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Tee To Green

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President's Message



No Time Is a Good Time



his time of year, many facilities share a common challenge: early morning golfers chasing behind green cutters. These players excuse themselves, saying, "We don't care if the greens are cut or not, and we'll watch out for your workers," as their ball cuts a line through the dew on an uncut green.

Few people stop to think that we are the only sports industry in the world that maintains the playing surface while people are actually playing on it. Have you ever seen a Zamboni out on the ice during a hockey game? Or a mowing crew out on a football field during halftime? Of course not. That would be ridiculous!

Yet, unless there's a tournament, we prepare our golf course for play in the middle of play, seven days a week. And as we superintendents know, this is a tremendous task.

I've been asked many times, "Isn't there a better time to do this?" only to respond, "No time is a good time."

So Little Time, So Much to Do . . . Everyday

So few golfers realize how little time is available for us to work on our courses. Aside from the obvious limitation—number of daylight hours—there are the local noise ordinances that delay the start time of work—sometimes until 9 or 10 a.m.

So there we are, time and again, in the middle of play trying to complete our daily maintenance regimes. We try our best to work around golfers' tee times, but there are so many times this just can't be done. On a hot summer day, for instance, how can we hand-water greens and avoid getting in the way when there are foursomes on every green, tee, or fairway?

Though we stress that workers be polite, work into play, idle down machinery when golfers are nearby, how many times does a utility vehicle loaded with crew members and tools rattle by in the middle of someone's backswing?

Sure, it's annoying. Like it's annoying to us when we're driving home from work and we're forced to wait for a highway crew to make a repair. But all of it's necessary. And all of it's unavoidable.



Will Heintz
MetGCSA President

Finding the Best Time for Best Management Practices

Closing the golf course to accomplish vital best management practices—aerifying, spiking, hydrojecting, topdressing, pest management—has also become increasingly difficult. Understandably, with growing economic pressures, clubs are clamoring to schedule more events and outings that generate income. Unfortunately, it's usually at the expense of one or more of our cultural practices.

The result: We end up applying Band-Aids, putting out fires, and half completing tasks. Inconsistent scheduling and lack of continuity in management practices puts our reputation as responsible turf managers on the line—and the long-term health and welfare of our turf at risk. More often than not, that results in poor playing conditions and a disappointed clientele.

Your Best Defense

All this is to say that your best line of defense—and your responsibility, really, as a turf manager—is to develop a plan to secure the support of the management team at your facility. Make a strong and logical case for having the course closed for a half—or better, one whole—day a week so that you can establish continuity in your management practices. Explain that if you're forced to skip or shortcut any part of your program, it will be impossible to maintain the turf quality you expect for the course—and your members deserve.

Best regards for the season,

Will Heintz
President

Weeding Through the Bentgrass Options

by Dr. Stacy A. Bonos, Rutgers University

Which Bentgrass Is Right for My Course?

When getting down to selecting a bentgrass for your course, it helps to first become thoroughly acquainted with your options. After that, it's up to you to ask yourself some important questions: Is it a good choice for our climate in this part of the country? Does it work for my budget? Will it stand up to our management practices? Is it resistant to diseases most prevalent on my course? And the list goes on, depending on your preferences for various agronomic traits.

The tables, on the following page, attempt to categorize some of the more popular bentgrass cultivars with respect to tiller density, leaf texture, and disease resistance. Data for these tables was obtained from turf quality and disease evaluations of bentgrass cultivars tested at Rutgers University and through the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP).

Here's a quick take on how some of the bentgrasses fared in these tables:

Shoot Density: The Highs and Lows

In general, the cultivars with higher shoot density will respond better to more rigorous management regimens, such as aerification and topdressing. Cultivars with higher shoot density also tend to compete better with *Poa annua* than cultivars with low shoot density.

Some of the newer bentgrass cultivars with high shoot density include:

- the creeping bentgrass cultivars Penn A-1, Penn A-4, Century, Penn G-2, Penn G-6, and Declaration
- the velvet bentgrasses SR 7200 and Greenwich

Among the cultivars with lower shoot density are Penncross, 18th Green, and Cobra (Table 1).

Leaf Texture

Leaf texture and shoot density are generally highly correlated. If a grass has high shoot density, it normally also has finer leaf texture. It's not surprising, then, that the velvet bentgrasses are considered to have very fine leaf texture, while cultivars with poor shoot density—such as Penncross, Putter, and Pennlinks—have a coarser leaf texture (Table 2).

Keeping Disease at Bay

Every superintendent these days is interested in growing a grass that will perform well with as few pesticide applications as possible. Selecting a disease-resistant cultivar, however, is tricky business, since a grass's ability to resist disease will vary with environmental conditions present at a particular location. Disease pressure may be severe in some locations and almost nonexistent in others.

For superintendents in the Northeast, however, several cultivars have been identified as providing good resistance to dollar spot and brown patch—two particularly problematic

*T*oday, with the near-dizzying array of bentgrass cultivars under development and on the market, choosing the right bentgrass for your golf course can be intimidating, at best. One misstep, and you're stuck with a stand of turf that may be not only inappropriate for your budget, long-term, but also your turf management practices.

To help you weed through the myriad bentgrass options available to you, Dr. Stacy Bonos of Rutgers University offers

us an in-depth look at the characteristics—and pros and cons—of the various bentgrass cultivars you have to choose from.

For a complete understanding of bentgrass breeding and options, please be sure to read the accompanying piece, "Bentgrass Breeding From the Beginning." In this piece, Dr. Bonos offers a thorough account of the many cultivars—old and new—on the market today.

Table 1. Bentgrass Cultivar Classification of Putting Green Densities

Very High*	High	Moderately High	Moderate	Low
Penn A-1	L-93	Crenshaw	Penneagle	18th Green
Penn A-4	Southshore	Cato	Pennlinks	Viper
Penn A-2	Independence	SR 1020	Providence	Cobra
Century	13M	SR 1119		Putter
Penn G-1	Imperial	Backspin		Procup
Penn G-2	Penneagle II			Seaside
Penn G-6	Bengal			Mariner
Declaration	Kingpin			Trueline
007	Benchmark DSR			Penncross
Shark	Memorial			
Alpha				
T-1				
SR 7200				
Greenwich				

Table 2. Bentgrass Cultivar Classification of Leaf Texture

Very Fine*	Fine	Medium-Fine	Medium-Coarse	Coarse
SR 7200	Penn A-1	L-93	Crenshaw	Pennlinks
Greenwich	Penn A-4	Imperial	Providence	Putter
	Penn A-2	Independence	SR 1020	Procup
	Century	Pennlinks II	SR 1119	Penncross
	Penn G-1	Penneagle II	Southshore	Trueline
	Penn G-2	Bengal		Backspin
	Penn G-6	T-1		Seaside
	Declaration	13M		Princeville
	Shark	Kingpin		
	007	Alpha		
		Benchmark		
		DSR		
		Memorial		

Table 3. Bentgrass Cultivar Classification of Dollar Spot Resistance

Most Resistant*	Moderately Resistant	Moderately Susceptible	Highly Susceptible
Declaration	Penncross	Providence	Crenshaw
Kingpin	Pennlinks	Southshore	Imperial
Benchmark DSR	L-93	Penn A-4	Independence
13M	Penn A-1	Penn G-1	Century
007	Penn A-2	Penn G-2	SR 1020
Pennlinks II	Seaside	Penn G-6	
Memorial		SR 1119	
SR 7200		Shark	
Greenwich		Alpha	
		Bengal	
		Penneagle II	
		T-1	

Table 4. Bentgrass Cultivar Classification of Brown Patch Resistance

Most Resistant*	Moderately Resistant	Moderately Susceptible	Highly Susceptible
Penn G-6	Declaration	Penncross	Penn A-1
Shark	Century	Penn A-2	Mariner
SRX 1GPD	SR 1020	Providence	Seaside
Penneagle II	Penn G-1	L-93	Cato
SR 7200	Southshore	Penn G-2	
Greenwich	Crenshaw	SR 1119	
	Pennlinks	Princeville	
	Imperial	Benchmark DSR	
	007	13M	
	Kingpin	Penn A-4	
	Pennlinks II	Bengal	
	Independence		
	Alpha		
	T-1		
	Memorial		

* Data for classification was obtained from the 1998 and 2003 National Turfgrass Evaluation Program's National Bentgrass Trials (www.ntep.org) and bentgrass evaluation trials conducted at Rutgers University from 2001 through 2004 and presented in Rutgers Turfgrass Proceedings (www.turf.rutgers.edu).

diseases for golf courses in this part of the country.

- *Dollar spot resistance.* Cultivars identified for their ability to resist dollar spot include the creeping bentgrasses Declaration, Kingpin, and Benchmark DSR and the velvet bentgrasses SR 7200 and Greenwich (Table 3).

Cultivars that are consistently susceptible to dollar spot across several locations include Crenshaw, Imperial, Century, and Independence. Penncross has moderate resistance to dollar spot disease.

- *Brown patch resistance.* Cultivars that have exhibited good resistance to brown patch, which in the Northeast tends to rear its ugly head in July and August, include Shark and Penn G-6. Susceptible cultivars include Penncross, Mariner, Penn A-1, and Seaside (Table 4).

If You're Involved in New Construction

Let's face it, with the advent of plant breeding techniques, new cultivars, for the most part, have marked improvements in many agronomic traits over older cultivars.

It only makes sense, then, that new golf courses or renovated holes on established golf courses should make use of the new-and-improved cultivars, such as L-93, Declaration, 007, Penn A-1, Penn A-4, Penn A-2, Penn G-2, Penn G-6, SR 1119, and Shark.

Older cultivars—e.g., Penncross, Penneagle, Mariner, Imperial, 18th Green, Trueline, Putter, Procup, Backspin, Seaside, Cobra, and Viper—are not recommended for new construction because of the lack of tiller density and disease susceptibility.

In the End

When it comes down to it, cultivar choice depends on maintenance budget and particular management efforts, which are different at every golf course. Before settling on a bentgrass variety—old or new—it's worth your time to study the NTEP bentgrass evaluation trials for particular strengths and weaknesses that may be important for the specific use. Check the NTEP website at www.ntep.org

Dr. Stacy Bonos is an assistant professor of turfgrass breeding and genetics in the Department of Plant Biology and Pathology at Rutgers University. She leads the bentgrass breeding program at Rutgers University and is also working to understand the genetics of disease resistance in turfgrasses.

Bentgrass Breeding From the Beginning

by Dr. Stacy A. Bonos, Rutgers University

Bentgrass breeding is as old as the hills—well almost. It all began in the early 1900s with the efforts of three researchers—D.V. Piper, R.A. Oakley, and Lyman Carrier—who worked long and hard to identify high-quality strains of creeping bentgrass for use on putting greens.

Over the past century, much has been done to refine the early strains of bentgrass and the methods of cultivation. What follows is a detailed account of how bentgrass began—and how far it has grown.

The C-Series Comes and Goes

The first bentgrass seed source came from Europe. It was known as a south German mixed bent and included a combination of colonial, velvet, redtop, and creeping bentgrasses.

As you might expect, this mix didn't perform exceedingly well because the individual plants in this stand began to segregate and, as a result, did not perform consistently over time.

After examining the performance of this mix on older greens, researchers Piper, Oakley, and Carrier did note circular patches of creeping bentgrass, which had distinctly different color, fineness of leaf blade, density of turf, among other qualities. It was then that they realized that an entire green or whole golf courses could be planted with a uniform turf originating from a single plant.

They collected the vegetative clones with superior quality, improved disease resistance, and stress tolerance and began comparing

and evaluating them for important agronomic characteristics. After evaluating some of the best of these selections on golf courses across the country, the most promising strains were given names and released. In 1922, the C-series of bentgrasses was born, with Washington (C-50), Metropolitan (C-51), Arlington (C-1), Congressional (C-19), Collins (C-27), Cohansey (C-7), and Toronto (C-15) among them. All of these cultivars were individual clones that maintained uniform putting surfaces but had to be established vegetatively.

During the early 1920s, researchers did experiment with some seeded varieties of bentgrass—with the cultivar Seaside among the first. These, however, also did not produce a uniform stand and were inconsistent over time. It wasn't until 1954 that a truly successful seeded cultivar was developed. Thanks to the superior breeding work of Dr. H.B. Musser of Penn State University, Penncross was released to the market. This variety provided consistent performance and also added the ease of establishment from seed. These attributes allowed Penncross to replace the C-series vegetative bents and remained the industry standard for decades.

Demands Escalate, Breeders Respond

Needless to say, after the release of Penncross, the golf and golf course maintenance industries began to change. Improved golfing equipment—clubs and balls—and improved turf management equipment—mowers, top-dressers, and verticutters—began to drive the

need for improved cultivars.

Turfgrass breeders rose to the challenge by accelerating bentgrass breeding efforts. Researchers such as Drs. Ralph Engel and Reed Funk at Rutgers University, Dr. Richard Skogley at University of Rhode Island, Dr. Joseph Duich at Penn State University, Dr. Milt Engelke at Texas A&M, Dr. Leah Brilman at Seed Research of Oregon, and other breeders improved the efficiency of population improvement and seed production for the bentgrasses.

These breeding efforts resulted in a number of new cultivars being made available to golf course superintendents during the late 1970s and '80s. Among them: Penneagle (1979 by Penn State), Pennlinks (1986 by Penn State), Cobra (1987 by Rutgers), SR 1020 (1987 by U. of Arizona), Providence (1988 by URI), and Putter (1989 by Washington State).

New Breeds of the '90s

During the 1990s, bentgrass breeders also began evaluating the potential of other bentgrass species for use on golf courses. Among them: colonial bentgrass and velvet bentgrass.

- *Colonial bentgrass*, traditionally used as a lawn grass in northern Europe and New Zealand, showed potential for golf course fairways and tees. It generally has better dollar spot resistance than creeping bentgrass and can maintain good quality under low fertility. However, the use of colonial bentgrass is limited due to its high susceptibility to brown patch disease in the humid temperate regions of the U.S. An improved colonial bentgrass



The first step in breeding for disease resistance is to collect germplasm and then evaluate it for resistance. Plant collections are inoculated with the dollar spot fungus. After the disease develops individual clones with improved resistance are selected.

The clones with similar growth habit and agronomic traits are moved to isolated crossing blocks and interpollinated.



cultivar, SR 7100, was selected from the variety Bardot and released by Seed Research of Oregon.

- *Velvet bentgrass* is a species that has strong potential for use on fairways and putting greens in some parts of the U.S., but especially in the Northeast. Velvet bentgrass is the densest of the bentgrasses used for turf. When well-managed, a stand of this grass resembles a green velvet carpet.

Velvet bentgrass generally has better dollar spot resistance than creeping bentgrass and can also perform better under shade and drought stress conditions. This species, however, does not seem to perform well in all areas of the U.S., including the Midwest region. Some reasons proposed for the lack of success in these areas include sensitivity of this grass to high pH and susceptibility to a root Pythium disease in the seedling stage, which hinders establishment.

These questions are the topic of current research projects. SR 7200 velvet bentgrass was released jointly by URI/Seed Research of Oregon in the early 1990s and was developed from four clones selected from extensive collections from the Northeast.

Breeding: An Exact Science

Bentgrass breeders typically use a breeding method called population improvement and recurrent selection to develop improved bentgrass cultivars. This process involves selection for improved traits—such as high shoot density, low prostrate growth habit, freedom from disease, aggressive lateral spread—for a number of generations. Each cycle of selection builds on the previous cycles, resulting in new cultivars that are considerably better in those traits compared to older cultivars.

As an example, cultivars released in the 1990s were improvements over those released in the 1980s:

- SR 1119 was developed from the progeny of five clones selected out of Providence (SR 1019).
- Century (Syn92-1) is a six-clone synthetic drawn from Italian, French, and Texan collections and the cultivar Cato.

- L-93 was developed by selecting 15 superior plants, which were collected from old golf courses in New Jersey, New York, California, Arizona, and Pennsylvania.

- The A and G Series developed by Dr. Joe Duich at Penn State University were also developed in the 1990s. Penn A-1 was selected from one clone out of eight (A-Series) segregating patches at Augusta National main course in 1984.

- Penn G-2 was selected from one clone collected from the Par 3 course at Augusta National, which was originally seeded to Penneagle.

These newer cultivars showed marked improvements over older cultivars due to the advent of recurrent selection. They have higher shoot densities, respond better to increased management and cultural practices, and for the most part, maintain better disease and pest tolerance.

Taking Disease Resistance to the Next Level

More recently, since the year 2000, bentgrass breeders at Rutgers University have focused their efforts on developing creeping bentgrass cultivars with improved disease resistance:

- Declaration, released in 2003, was developed from eight clones selected for improved dollar spot resistance from collections on old golf courses in the Northeast.

- Kingpin was developed from six clones selected for improved dollar spot resistance and dark green color from putting green collections in Arizona.

In addition, turfgrass breeders at universities and private companies have also developed several new colonial and velvet bentgrass cultivars in the past several years:

- Among the velvet bentgrasses are Greenwich, Vesper, and Legendary
- Among the colonial bentgrasses are Glory, Tiger II, and Revere.

Most of these new varieties are currently being evaluated in the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program Putting Green and Fairway Trials.

What Has Rutgers Been Up To?

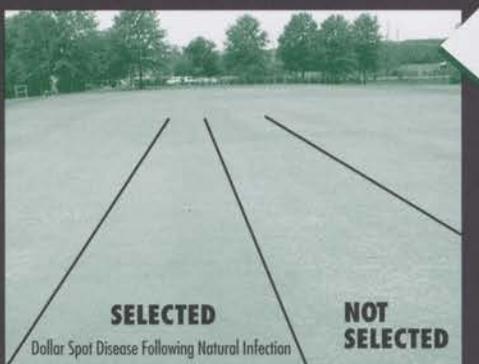
Rutgers has been instrumental in developing many of the newer disease-resistant bentgrass strains—particularly for dollar spot. This has been a prime focus at the university, mainly because it is such a widespread problem throughout the country. Efforts have paid off with the release of several new bentgrasses—Declaration, among them.

Of course, the concerted effort to breed dollar spot-resistant turf doesn't mean Rutgers researchers are slighting other diseases. In fact, evaluation and selection for resistance to such diseases as brown patch and anthracnose is currently underway. The hope is to combine multiple disease-resistant sources.

The Rutgers breeding program is also interested in improving creeping bentgrass to better tolerate traffic and low mowing, and it is emphasizing the improvement of colonial and velvet bentgrass. Many varieties of colonial bentgrass have improved dollar spot resistance but are susceptible to brown patch disease. Breeding for improved brown patch resistance is a major objective in this species.

Velvet bentgrass has many positive attributes; however, it also has several weaknesses. Improved Pythium resistance, copper spot disease resistance, and winter color are among the traits targeted for improvement.

So what is ahead at Rutgers? The hope for the future is to develop new bentgrasses that combine multiple disease resistance with other important agronomic characteristics. Rutgers is also in the process of developing salt-tolerant grasses that can tolerate irrigation with effluent/salt water. Ultimately, university researchers hope to develop grasses that perform as well—or better—with lower quantities of pesticides, fertilizer, and even water.



Seed is then harvested individually from each plant and established in turf plots.

Equal amounts of seed from each crossing block are also combined to develop composites that are planted in replicated turf plots and compared to standard cultivars. The experimental composites selected for dollar spot resistance showed improved resistance over standard cultivars of creeping bentgrass in a trial established in 2002. Several of those experimental composites—Declaration, among them—have been released and are commercially available.



Top Plays in the Rolling Hills Superintendent/Manager Tourney

Despite being the third coldest May in history, sunshine and blue skies greeted MetGCSA supers and their managers at the annual Superintendent/Manager Tournament at Rolling Hills Country Club in Wilton, CT.

It was obvious that our meeting host, Glenn Perry, has been busy. After three years of major renovations and more to come, the golf course was in perfect condition. If you haven't played Rolling Hills, you should. It's well worth a visit.

Many thanks to Glenn and the entire Rolling Hills staff for a great day. Here are the tournament results:

Superintendent/Manager Teams

First Low Gross

82 Tim O'Neill/Ken Koch
Country Club of Darien
(won in a match of cards)

Second Low Gross

82 Scott Niven/Peter Tunley
The Stanwich Club

First Low Net

83 Bob Alonzi/Steve Arias
Fenway Golf Club
(won in a match of cards)

Second Low Net

83 Glenn Perry/Jeff Jones
Rolling Hills Country Club

MetGCSA Member Teams

Low Gross

69 Andy Drohen, *Pursell Technologies*
Joe Stahl, *Harrells Turf Specialty*

Low Net

63 Tom Leahy
Sleepy Hollow Country Club
Tony Grasso
Metropolis Country Club

— Chuck Denny

Two-Ball Qualifier Hotly Contested at Trump National

We all knew that our Two-Ball qualifying venue this year would be a true test of golf, but I think it even surpassed those expectations. Trump National Golf Club is now home to many new golf balls—courtesy of our Met membership. Only one player broke 80, and I would venture to guess that several people shot over 100 who had never done so before. I suppose this is why the rating and slope are one of the highest in the Met area!

A great day was had by all, considering it was snowing during registration and it sleeted during the round. EGolf Score was on hand to provide electronic scoring and up-to-the-minute leader boards in each foursome, which added excitement throughout the day.

About the Two-Ball

Earning the top score was the team of Andy Drohen and Joe Stahl with a Gross 72 (yes, that means Andy shot 72 on his own ball). Second gross went to the team of Earl Millett and Jud Smith with a 79.

In the Net division, we had an early scare with the team of Mike Scott and Kevin Seibel as coincidentally they were playing as a twosome and had an early three-shot lead on the front nine. I guess the hazing (accusations of cheating) from all the other foursomes finally got to them as they fell back to a tie for first place and finished in second place on a match of cards with a Net 67. Taking the honors in the Net division was the team of Greg Wojick and Mike Reeb also with a Net 67, and placing third were Jim Calladio and Mark Fuller.

Trump National is home to some difficult Par 3s, but as usual, Earl Millett's great ball striking got him not one, but two awards for Closest to the Pin. The others were won by David Fleury and the iron man, Mr. Fred Scheyhing. I hit the long drive of the day—although not the strongest part of my game—by worm burning a low draw out there on the down slope.

Good Turnout, Great Day

This was one of our largest turnouts in recent years for this event as there were 39 twosomes vying for 32 Two-Ball qualifying positions. In addition, there were nine more twosomes playing in the day's event, totaling 96 players.

Once again, we are having two flights with the winners of last year's event being awarded the #1 position. I can't wait to see who is going to be the sleeper team this year. Last year, the winners were from the 5th position (1st flight) and 14th position (2nd flight), so you just never know who is going to get hot.

I want to again thank Trump National Golf Club and the staff for hosting the 2005 MetGCSA Two-Ball Qualifier. Everything "up top" was wonderful, and Mike Samol had the golf course in perfect shape. Thank you for being such a gracious host!

Please look for updates on the golf matches on the Met website—METGCSA.org—under "Met Events."

Two-Ball Qualifier Results

Here's the lineup of Two-Ball Qualifiers, along with their first-round match assignments, which are well underway:

First Flight

- 1) Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
Oak Hills Park GC/Brae Burn CC
vs.
- 16) Matt Ceplo/Jim Swiatowski
Rockland CC/Montammy GC
- 8) Bert Dickinson/Chip Lafferty
Willow Ridge CC/Rye GC
vs.
- 9) John Genovesi/Eric O'Neill
Island Hills GC/Towers CC
- 5) Scott Niven/Larry Pakkala
The Stanwich Club/Woodway CC
vs.
- 12) Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera
Metropolis CC/Metro Turf Specialists
- 4) Grover Alexander/Dave Dudones
Hudson Hills GC/North Jersey CC
vs.
- 13) John Currie/Chris Smith
Currie Landscaping/Hudson National GC
- 6) Rich Browne/Glenn Gallion
Garrison GC/Wilfred MacDonald
vs.
- 11) Sean Cain/Jeff Wentworth
Sunningdale CC/Pelham CC
- 3) Earl Millett/Jud Smith
Ridgeway CC/Orange Hills CC
vs.
- 14) Tony Girardi/Rick Schock
Rockrimmon CC/Turf Products Corp.
- 7) David Fleury/Glenn Perry
The Roger Rulewich Group/Rolling Hills CC
vs.
- 10) Brian Benedict/Bob Lippman Jr.
Seawane Club/Westchester Turf Supply
- 2) John Barlock/Chad Esposito
Class AF member/Highland GC
vs.
- 15) Chuck Denny/Will Heintz
Salem GC/Centennial GC

Second Flight

- 1) Bob Johnston/Matt Severino
Lake Success GC/Scarsdale GC
vs.
- 16) Scott Ferguson/Tom Weinert
Mahopac GC/Plant Food Company
- 8) Kevin Quist/Charlie Siemers
Lake Isle CC/Lesco, Inc.
vs.
- 9) Tom Leahy/Mark Millett
Sleepy Hollow CC/Old Oaks CC
- 5) Tony Campanella/Bill Middleton
Hampshire CC/Emerald Isle, Ltd.
vs.
- 12) Scott Apgar/Bobby Steinman
Metro Turf Specialists/Beekman CC
- 4) Jim Calladio/Mark Fuller
Milbrook Club/Connecticut GC
vs.
- 13) Bob Alonzi/Joe Alonzi
Fenway GC/Westchester CC
- 6) Kevin Collins/Nick Lerner
Aquatrols Corp./Bonnie Briar CC
vs.
- 11) John Wickes/Jason Ziesmer
Ira Wickes-Arborists/Minisceongo GC
- 3) Mike Scott/Kevin Seibel
Wykagyl CC/Century CC
vs.
- 14) Gary Arlio/Bob DeMarco
Seeton Turf Warehouse/The Powelton Club
- 7) Dennis Flynn/Peter Rappoccio
D & D Construction/Silver Spring CC
vs.
- 10) Joe Kennedy/Peter Waterous
Ira-Tech/Westchester Hills GC
- 2) Mike Reeb/Greg Wojick
CC of New Canaan/Greenwich CC
vs.
- 15) Chuck Martineau/Fred Scheyhing
Whippoorwill Club/Mt. Kisco CC

All matches should be completed by the following dates:

- Match 1 ~ June 16
- Match 2 ~ July 27
- Match 3 ~ August 29
- Final ~ September 30

Event of the Day Results

First Low Gross

Andy Drohen/Joe Stahl 72
Pursell Technologies/Harrells Turf Specialty

Second Low Gross

Earl Millett/Jud Smith 79
Ridgeway CC/Orange Hills CC
(won in a match of cards)

First Low Net

Mike Reeb/Greg Wojick 67
CC of New Canaan/Greenwich CC
(won in a match of cards)

Second Low Net

Mike Scott/Kevin Seibel 67
Wykagyl CC/Century CC
(won in a match of cards)

Third Low Net

Jim Calladio/Mark Fuller 68
Milbrook Club/Connecticut GC
(won in a match of cards)

Closest to the Pin

David Fleury #6 / 8'4"
The Roger Rulewich Group
Fred Scheyhing #8 / 7'
Mt. Kisco CC
Earl Millett #13 / 11'
Ridgeway CC
Earl Millett #15 / 10'2"
Ridgeway CC

Longest Drive

Blake Halderman, #17
Brae Burn CC

– Blake Halderman, CGCS



The Power of Nature

by Scott Niven, CGCS



F

or most superintendents, as draining as our jobs can be, there's nothing more energizing than standing on one of the golf course's more picturesque holes, in the quiet of the early morning, and enjoying the beauty of the landscape around us. It's that special attraction to nature that draws not only superintendents to a career in golf course management, but also golfers to the game of golf.

In fact, the survey I conducted for *Tee to Green* last year revealed that working outdoors with nature was, in more than 90 percent of the cases, the prime source of job satisfaction for superintendents. Just as telling, surveys of golfer satisfaction conducted by the GCSAA have shown that players enjoy the beauty of the golf course as much, if not more, than their actual round of golf. Further credence to this idea is offered by the Fazio Golf Course Designers group who believes that golfers enjoy looking at beautiful golf holes even more than they enjoy playing them.

Not a lot of Hocus Pocus

All this isn't just a lot of speculation and conjecture. Serious research has been conducted throughout the years to support this theory. Charles Lewis, a horticulturist who was fascinated with the soothing effects of plants on people, spent the last four decades of his life seeking to understand the human connection with nature.

In his research, he discovered that the "special feeling" we get from the great outdoors is part of our genetic makeup, which has evolved within us since ancient times when the human species was just a small part of the natural world, living off the existing plants, soils, water, and air.

In his book, *Green Nature, Human Nature: The Meaning of Plants in Our Lives*, Lewis explains that our early dependence on plants developed a preconditioned affinity toward vegetation and an inborn love of plants. Furthermore, he proposes, our bodies respond favorably when exposed to aesthetic vegetative settings, resulting in a calming, refreshed effect.

This theory was supported in research conducted by Roger Ulrich of the College

of Architecture of Texas A & M University. He designed an experiment in which he showed two groups of volunteers videos of either urban settings (e.g., traffic, malls, buildings) or nature scenes (e.g., trees, ponds, fields) while monitoring their blood pressure, heart rate, sweat gland activity, and muscle tension in their forehead. As you might have guessed, the data showed that the people who viewed the nature scenes were more relaxed.

This new concept has been embraced by city planners and landscape architects who have made extensive use of plantings to breathe new life—and calm—into buildings, institutions, and urban communities throughout our country.

Many psychologists have also capitalized on the positive effects of nature. Charles Lewis's work, for instance, evolved into what has become known as "horticultural

degree of knowledge and horticultural sophistication, their top-rated satisfaction was not growing the most beautiful rose or rarest peony. The most beneficial aspect was described as achieving an inner sense of serenity. More than 60 percent of the respondents gave "peacefulness and tranquility" as their most important reward for gardening.

Bring on That Special Feeling

Now we, as superintendents, can't exactly be considered gardeners. (Although Bob Alonzi has told the story about a female member at Winged Foot who, when looking for him, asked where she could find the "head gardener.") But we certainly do have at our disposal the many gardens and acres of beautiful turf, trees, and aesthetic landscapes we manage.

"When someone grows a plant, you get more than a beautiful plant, you get a beautiful person."

— Charles Lewis, horticulturist

therapy," where gardening is used to rehabilitate and enhance the psychological well-being of individuals in prisons, hospitals, and depressed urban areas.

Another study that further proves the psychological benefits derived from green nature was conducted by the American Horticultural Society (AHS). This group sent out a two-page survey to all its members. A portion of the survey was devoted to determining what members liked most about gardening. Did they, for instance, derive satisfaction from their horticultural achievements by growing new or unusual plants, by actually seeing plants flourish, or because the plants provide them with food?

Surprisingly, 4,297 surveys were returned, and although AHS members have a high

Of course, in the frenzy of trying to keep so many acres of vegetation alive, it frequently becomes, for us, more a source of stress than "peacefulness and tranquility." By knowing the therapeutic benefits of nature, we can try to train ourselves to take our minds off the "to-do" lists as we look around us and focus on enjoying, quite literally, the fruits of our labor—just as our golfing members do.

So, when the demands of the job are getting the best of you, try taking yourself to your favorite spot on the course, and let what horticulturist Charles Lewis refers to as that "special feeling" work its magic.

Scott Niven, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT.

Members on the Move

- **Gary Arlio** has accepted a position with Seeton Turf Warehouse in Maple Shade, NJ. Former position: Superintendent at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

- **Matthew Topazio** is the new superintendent at New York Country Club in New Hempstead, NY. Former position: Assistant superintendent at The Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo Park, NY.

Well Wishes

We'd like to extend our wishes for a speedy recovery to two Met members suffering from congestive heart failure:

- **Ray Beaudry** of Atlantic Irrigation in N. White Plains, NY.

- **Sherwood Moore**, now a Life member of the Met, living in Brewster, MA.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new members:

- **Michael Barton**, Class A, Burning Tree Country Club, Greenwich, CT.

- **Dr. John Kaminski**, Class I, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

- **Kenneth Lochridge**, Class B, Hamlet Golf & Country Club, Commack, NY.

- **Ryan Oliver**, Class C, The Bridge Golf Club, Sag Harbor, NY.

- **Thomas Vorio**, Class C, Pine Orchard Golf & Yacht Club, Branford, CT.

- **Michael Wyant**, Class C, Island Hills Golf Club, Sayville, NY.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to **Earl Millett** of Ridgeway and **Mark Millett** of Old Oaks. Their mother, Janette Millett, passed away the first week of July. Donations can be sent to the American Diabetes Association, in memory of their mother.

Up-to-the-Minute Calendar of Events

Our 2005 Meeting and Social Calendar is nearing completion. But it's not too early to secure a meeting or social event for next year! To host a social event, please call any one of our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs, which include Tom Leahy and Chuck Denny and also Bob Nielsen, who can be reached at 914-234-3779. To book a golf meeting, call either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Tom Leahy at 914-941-8281 or Chuck Denny at 914-669-5959.

Summer Social

Tuesday, August 9
Metropolis Country Club
White Plains, NY
Host: Tony Grasso

Poa Annual Tournament/First Round of Met Championship

Monday, August 15
Oak Hills Park Golf Course
Norwalk, CT
Host: Glen Dube, CGCS

Second Round of Met Championship

Monday, September 19
Connecticut Golf Club
Easton, CT
Host: Mark Fuller, CGCS

Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament

Monday, October 17
Century Country Club, Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel

Annual Assistants Championship

Date & Site OPEN

Met Area Team Championship

Monday, October 24
Aronimink Golf Club, Philadelphia, PA
Host: Henrique Holanda

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, November 9
St. Andrew's Golf Club
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
Host: Rob Alonzi

MetGCSA Christmas Party

December
Date & Site OPEN

Educational Events

The Rutgers Golf & Fine Turf Field Day

Thursday, August 4
Horticultural Farm II, North Brunswick, NJ
Run in cooperation with the New Jersey Turfgrass Association, this field day begins at 8:30 a.m. with registration. Research tours are run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. You'll learn about the latest management techniques for Anthracnose on *Poa annua*, current efforts to convert *Poa* fairways and greens to bentgrass, new bentgrass cultivars for greens and fairways, irrigation management and wetting agent studies on bentgrass, and advances in spray application technology. Preregistration discounts are available before July 22. For further information, contact NJTA Executive Director Michelle Rickard at 215-757-6582.

University of Rhode Island Field Day

Wednesday, August 17
C. Richard Skogley Turfgrass Research Facility, Kingston, RI
The field day will offer the traditional vendor displays, demonstrations, and field tours of research in progress. In addition, there will be three educational seminars offered from 1 to 3 p.m. on managing earthworm castings and black cutworms on golf course turf and on weed identification and weed control tactics.

Fundraising Event

UMass Turf Education Fundraiser

Thursday, October 20
Cape Cod National Golf Club, Brewster, MA
Host: Steve Cadenelli, CGCS
Held for the first time last year, this event raised more than \$60,000 for UMass's Joe Troll Turf Research Center. This year, the UMass Turf Advisory Board is sponsoring this worthy outing in support of the UMass turf program. The cost is \$225 per person, with \$100 of that fee going toward the turf program. You'll have lunch at Cape Cod National and then join fellow golfers at the nearby Wequasset Inn for dinner. As last year, your donation is tax deductible. We hope you'll plan to be there! For more information, call Steve Curry at 413-329-4912.

The Advertising Opportunity You've Been Waiting For!

As promised, *Tee to Green* is now accepting inserts from suppliers interested in advertising their products or services in the center of our publication.

Call Advertising Manager Glenn Perry at 203-762-9484 for further information.

Ridgeway Meeting Offers Educational Opportunity

Earl Millett Brings Met Members Back to Ridgeway

July 20 was the date of the Met's fourth annual Education Meeting, which Ridgeway Country Club Superintendent Earl Millett graciously hosted again this year.

Those who have attended before know that education meetings are all about education (see the box below). There's no golf and little opportunity to view any part of the course—which in this case was an 83-year-old Pete Clark design that Earl has, shall we say, "massaged" over the course of his 25 years at the club.

The Ridgeway clubhouse, where the evening's events took place, was built in 1952—exactly 30 years after the golf course. Interestingly, the course was originally built for the guests of a hotel—the Gedney Farm Hotel—which was located across the street on the grounds of Westchester Hills Country Club, then newly opened.

The Gedney Farm Hotel's course fell on hard times after a fire destroyed the hotel. It changed hands two times before local businessmen bought the course and formed the Ridgeway Country Club, named for the street on which it's located.

The Making of Super Millett

Anyone who's been around the Met area for any length of time knows Ridgeway, and more notably, Earl—if not for his cynical sense of humor, for his leading role in the MetGCSA. Affiliated with the association for more than 30 years, Earl's served on countless committees and devoted 12 years to the board, which culminated in his presidency in '98 and '99.

Add to Earl's list of industry credits his service on the board of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation and his involvement with NYSTA and you might get an inkling of his commitment to the golf industry—and the betterment of the turf we all play on.

"Involvement is key. It offers a tremendous opportunity to swap information and

share concerns—both personal and professional—with people who are in the same boat."

Earl got his start in the industry long ago, back in Turner Falls, MA. That's where he and his superintendent brother, Mark Millett of Old Oaks Country Club, just about grew up on a nine-hole golf course, the Thomas Memorial Golf and Country Club. "I started out there pushing a mower when I was about 12," remembers Earl.

But Earl's real turf lessons began when he was persuaded by his cousin Chuck Martineau, superintendent of Whippoorwill Club, to come down to Armonk and learn the ropes working as a laborer on his crew. Earl worked with Chuck for three years, then in 1978, accepted the assistant's position at Fenway Golf Club, under then superintendent Al Tretera. Earl stayed there until 1980, completing his A.S. in Turfgrass Management from UMass along the way.

"I've always said that I learned how to run a crew from Chuck and how to grow grass from Al," says Earl of his years in training for his first—and present—superintendent's job at Ridgeway Country Club.

There's More to Life . . .

If there's one thing Earl knows and understands, it's that there's more to life than growing grass. Of course, golf—one of Earl's favorite leisure-time activities—comes a little close to his professional pursuit, but for him it's nothing more than fun and games.

"I've competed on just about every Metropolitan New York area course that would have me," he says, "not to mention many of the best courses around the country. That, to me, is one of the major perks of our profession."

Earl also knows the importance of family. He spends as much time as he can with his wife, Donna, of 25 years, and his son, Ian Baker, now 13. Ian, like dad, has a passion for hockey and fishing.



Earl Millett

Speaking of family . . . there's another one Earl values quite a bit—the family of superintendents we're all a part of as members of the MetGCSA.

Education Meeting Topics and Events

Couldn't make it? Here's what you missed:

- 5:00 Peter Hasak, grounds manager at Tedesco Country Club in Marblehead, MA, gave an informative talk titled, *Winter Injury: Are You Prepared?*
- 5:45 Dr. Nathaniel Mitkowski from the University of Rhode Island spoke about *Bacterial Wilt: Winter Injury's Evil Twin*.
- 6:15 The MetGCSA Scholarship and Research Committee awarded 11 scholarships to members' children.
- 6:30 Members conversed over cocktails and a delicious assortment of hors d'oeuvres.

Summer Social Host Promises a Real Good Time

by Bill Perlee

MetGCSA members are invited to kick back—or is it kick up their heels?—at the 2005 MetGCSA Summer Social August 9 at Metropolis Country Club in White Plains, NY.

Though this trip to Metropolis won't offer golfers a chance to appreciate one of the Met area's finest layouts and some of the best conditions anywhere, everyone will still get to take in the club's newly refurbished clubhouse.

Host Tony Grasso promises a special evening of dining and dancing on the terrace overlooking the pool. "We'll definitely have some fun," says Tony. "We always do."

A Bit About Our Host—and Hostess

Tony has been the superintendent at Metropolis for 15 years. But this wasn't his first trip to Metropolis. Early in his career, Tony spent four years at the club working, first, on the summer crew and, then, as a full-time assistant under then superintendent, and later father-in-law, Bruno Vadala.

It was during his early years at Metropolis that Tony began dating Bruno's daughter—now his wife of 25 years—Lucille. Reflecting on his courtship, Tony says, "Dating the boss's daughter wasn't easy. I always felt I had to get her home early because her father didn't want me to be late for work the next day. The problem was, I'd drop her off and then go out again, anyway!"

In and around his early training at Metropolis, Tony gained valuable experience at Mt. Kisco Country Club, Siwanoy—long before the Dave Mahoney era—and in 1981, at Willow Ridge, where he worked as superintendent for 10 years before accepting his current position at Metropolis.

Somewhere in there, Tony managed to get an associate's in turfgrass science from Stockbridge and then a B.S. in plant and soil science from UMass.

In the Business and Lovin' It

Tony clearly loves the profession. No surprise. He's got the turfgrass industry in his blood. On a recent trip to his office, Tony points to a picture of his father, Anthony, John Wistrand, and Rick Apgar that appeared in an old promotional brochure for a company the three worked for more than 45 years ago. It was after that company was sold—sometime in the late '60s—that Tony's father and John Wistrand started Metro Milorganite. They ran the company until they retired in 1991, selling the business to Rick Apgar, who's since passed it on to his son, Scott.

What's more, Tony's brother, Larry, is an assistant at Century in Purchase, NY, and his brother-in-law, Greg Vadala, is the superintendent at Montclair in New Jersey. And then there's Tony's good friend and frequent partner in crime—rather golf—Earl Millett, who is a superintendent at Ridge-way Country Club.

So far, none of Tony and Lucille's children have opted to carry on the turfgrass tradition. Their eldest son, Anthony, graduated from Central Connecticut State College last year with a major in theater. He's now working as a concierge in Orlando at the Walt Disney Polynesian Resort, hoping, eventually, to break into show business. Their daughter, Katie, is an education major in her sophomore year at Keene State in New Hampshire, and their 12-year-old son, Joe . . . well, it's too early to tell. Right now, what he seems to enjoy most is playing lacrosse—and Tony probably enjoys watching him play even more. "I love hanging out with him and going to his games," Tony says, realizing all too well just how soon he, too, will be grown and on his own.

The Talents of Tony

Dedicated dad, dedicated golf course superintendent . . . add to that list talented storyteller.

Tony's always got a story. On a quick tour of the course, he was true to form. First, it was about an area on the fairway where a young deer had run in circles, leaving hoof prints in the rain-softened turf. Then, my being a former Sleepy Hollow employee



Tony Grasso

brought to mind the story then Superintendent Joe Camberato had told Tony about horses escaping from the club's stables and romping on the greens. I, of course, immediately identified with the story, since I was one of the guys Joe assigned to clean up the mess.

Then that led to a story about Tony's Willow Ridge days, when a neighbor's horse would break free and tear up a green from time to time. Tony explained how he asked Joe what he would do about the problem and Joe explained that he'd either charge the neighbors to build a huge fence or charge them for the cost of repairing the damage. Tony's next question to Joe: "Well how much do you charge?" Joe said \$3.50 a hoof print: That's for the seed and the labor costs. (Obviously, that figure was from a few years ago!)

When we got back to his office, the New York sports memorabilia he has on display—the Yankee hat, in particular—sparked a final story: "I recently scolded a golfer for hitting off the grass at the practice tee when everyone else was using the mats," he remembers smiling. "It took me a few minutes, but then I realized it was a current starting pitcher for the Yanks!"

Along with the Yankee hat in his office, Tony also has quite a collection of ball mark repair tools and MetGCSA trophies on display. No wonder. Right up there with his job as superintendent is Tony's interest in golf.

A solid golfer, Tony battled back from an arm injury to regain his old form. "Well not quite," he's quick to note. "But I can still hit it."

He won't be able to prove it at this event, but we'll keep an eye on him anyway.

Bill Perlee, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY.

Glen Dube to Host Dual Event at Oak Hills

by Greg Wójcik, CGCS

Our Education chairman, Glen Dube, will be hosting not only the Met Championship's first round, but also this year's Poa Annual Tournament on August 15. The site of this dual competition: Oak Hills Golf Course in Norwalk, CT.

Glen, who added CGCS to his name in 2003, has been the superintendent at Oak Hills for the past seven years. During his tenure, Glen's not only provided public golfers in the Norwalk area with great playing conditions, he's also been the catalyst for many improvements to the 36-year-old course.

There's the major tree removal project Glen initiated in 2003, where he secured the go-ahead to free the grounds of at least 200 turf-hampering trees. Around the same time, he and his staff also worked to expose attractive bedrock, and rid the course of round-slowng underbrush.

"Not long after I got here—in 2000 and 2001," says Glen, "we also installed a badly needed new irrigation system and corrected serious drainage problems on seven of our greens."

There have been bunker renovation projects and more drainage work, as well as a major, in-house landscaping effort around Oak Hill's brand-new clubhouse, which boasts enough space inside for 140 guests and an additional 70 on the deck.

The Challenges of Public Course Work

What does Glen think about his time at Oak Hills so far? "I came to Oak Hills with upper-tier country club experience," he says. "That was my paradigm. When I got here, I was faced with half the staff, about half the budget, and twice the rounds, and I still had to meet high player expectations.

"Take last weekend. . . . Over the course of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, we had 900 rounds of golf. I'm doing the job with 10 workers, five of them year-round. And I still have to deal with the same politics you get at private clubs—with a slightly different twist.

"Needless to say," adds Glen, "I quickly learned how to survive the limitations and constraints of working on a public course. I feel that if I can produce quality turf conditions here, I can produce quality turf anywhere."

Glen's training ground was varied. He spent his early years as an intern at Muirfield Village in Dublin, OH, at TPC at River Highlands in Cromwell, CT, and at the Country Club of Darien. His last stop before Oak Hills was Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT, where he worked as an assistant to Peter Rappoccio for three seasons. Glen also boasts a B.S. in turfgrass management from the University of Rhode Island, which he completed in 1995.

What Every Player Should Know

Oak Hills, designed by Golf Course Architect Alfred Tull, opened for play in 1969. Its 18-hole layout offers many interesting and challenging holes. "The first seven holes are very tight," explains Glen. "Holes 2, 3, 5, and 6 have water hazards, so I advise keeping your driver in the bag until you get to hole #8."

Holes 8 through 12 are much more open, but then the course finishes tight again. "The Par 3 15th is probably our signature hole," adds Glen. "It's 235 yards long from the 'tips' and has a false front that fools many golfers. Overall, the course is short at 6,300 yards, so accuracy is paramount."



Glen Dube, CGCS

Glen Behind the Scenes

Glen's commitment to the profession is manifested in his devoted service to the MetGCSA having served on numerous committees, including Tournament, Communications, Social, and Government Relations. Most recently, he's assumed the reigns for the Education Committee.

When he's not worrying about the welfare of the association—or his course—you might find Glen wielding a fishing rod or golf club or, better, enjoying time with his wife, Erica, of three years and their 2 1/2-year-old daughter, Madison.

Greg Wójcik, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Greenwich Country Club in Greenwich, CT.

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