forego the drainage on raised knolls, which are never overly saturated. This saved both time and money, since we were able to reduce the total area to be drained by roughly 25 percent.

Another important lesson I learned

was that the composition of the root zone mix must be designed to hold enough nutrients and water to avoid having the trenches wilt during dry weather or appear chlorotic from nutrient deficiency.

The Turf Drain company generally recommends a 60:20:20 mix (sand-loam-peat) for a backfill material, but experience has shown that a root zone mix of these proportions can be a little too droughty. We tried adding 10 percent Axis to the 60:20:20 material, but, unfortunately, we didn't see any measurable benefits from that extra amendment.

What seemed to work best was the mix we used on our test green, which was closer to a 50:50 ratio of sand to peat humus. This type of backfill material drains adequately yet doesn't dry out during hot, dry weather or turn yellow from lack of fertility.

We also found it helpful to avoid



Trench line ready for sod. A trench compaction compensator tool leaves high spot along trench to allow for slight settling.

using a sterile medium by adding fertilizer amendments to the root zone mix, such as Milorganite at 2 lbs. nitrogen/1,000 or a complete analysis fertilizer similar to those used when establishing a new green.

Two Years Later

After observing the drainage at work on our course for the past two years, I'm convinced that—except for completely rebuilding a poorly drained green—this is the best option for resolving drainage issues with an existing green.

It's remarkable how different the greens behave with internal drainage. Besides being healthier and easier to manage, they are generally drier all winter and firm up more quickly in the spring. Within minutes after a heavy downpour, the greens are puddle-free and sufficiently firm for mowing or play.

If you are considering this procedure for your course, don't hesitate to give me a call. I have a detailed printed copy of the entire process—complete with a list of caveats—that I would be happy to fax or send to you.

SCOTT NIVEN, CGCS
The Stanwich Club

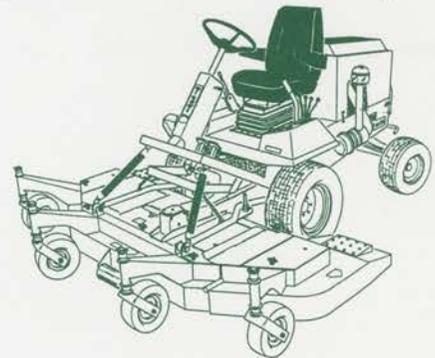


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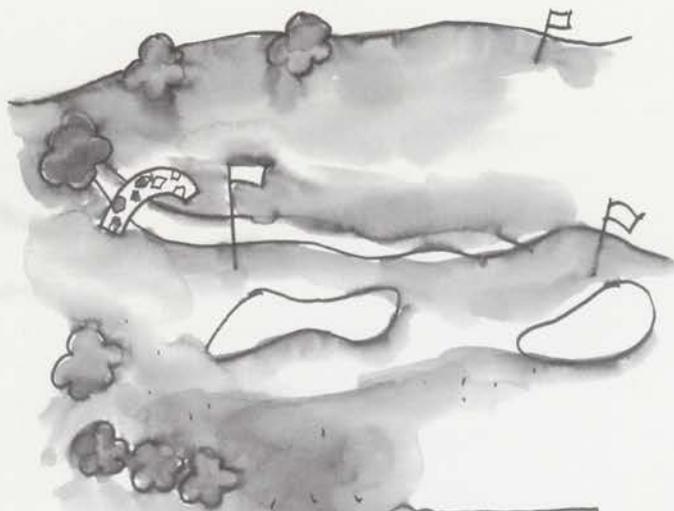


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Social Event

MetGCSA Christmas Party

Sunday, December 19
Ridgeway Country Club, White Plains, NY
Host: Earl Millett
Save the date! Join fellow association members in ringing in the holidays.

Conference

NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition

Tuesday – Thursday, November 9 – 11
OnCenter, Syracuse, NY
NYSTA, in cooperation with Cornell University, will celebrate its 50th year at the annual Turf and Grounds Expo. Its golden anniversary theme is "Committed to Excellence: Plants, People, the Environment, and You." This year's conference will feature more than 60 business and technical sessions addressing all aspects of the green industry.

Well-known and respected speakers from across the country will present conference attendees with a wealth of information. This year's keynote speaker will be Brian Holloway, four-time All-Pro and holder of the NFL record for most consecutive plays from the line of scrimmage.

An expansive trade show with 350 exhibitor booths will bring new technology and innovative ideas to all who attend.

For further information, contact NYSTA at 800-8730-8873 or 518-783-1229.



GCSAA Education Seminars

Maximizing Job Satisfaction

Wednesday, November 17
The Winchester Marriott
Tarrytown, NY
Cosponsored by the MetGCSA and GCSA, this seminar is designed to help you evaluate and work through the gaps in your level of job satisfaction. You'll learn to work systematically to be content and productive and identify job traits that provide you with the greatest—and least—amount of satisfaction.

This seminar is also offered on Monday, December 6 in Atlantic City, NJ.

Bentgrass Summer Stress Management for Cool/Humid Regions

Wednesday, December 1
Berlin, CT

Problems and Solutions: Using Annuals and Perennials in the Golfscape

Thursday, December 2
Berlin, CT

Contact the GCSAA Education Department at 800-472-7878, ext. 650 to register or for further details on seminar locations and times.

Recertification Seminars

Using Pesticides Legally & Safely

Run by Pesticide Training & Consulting company, this recertification program is designed for commercial and private pesticide applicators. Among the topics covered: Record-keeping and annual reports for certified applicators and registered businesses; preventing environmental damage; rules and regulations, including new certification requirements; handling pesticides safely; the why and how of IPM.

You'll find this seminar at the following nearby locations:

Holiday Inn, Rockville Centre, NY
516-678-1300
Thursday, December 16

Brooklyn Botanical Garden, Brooklyn, NY
718-623-7200, ext. 7227
Friday, December 17

Holiday Inn, Kingston, NY
914-338-0400
Tuesday, January 18, 2000

Holiday Inn, Newburgh, NY
914-564-9020
Wednesday, January 19, 2000

Ramada, Elmsford, NY
914-592-3300
Thursday, January 20, 2000

Integrated Pest Management

Run by Pesticide Training & Consulting company, this recertification program will cover such topics as why and how to set up an IPM plan; alternative pest controls; identifying a variety of pest and plant problems; protecting water quality; landscaping to minimize pest problems.

You'll find this seminar at the following nearby locations:

Douglaston Manor, Douglaston, NY
718-224-8787
Tuesday, December 14

Holiday Inn, Plainview, NY
516-349-1240
Wednesday, December 15

Best Western, Poughkeepsie, NY
914-462-4600
Tuesday, January 25, 2000

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Winning Results in Anglebrook's Two-Man, Better Ball

A full field of participants enjoyed playing Anglebrook September 14, one of the newest courses in the Met area. Special thanks to Lou Quick and the hard-working staff at Anglebrook Golf Club for making our September meeting such a great success. Here's the outcome of our Two-Man, Better Ball:

Gross Winners

72 Earl Millett, *Ridgeway CC*
Scott Schukraft, *Huntsville GC*

74 Scott Niven, *The Stanwich Club*
Larry Pakkala, *Woodway CC*

Net Winners

64 Matt Heideman, *Lakeover Nat'l*
Wess Perrine, *Schofield Industries*
(won in match of cards)

64 Greg Moran, *Lesco, Inc.*
John Rizza, *Turf Partners, Inc.*
(won in match of cards)

Longest Drive

Ernie Steinhoffer, *Lesco, Inc.*
PAT SISK
Country Club of Fairfield

Nearest to the Pin

Matt Severino, *Scarsdale GC* 4'1"

Sunningdale Takes Super/Green Chairman Tourney

It was a treat to return, September 28, to Wykagyl and see how the golf course has evolved over the past 10 years. Special thanks to Host Superintendent Steve Renzetti, PGA Pro Mark Wanser, and Food and Beverage Director Brett Morris for making the Superintendent/Green Chairman Tourney such a great success.

Congratulations to the Sunningdale team, who earned low gross with a 76. Here are the other big wins of the day:



Gross Winners

76 Sean Cain/B. Kenny
Sunningdale CC

78 Pat Sisk/N. Foote
CC of Fairfield

Net Winners

67 Bill Perlee/S. Delaney
The Apawamis Club

68 Dave Mahoney/T. Pizzo
Siwanoy CC

70 Steve Sweet/B. Goldstein
Mill River Club

Longest Drive

Superintendent: Bert Dickinson,
Willow Ridge CC
Green Chairman: George Dalzell,
Minisceongo GC
PAT SISK
Country Club of Fairfield

Nearest to the Pin

Asst. Superintendent: Grover Alexander,
Wykagyl CC 7'
Green Chairman: Steve Delaney,
The Apawamis Club 17'

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