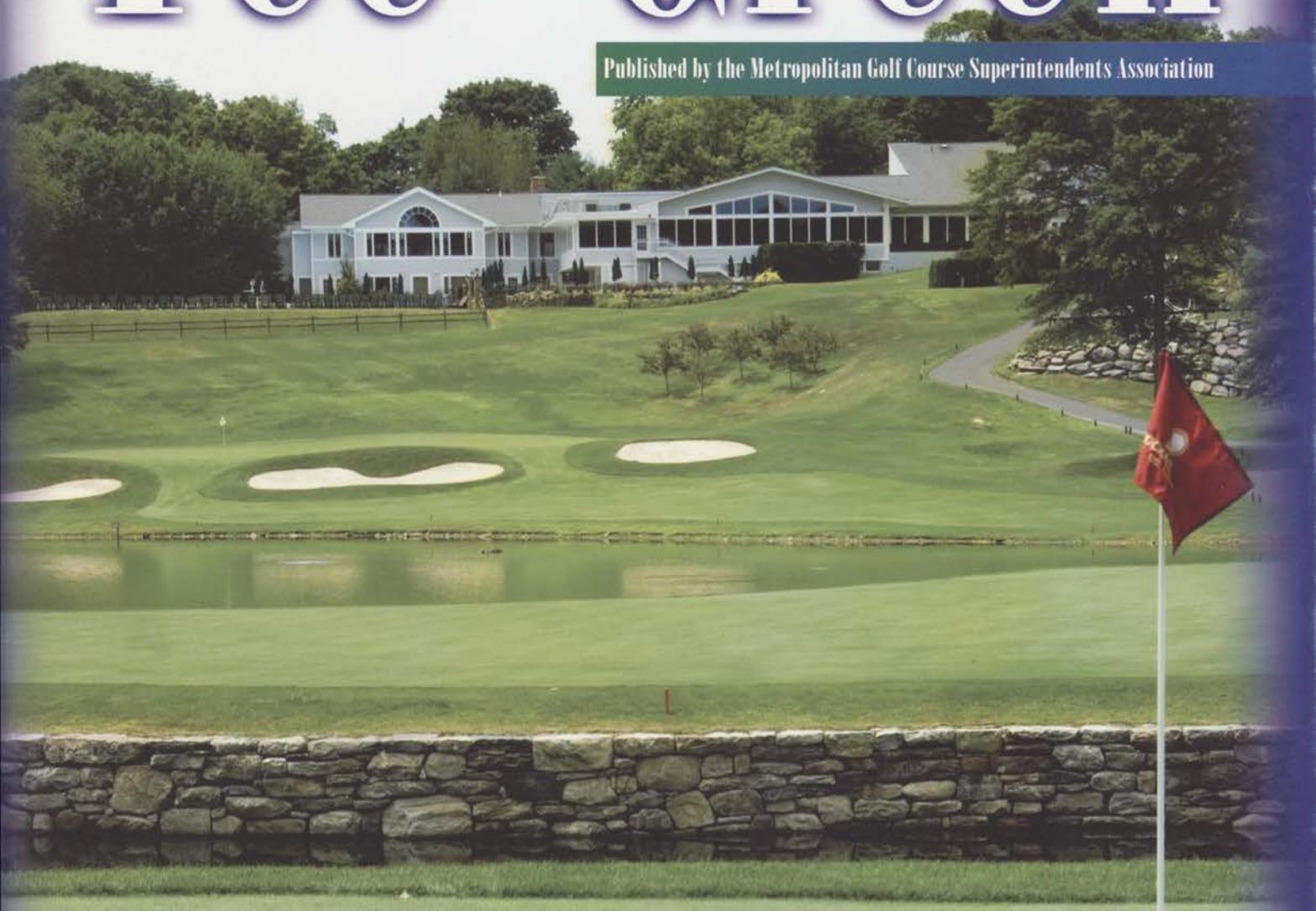


November/December 2008
VOLUME 38 NUMBER 6

Tee To Green

Published by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association



Jim Nantz to Receive Met's Coveted Reid Award

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Editors

DAVE DUDONES PAUL GONZALEZ
973-942-0566 914-273-3755

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Designer
TERRIE DUNKELBERGER

Photographer
BILL PERLEE

Advertising Manager
MARK MILLETT, 914-949-4203

TEE TO GREEN is published bimonthly by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association
49 Knollwood Road, Elmsford, NY 10523-2819
914-347-4653, FAX: 914-347-3437, METGCSA.ORG
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Tee to Green



Cover: Rockrimmon Country Club.
Photography by Tim Coffey.

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I

would like to begin my first President's Message by saying I am truly honored to serve as president of the MetGCSA, such a prestigious and long-running association. It is an honor that I will uphold with great pride and professionalism. In my 11 years on the board, I've learned so much and developed so many great relationships. The people I've come to know on the board and in the general membership have demonstrated a true dedication to our association and great pride in the job they do for the golfing public. It will be my job to maintain the professionalism of our association and continue to build on the great foundation that has been laid by my predecessors.

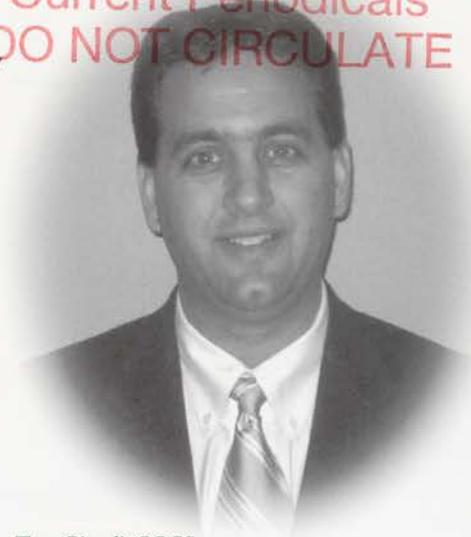
Are You Up for the Challenge?

As I write this message, I can't help but think of the economic reality we're now faced with—not only in our industry, but as a nation and across the globe. Looking at the effects we're feeling close to home, at our own golf courses, I'm sure many of you have been asked by your employers to find ways to cut expenses, whether it's to reduce or eliminate capital funding projects, cut staff or overtime, or scale back on operational expenditures in general into the next calendar year.

If this sounds familiar, it's essential that you review each and every aspect of your department's activities and do everything possible to prove to your club that you are up to the challenge. You want to demonstrate, after all, that you're part of the solution, not part of the problem.

At Rockrimmon, we've gone to great lengths over the past 12 to 18 months to improve our efficiency and reduce inputs on many levels throughout the course. I thought it might be helpful to share some of our successes. Here are just several of our cost-saving measures, both on the golf course and in our maintenance facility:

- We switched from gasoline to diesel fairway mowers and made the move to hybrid greens mowers, which together, reduced fuel use by approximately 10 percent.
- We instituted an organic fertility program throughout the course, which has allowed for one less fertilizer application on greens, tees, and fairways.



Tony Girardi, CGCS
MetGCSA President

- We've installed lower energy-use ballasts in all our lighting fixtures and went with more energy-efficient bulbs.
- We've installed motion sensors on most light switches to reduce run times. (The cost of making the transition to more energy-efficient equipment was offset by direct rebates our electric company offered to us as an incentive.)
- We asked our heating service to review and make necessary adjustments to the heating system to ensure it runs at peak efficiency.
- We added programmable thermostats in our maintenance facility.

By implementing changes like these, we not only help cut costs, we demonstrate environmental responsibility and show club officials that we are active and willing participants in their efforts to economize. I am sure I am not alone and many of you are already "part of the solution." I encourage all of you, in these difficult economic times, to continue to do your very best to make a difference. Your club will notice your efforts.

The Clear Benefits of Attending the Golf Industry Show

Now the not-so-great news. Word has it that numbers are down for our national Golf Industry Show (GIS). Some clubs, apparently, are taking this expense-paid educational opportunity away from their superintendents, seeing this as an easy way to trim dollars from our operating budgets, especially during February when most clubs are slow or closed altogether.

This wouldn't be all that bad if it weren't for the fact that, by not going to the conference, we lose one of the most significant and

Continued on page 9

Top Sportscaster Jim Nantz to Receive Coveted Reid Award

by Scott Niven, CGCS

becoming “The Voice of The Masters,” he will tell you, has been the highlight of his career.

Nantz’s award-winning broadcasts are the result of painstaking preparation and in-depth study of each participant’s background and recent accomplishments. He spends as much time with them as possible, gathering personal stories that add color to the drama of significant sports moments.

When it comes to golf events, his thought-

ful commentary extends beyond the golf professional’s performance to the role of the golf course superintendent. “I have always felt that the golf course superintendent is the unsung hero of the sport,” says Nantz, to explain his consistent recognition of the superintendent’s contributions during his CBS broadcasts.

“I am particularly impressed,” he continues, “by those who have made golf in the Metropolitan area so special. Here, you deal

The MetGCSA is presenting its prestigious John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award this year to one of the most prestigious—and well-known—figures in all of sports: none other than CBS Sports Commentator Jim Nantz. Well on his way to becoming the best sports commentator in history, Nantz is our 19th Reid Award recipient, joining an impressive roster of honorees, not the least of whom is retired golf color man and friend to Nantz, Ken Venturi.

Commenting on Jim Nantz’s selection for the 2008 Reid Award, Awards Committee Chairman Will Heintz notes, “We are very proud to add Jim’s name to our venerable list of Reid Award recipients. And we are all looking forward to honoring him with the 2008 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award at our January 14 Winter Seminar at Westchester Country Club.

“Through the years,” Will continues, “Jim has been complimentary to grounds crews and superintendents while covering golf tournaments on national television. His impeccable image and reputation along with his support has helped to promote the professional image of the golf course superintendent, the very premise on which the Reid Award was founded.”

Though Nantz has covered a wide variety of CBS Sports events—from NFL football to NCAA basketball, U.S. Open tennis, and the Winter Olympics—

Jim Nantz partners with his father, Jim, at his Three Amigos charity event in 1994.

Photo by Bob Straus



with all the forces of Mother Nature—from harsh winters to hot, sticky summers—yet we are blessed with the greatest assemblage of golf courses anywhere in the nation. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the men and women who've ensured that golf in the Metropolitan area represents the best of the best."

The Person Behind the Name

Jim Nantz is a busy man—with more than just his "day job," at the moment. When I called to see if he would be able to accept the John Reid Award at our January 14 Winter Seminar, I was delighted when he said he could make our Awards Luncheon. He said that his life had been turned upside down doing signings for his new book, *Always by My Side: A Father's Grace and a Sports Journey Unlike any Other*.

Hitting stores this past Father's Day, his first-ever book quickly rose to number three on the "New York Times Best Seller List," where it remained for seven weeks. Co-authored with Eli Spielman, the book's forward was written by one of Nantz's good friends and frequent golf partners, the elder, former President George H.W. Bush.

An entertaining and often touching read, the book shares many of Nantz's career highlights and experiences, including his 2007 sports broadcasting "triple" where he announced the Super Bowl, NCAA Final Four, and the Masters all within 63 days—the only announcer ever to achieve that feat. Dedicated to his father, who sadly passed away this past summer after a battle with Alzheimer's, the book also describes the many life lessons his father taught him and how they contributed to the individual he is today.

"As dad had taught me," says Nantz in one of the pages of his book, "at every stop along the way in life, it is all about the integrity with which you approach work, the way you treat people, and the relationships you build." He went on to say, "At the top of every broadcast—with what has become my signature line, "Hello friends!"—I consider this phrase the ultimate tribute to my dad. Once he met you, you were his friend—and he had only friends in this world."

The same can be said of Jim Nantz.

Award-Worthy Contributions

Jim Nantz has no lack of friends among superintendents. Who couldn't like—and admire—him, when he goes out of his way during his tournament broadcasts to recognize the contributions of the superintendent toiling behind the scenes.



Jim Nantz with his CBS Golf analyst team.

Photo courtesy of CBS Photos.

I will never forget my first meeting with Jim. A member of Stanwich, he actually sought me out on the golf course one day to say hello and chat about superintendents we knew in common.

As keynote speaker at the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego, CA, in February 2004, Jim Nantz endeared superintendents from across the country with his colorful sports stories and his vow to promote the work of the golf course superintendent through his role in CBS's golf telecasts.

"Needless to say," says former GCSAA CEO Steve Mona in reflecting on the event and Jim Nantz's outstanding keynote address, "those in attendance reacted very positively to Jim's commitment."

And according to Steve Mona, it didn't take Nantz long to make good on his promise. "Several months later, in August," says Steve, "the PGA Championship was held at Whistling Straits, and I paid Jim a visit at the CBS compound on Thursday before he went on the air. The first thing Jim told me was that he had mentioned the name of the golf course superintendent every week, with the exception of The International, which was played the week before. Jim said that he would see to it that he remedied that situation the week of the PGA Championship. And he did.

"What the exchange with Jim told me," says Steve, "was that he is a man of his word who has a deep and abiding respect for the work of the golf course superintendent."

It goes without saying that by the end of that year, Jim Nantz had fulfilled his promise of mentioning the name of every superintendent who hosted an event televised by CBS—much to the everlasting thanks of GCSAA and golf course superintendents worldwide.

But Jim Nantz's generosity extends beyond

the superintendent to various organizations, clubs, and foundations within the golf industry.

After a keynote address at the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference in Providence, RI, for instance, Jim donated \$5,000 toward research at the University of Rhode Island and suggested that I, being a URI grad, put it toward a project of my choice.

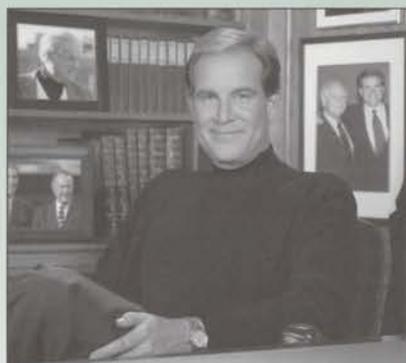
In addition to funds, Jim's donated another valuable resource: his time. When Stanwich hosted the USGA-sponsored 2002 Mid-Am, Jim agreed to narrate a golf course flyover video that was distributed to all the participants around the country; he later acted as Master of Ceremonies for the players' dinner at the Hyatt Hotel in Greenwich, CT, as well. He also spoke at the 2002 launch of The First Tee of Metropolitan New York at Mosholu Golf Course & Driving Range in the Bronx. He again narrated a video—this one for the MGA. Titled *Golf Grows Here*, it outlined the goals of the MGA Foundation Capital Campaign.

Life Before Sportscasting

Jim was born on May 17, 1959 in Charlotte, NC, but spent most of his youth in Colts Neck, NJ. Immersed in golf at a young age, he learned the game at Bamm Hollow Country Club in Lincroft, NJ, where his parents were members.

In his teens, he worked at nearby Battleground Country Club for Head Pro Tony Bruno, helping out around the Pro Shop. During those early years, he became an accomplished golfer and was the co-captain and number one player on the Marlboro High School golf team.

Recruited to play on the University of Houston men's golf team, Nantz roomed with three guys who went on to play on the



Jim Nantz

with Eli Spielman

ALWAYS BY MY SIDE

A Father's Grace and a Sports Journey Unlike Any Other

Foreword by President George H. W. Bush

*Jim Nantz's book, **Always By My Side**, is a New York Times best seller.*

Living His Dream

In 1985, Nantz achieved his ultimate dream when he was invited to join the CBS Sports golf team, just four years after graduating from college. He became the anchor for the network's golf coverage in April 1994 and was partnered with Ken Venturi (1988 Reid Award recipient) until June 2002, then Lanny Wadkins until 2006 before Nick Faldo assumed the lead analyst's role in 2007.

Nantz has hosted CBS Sports's coverage of the Masters since 1988 and the PGA Championship since 1991, and served as anchor of the biennial Presidents Cup in 1994 and 1996. You may also remember seeing Jim in a prominent role in Kevin Costner's 1996 hit movie *Tin Cup*.

In 2005, Nantz established his own production company, Jim Nantz Productions. Each year, he and his company produce what they call a Masters Sunday Special. To date, he's produced three shows that have aired. One of them, titled *Jim Nantz Remembers Augusta: The 1960 Masters*, made television history by broadcasting a sporting event in color that had originally aired live in black and white. In fact, this special was so special, that it was nominated for a 2007 *George Wensel Technical Achievement* Sports Emmy Award.

Nantz was also named the 2007 National Sportscaster of the Year by the National Sportscasters and Sports Writers Association. He had previously won the award in 2005 and 1998 and now joins Chris Schenkel and Ray Scott as the only CBS broadcasters to win the award more than once.

These are just the highlights of Jim's many

accomplishments in the world of golf. We could fill the pages of the newsletter with his numerous other honors—in sportscasting of every kind—during his 23-year career in broadcasting. Jim Nantz is the ultimate representative of the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award.

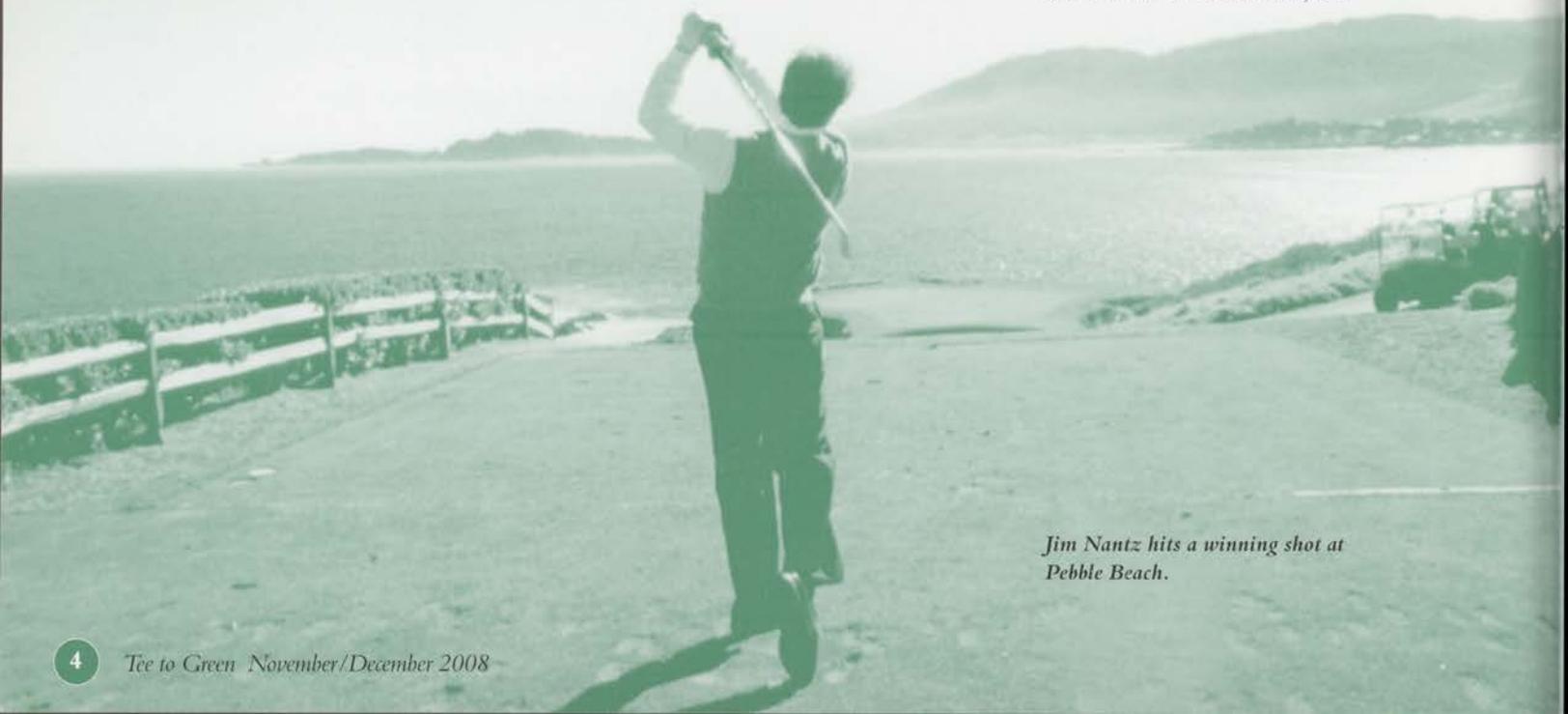
These Days

Given Jim's college golf experience, people who have the chance to get him out on the links expect him to shoot something close to par. What few realize is that Jim's hectic schedule after leaving college has left him little time to tend to his game. These days, rather than a round of golf, he usually settles for a little time on the practice range along with lunch.

When asked how he felt about receiving the Reid Award, Jim responded, "I am humbled and honored to be receiving the John Reid Award. I can't think of a harder working, more dedicated group of professionals than the one that will be presenting me with this special honor in January."

Initiated in 1986, the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award was named after the man commonly known as the "Father of American Golf." John Reid was not only the first to play golf in this country (1888), he was also instrumental in forming St. Andrew's Golf Club in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY, the first golf club in America. Later he went on to form the USGA and the MGA. Probably even more important to superintendents is that John Reid, by recognizing that golf courses required daily maintenance and care, was in large part responsible for establishing the golf course management profession.

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



Jim Nantz hits a winning shot at Pebble Beach.

The 15th Chapter Delegates Meeting Breaks the Mold

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS

Desiring to put members at ease about New Orleans' ability to host our upcoming conference and show, GCSAA took its 2008 Chapter Delegates meeting to The Big Easy, October 24 to 26. This was the first time in many years that the meeting was not held at GCSAA's Lawrence, KS, headquarters.

Not only did the meeting break ranks by moving from its traditional site, but it also included a two-hour tour of the city and a briefing from local officials on the recovery from storms during the past two years. I was one of 97 chapter delegates to attend. Only three of the affiliated chapters weren't represented.

Conference Site More-Than-Good to Go

Les Kennedy, John LeClair, John Genovesi, and I (the Northeast contingent) felt it was our duty to make sure that the areas surrounding the convention center were safe for all to enjoy at all hours. There are areas in the city that should probably be avoided, but those areas exist in every city. The culture, dining, and "Mardi Gras atmosphere" are unique to this city. The French Quarter, with its infamous Bourbon Street and great restaurants, was largely unaffected. The convention center has been completely renovated and is state-of-the-art. The hotels, including Harrah's, have all been refurbished and are in as good, if not better, condition than before Katrina. I can't think of a more interesting destination and strongly urge all to attend the convention and show February 2-7.

News From GCSAA's New CEO

This was the first time that Mark Woodward was able to address the delegates as CEO. Assuming the helm from Steve Mona in July, Mark has tremendous shoes to fill, but he is extremely focused and has a strong agenda in mind. Sharing his vision for the association, he touched on the following topics:

- The importance of chapter effectiveness
- The need for member engagement on the chapter and national level
- Building relationships to advance the association and its members
- GCSAA and The Environmental Institute

for Golf's role as a leader in ensuring golf's compatibility with the environment (Check out the Golf Channel for examples.)

- The role of the GCSAA member now and in the future

Chapter Effectiveness a Focus

GCSAA devoted considerable attention to discussing tactics we, as delegates, could use to help our chapters become more effective. Country Club of Darien Superintendent Tim O'Neill, who chairs GCSAA's Chapter Relations Committee, presented four elements the committee identified as key to enhancing chapter effectiveness:

- Strategic planning by chapter boards
- Enhancing GCSAA field staff
- Paid executive leadership, along with administrative support
- Sharing of resources among chapters

Peggy Hoffman and Peter Houstle of Mariner Marketing and Management facilitated a session focused on chapter effectiveness that explored ways to increase volunteer participation, enhance communications, activate memberships, improve management and engage in strategic planning, all on the chapter level. The key takeaway: More people volunteer if they are directly asked and are offered opportunities that are ad hoc or short term in nature.

The State of the Association

Given the economy and everyone's heightened interest in their financial situations, both at home and on the job, GCSAA's financial status was a leading area of interest. GCSAA President David Downing, CEO Mark Woodward, and GCSAA Managing Director of Finance Cam Oury presented the association's financial picture as being strong with no debt, valuable assets (its headquarters, for instance, has held its value), and a solid cash reserve. Although revenues will be lower in 2008 than 2007, association leaders indicated expenses were being managed down appropriately. Delegates were asked to convey the importance of the conference and show. Not only is it the only time the membership convenes as a whole, but it also represents 40 percent of the association's gross income; that's \$2.5 million in net income.



Meet the Candidates

It wouldn't be a delegates meeting without the opportunity to meet the candidates for the GCSAA board. Voting members will elect three officers and three directors at the 2009 Annual Meeting on February 6 in New Orleans.

Our own John O'Keefe will be vying for reelection along with Keith Ihms of the Country Club of Little Rock in Arkansas. Jay Stine of Brookhaven Country Club in Texas and Pete Grass of Hilands Golf Club in Montana are the other two candidates running for the third opening for director.

Mark Kuhns of Baltusrol Golf Club in New Jersey and Jim Fitzroy of Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in Massachusetts are running unopposed for president and vice president, respectively. Bob Randquist of Boca Rio Golf Club in Florida and Sandy Queen of City of Overland Park in Kansas will be running for the secretary/treasurer spot.

Important Note About Voting

All members should note that, even if you have authorized the MetGCSA to vote for you, you're encouraged to call me if you have a preference for a particular candidate. I am permitted to split the vote and will vote on your behalf.

I would strongly urge all of you to attend the conference and show in New Orleans—not just because, as a delegate, I'm encouraged to do that, but more because I truly believe this is a worthy educational opportunity. And then, of course, we can't deny that this year's conference is going to one of the more lively destinations. New Orleans is a one-of-a-kind city with unique food and an unbelievable variation of culture. Please don't miss it!

In addition to being the MetGCSA's Chapter Delegate, Bob Nielsen is our association's vice president and superintendent at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY.

In Memory of an Honorary Member

It is with great regret that we announce the death of one of the most influential figures in the history of Met Area golf. On November 24, Honorary MetGCSA member **Arthur Weber** passed away at age 88.

The MetGCSA's 1994 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Arthur Weber was a founding member of Old Westbury Golf & Country Club in Old Westbury, NY, and served as MGA president from 1987 to '88. Weber's most lasting impact in golf, however, was his passion for the environment and his tireless efforts to focus the attention of the golf community on ways that courses could enhance their surroundings.

A brilliant chemical engineer, who worked on the Manhattan Project, Weber combined his training as a chemical engineer with his knowledge of agronomy to explore how golf

course maintenance could be beneficial to the environment. He helped identify non-toxic treatments for moss on putting greens, and he wrote an Environmental Code of Conduct for golf course maintenance 16 years ago that courses still use as a model. He also helped found the MGA Green Committee and the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation and was an active board member of both until the time of his death.

Donations may be made in Arthur Weber's memory to the MGA Foundation, 49 Knollwood Road, Elmsford, NY 10523.



MGA's Westmoreland Receives High Honor

Congratulations to honorary MetGCSA member and past John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award recipient **Gene Westmoreland** on receiving the MGA Distinguished Service Award. Presented annually by the Metropolitan Golf Association, this high honor is reserved for candidates who have contributed distinguished service to golf and its related activities, consistent with the valued standards and honorable traditions of the game.

"It is with great pleasure that the MGA awards its highest honor to Gene Westmoreland in recognition of his dedication to the MGA and to the game of golf over the past 30 years," says MGA President Les Schupajk. "Gene has made the MGA a leader in tournament administration, and his impact on the game makes him a very worthy recipient."

As the head of the MGA's tournament department for nearly three decades, Gene Westmoreland, who is retiring at the end of

2008 from his full-time post as senior director of rules and competitions, is the person primarily responsible for cultivating the MGA's reputation as the nation's premier tournament organization.

"I am honored to receive this award from the MGA, an organization I revere and which holds a place of honor in the world of golf," says Westmoreland. "It is truly humbling to realize that my name will be included among some of the true giants of the game as winners of the MGA Distinguished Service Award."

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Justin Adams**, Class C, Sunningdale Country Club, Scarsdale, NY
- **Bruce Chason**, Class AF, Bobcat of New York, Briarcliff Manor, NY
- **Patrick Cragin**, Turf Products Corporation, Enfield, CT
- **William Cygan**, Class C, Innis Arden Golf Club, Old Greenwich, CT
- **Doug Drugo**, Class SM, Wee Burn Country Club, Darien, CT
- **Michael Golden**, Class C, Century Country Club, Purchase, NY
- **Paul Grabbe**, Class C, North Jersey Country Club, Wayne, NJ
- **Adam Jessie**, Class SM, St. George's Golf & Country Club, East Setauket, NY
- **Nick Krohn**, Class C, Sleepy Hollow Country Club, Scarborough, NY
- **Greg Moore**, Class AS, On Course Construction, Hamden, CT
- **Joshua Reiger**, Class C, Wee Burn Country Club, Darien, CT
- **Kyle Stevens**, Class C, Knollwood Country Club, Elmsford, NY
- **Robert Zbacnik**, Class C, Apawamis Club, Rye, NY

Members on the Move

- **Brian Chapin** is the new superintendent at Dellwood Country Club in New City, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Dellwood Country Club.
- **Joe Gardner** is the new superintendent at Fresh Meadow Country Club in Great Neck, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Dellwood Country Club, New City, NY.

Well Wishes

Sending well wishes to:

- **Joe Alonzi**, superintendent of Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY, who is recovering from thyroid surgery.
- **George Pierpoint**, a Class LA member (and our executive secretary Ineke's husband), who is recovering from back surgery.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our condolences to **Steve Renzetti** of Pinnacle Turf, Inc., whose father recently passed away.

Kick Off '09 With These Educational Events

Empire State Green Industry Show

(Formerly the NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition)

Wednesday-Friday, January 7-9, 2009

Rochester Riverside Convention Center
Rochester, NY

The 2009 Empire State Green Industry Show offers an excellent opportunity to network, obtain research updates, and visit the trade show, featuring hundreds of exhibitors.

As always, key speakers representing all segments of the green industry will be featured.

For further information, call the show office at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229 or visit the website at www.nysta.org.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY

Plan now for our upcoming Winter Seminar. Here is our educational lineup:

- Pat Vittum of UMass will provide an update on her annual bluegrass weevil research.
- David Doherty, who is president and founder of the International Sports Turf Research Center (ISTRC) and recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities on the physical properties of golf greens, will share his expertise on soil testing.
- College Professor Nancy Patata will discuss strategies and techniques for motivating your employees.
- Mark Esoda, CGCS, from Atlanta Country Club, will talk about ways to generate positive awareness of golf's commitment to water and environmental stewardship among policy makers and other influential audiences who can have an impact on water, fertilizer, and pesticide regulations.

For further information, call our Education Chairman, Glen Dube, at 845-279-8960.

CAGCS Winter Seminar

Tuesday, January 13

Hawthorne Inn, Berlin, CT

The Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents has the following lineup of speakers and topics planned for their 2009 Winter Seminar:

- University of Connecticut's Dr. Jason Henderson, assistant professor of turfgrass and soil science, will provide an update on the university's fairway topdressing research.

• USGA Agronomist James Skorulski will discuss new challenges in pest management.

• Author Anthony Pioppi is presenting, "How to Make the Media Work for You."

• Dr. Bradley Klein, editor of *Superintendent News*, will offer important insight into greens and golf course construction.

• Richard Tice, president and executive director of the CTEC, and Lobbyist Michael Dugan of M.P. Guinan Associates will present "A Legislative Update & New Initiative: The Clock Is Ticking."

For further information, call CAGCS at 203-387-0810.

NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference

Tuesday - Wednesday, February 24 - 25

Holiday Inn Suffern, Suffern, NY

Geared toward landscape and turfgrass professionals, this conference will include a trade show and a variety of sessions on topics related to golf turf, lawn and landscape and sports turf.

The educational programming will kick off on the 24th with a seminar titled "Disease Management for Turfgrass." Dr. John Kaminski, turfgrass scientist and director of the golf course turfgrass management program at Pennsylvania State University, will cover all the bases on turfgrass maintenance and disease management strategies.

On the 25th, the educational opportunities will continue with an early bird session at 6:30 a.m., in which Dr. Kaminski will offer helpful tips on nozzle and sprayer calibration. At the 8:30 general session, Rutgers' Dr. Stephen Hart will discuss the latest trends in turfgrass weed control.

Throughout the day, golf turf professionals will have the opportunity to learn about advances in soil testing interpretation, algae management, and irrigation water quality.

To obtain a conference brochure and registration forms, call NYSTA at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229, or visit their website at www.nysta@nysta.org.

The 12th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

Monday - Thursday, March 2 - 5

Rhode Island Convention Center,
Providence, RI

The 2009 annual conference and show's educational sessions will bring you cutting edge turfgrass management tactics and techniques,

as well as the opportunity to receive helpful training in photography, MS Excel, and CPR/AED. On the 3rd, conference goers will also be treated to a visit from NFL sports commentator Greg Gumbel, who is this year's keynote speaker. Opening later that same day is the three-day trade show, providing easy access to the latest in equipment, products, and supplies offered by more than 400 exhibitors.

Call the NERTF Office at 401-841-5490 for further information, or visit their website at www.nertf.org/show/.

NYSTA's 2009 Turfgrass Advocacy - Lobby Day

Wednesday, March 11

Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY

NYSTA extends this complimentary offer to all green industry professionals. Lobby day offers a priority issue briefing session to inform you about current legislation that could affect the turfgrass and green industry, legislative appointments with your local elected officials, and a luncheon with a legislator.

Please contact Jill Cyr for more information at jill@nysta.org or 518-783-1229. Registration deadline is Friday, February 27!



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Tony Girardi Assumes the Reins as Met's 28th President

by Kevin Collins

There were two elections of note this November past. On November 4, our country elected its first African-American president to lead our country through the maze of difficulties we currently face. More important, on November 18, the MetGCSA elected its first Narragansett, RI, native to guide the MetGCSA through the next two years. The task ahead is to maintain the excellence of what is considered by many to be the finest superintendent's chapter in the country. That is the challenge that faces the MetGCSA's new president, Tony Girardi.

Family Matters

Hailing from the "biggest little state in the union" definitely had its advantages. "I had a great time growing up in Narragansett," Tony remembers. "Being close to the water allowed me to enjoy boating, fishing, and swimming. We were also close to the URI campus; I used to hang out there and mix with the students."

Being the youngest of three in a close-knit working-class family taught Tony some important lessons as he made his way in the world. "My dad, Tony, worked for the State; my mom, Fran, worked for URI. My brother, Michael, and I started our own landscaping business while I was in high school, and for five years, we did very well. My sister, Kimberly, also attended URI and became a social worker," says Tony, remembering his childhood with great fondness. "My family gave me such a strong foundation to build from—and a great work ethic. Doing those things like eating dinner together each night and having that family togetherness made me the person I am today."

The Not-So-Rocky Road to Rockrimmon

Tony went to Bishop Hendrickson Catholic High School in Warwick, and after graduating, entered URI with his sights set on becoming a business major. Then one day, in the fall of 1989, a chance meeting with an old friend changed all that.

"Walking through campus, I ran into Scott



Now Past President Matt Ceplo looks on as Tony Girardi addresses MetGCSA members for the first time as president.

Cybulski, who's currently the superintendent at Falmouth Country Club in Falmouth, Maine," says Tony. "He was enrolled in URI's turf program and suggested we work together that summer on a golf course."

They both signed on with Tim O'Neill at the Country Club of Darien. "It was an awesome experience, and I guess you could say I caught the bug," says Tony, who returned to URI that next fall as a turf management major.

"I kept in touch with Tim, and he suggested that I come back to Darien for my final internship before graduation," says Tony. "Tim promised to throw me into the fire and teach me about all facets of golf course management. He kept his promise. My second internship at Darien was invaluable."

Then, halfway through his senior year, Tony spoke to Tim again—this time about an assistant superintendent's position at Woodway with Larry Pakkala. Tony interviewed and, in the spring of 1992, began his professional career at Woodway.

"Working for Larry was unforgettable," says Tony of the experience. "He was the 'Godfather' of assistant superintendents. He taught me about life and how you should handle yourself professionally. He was a true mentor to me."

In April of 1995, Tony succeeded Gregg

Stanley as superintendent of Rockrimmon Country Club. "I am very honored to be only the fourth superintendent to work at Rockrimmon since 1949. The membership has attached a great value to the longevity of the superintendent's position at their club," says Tony of his nearly 14-year tenure at the club, adding, "We have a small membership of only 175 primary members, so there's a true family atmosphere here, making it a very special place to work."

With a membership who is, as Tony describes, both supportive of Tony's work and dedicated to enhancing the golf course, it's no surprise that Tony has been entrusted with leading the charge on numerous improvement projects. Adhering closely to a Long Range Master Plan developed by Golf Course Architect Roger Rulwich, Tony has directed the rebuilding of three green complexes, the reconstruction or renovation of every tee complex, the installation of all new cart paths, and the complete renovation of every bunker on the course.

"I am very proud of all that we have been able to accomplish," says Tony, quick to credit the club's membership for making it all possible. "Like many area clubs," he continues, "the membership puts a premium on maintaining the highest quality conditions. They have a true passion for their course here at Rockrimmon," says Tony, gratefully.

Giving Back

Two years into his position at Rockrimmon, Tony was approached by the Nominating Committee to run for the Met board as a director. During his 11-year term on the board, Tony has chaired numerous committees, including the Tournament, Government Relations, Club Relations, Website, Membership, and Scholarship & Research committees. In 2004, Tony became board secretary and, in 2006, vice president. Tony's other professional board affiliations include the Water Wise Council of New York and the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

To Tony, his two most rewarding assignments with the Met were the Scholarship & Research and Website committees. He says proudly, "The website is something we started from scratch, and it was very satisfying to get that up and running. The research projects we funded as an association were both important and pertinent to our membership."

When asked about his vision for the board and association moving forward, Tony responded, "More than anything, I would like to see the board maintain—and continue to enhance—the professional image it has established for our association. As part of this effort, I'd also like to encourage members to continue to meet and exceed the Professional Development Initiatives established by the GCSAA four years ago.

Also high on Tony's list of priorities is to work with the board in developing a professional management structure, whether it

involves an executive director or some other form of management. "The goal, he explains, "is to have a way to maintain a sense of continuity with other golf and green industry organizations in the absence of a static board and committees.

"In the end," continues Tony, "I feel it's important to leave something better off than when you got there. I want to give back to an association and industry that's been so giving to me."

On the Personal Side

Tony has URI to thank for more than just his career path: "I met my wife, Christine, while attending URI," he says, adding, "I am very grateful to have such a special person to share my life with, and she is a tremendous mother to our children." Married in April 1996, Tony and Christine have three loving children: Nicholas, 10; Matthew, 9; and Rebecca, 7.

Being a true son of Rhode Island, Tony will tell you he's a "huge" Red Sox and Patriots fan. And then he still enjoys spending quality time—holidays and other special occasions—with family and friends back in his Narragansett hometown. That time will, no doubt, be a little scarcer in the next two years. Good luck, Tony, on a successful term as MetGCSA president!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the Mid-Atlantic & Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America and president of Dryject Northeast/TurfPounders.

MetGCSA Elects New Directors to Board

On November 18, Todd Polidor of Somers Pointe played host to a well-attended Annual Meeting, where members voted in not only a new president, but also two new directors. Here's how things shook out:

Officers

President Tony Girardi, CGCS
Rockrimmon Country Club
Vice President Bob Nielsen Jr., CGCS
Bedford Golf & Tennis
Treasurer Blake Halderman, CGCS
Brae Burn Country Club
Secretary Glen Dube, CGCS
Centennial Golf Club
Past President Matt Ceplo, CGCS
Rockland Country Club

Ken Benoit, CGCS, from GlenArbor Golf Club, was re-elected to another director term, while Mark Chant from Colonial Springs Golf Club and Mark Millett from Old Oaks Country Club were newly elected to two-year terms.

Two members were also appointed to the board: Paul Gonzalez of Whippoorwill will assume the one-year board term left by Glen Dube, who moved to secretary. And Steve Renzetti of Pinnacle Turf will serve as our Class AF rep.

Special thanks to Nominating Committee co-chairs Earl Millett and Tim Moore and their committee for providing our membership with such fine candidates for the board.

President's Message continued from page 1

essential opportunities to further our education. The GIS, after all, is all about education, offering full- and half-day seminars and mini-sessions throughout the week on the latest trends in golf course management, including people management, budgeting, turf- and disease-related issues, and pest management strategies, to name just a few of the topics.

The trade show, the most comprehensive around, also offers superintendents an important opportunity to view and learn about the latest turf equipment and products that relate directly to improved playing conditions.

I fully understand the dynamics of certain decisions at our local clubs, but I feel it is imperative that we communicate to our club officials the importance of ongoing education. Keeping abreast of industry trends and breakthroughs will actually pay dividends to our clubs by helping us run our maintenance operations more effectively and efficiently.

Whether this sounds like a shameless plea to the decision makers at our clubs or not, I wouldn't be doing my job as association president if I didn't emphasize just how important it is that we attend not only our local educational meetings, but also our national Golf Industry Show. If anything, it's more important now than ever.

In Closing . . .

I am more excited than ever to get off and running as our association's president, and I am committed to doing my very best to not only maintain our professionalism, but also increase our exposure in the golfing community so that everyone can see just how valuable we are at each and every one of our facilities.

Please know that I'm always available for any questions, comments, suggestions, and/or constructive criticism. I believe strongly in maintaining an open door policy and feel everyone should have a voice in making things better. So let's keep the lines of communication open and move forward, together, in enhancing our association.

Happy Holidays to all.

Tony Girardi, CGCS
President

Second-in-Charge Have 1st-Class Day

by Scott Olson

At this year's Annual Assistant's Championship, held October 14 at Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, NJ, 41 assistants braved the Fazio layout—some with more success than others. Congratulations to Scott Curry, who walked away with the individual title, and to team championship winners Matt Plosila and Pete Hunter.

I would like to thank the entire staff at Trump National for giving up their amazing facility for a day and providing us with a memorable championship. Director of Grounds Mike Brunelle and Superintendent Greg Eisner had the golf course in excellent condition.

If there are any assistants out there who would like to host this outing in 2009, please be sure to contact a MetGCSA board member or Scott Olson, our Class C rep.

Here's the lowdown on the day's results:

Gross Team Winners

- 79 Matt Plosila, *Brae Burn CC*
Pete Hunter, *Rockland CC*
- 80 Jim Schell, *The Stanwich Club*
Ryan Segrue, *The Stanwich Club*

Net Team Winners

- 68 Andrew Agnew, *Sleepy Hollow CC*
Dave Moffett, *The Round Hill Club*
- 70 Scott Curry, *Lake Success GC*
Scott Olson, *Scarsdale GC*

Individual Gross Winners

- 83 Scott Curry, *Lake Success GC*
- 85 Justin Adams, *Summingdale CC*

Individual Net Winners

- 71 Pete Hunter, *Rockland CC*
- 72 Andrew Agnew, *Sleepy Hollow CC*

Closest to the Pin

- #4 Nick Krohn, *Sleepy Hollow CC*
- #16 Scott Olson, *Scarsdale GC*

Longest Drive

Mike Guinan, *Blind Brook Club*

MetGCSA Takes Third Place in Met Area Team Championship

by Blake Halderman & Andy Drohen (co-chair)

In true championship fashion, the Met Area Team Championship was held this year at the famed Winged Foot Golf Club's West Course on October 27. For the uninitiated, the Met Area Team Championship is a season-ending golf tournament that brings together superintendents from the upper Mid-Atlantic region to Western Pennsylvania and all throughout the Northeast for a little heated competition and a lot of camaraderie.

Now in its 28th year, this tournament has been growing in popularity, this year attracting a record number of associations: a full 15 with 8 players each. This year's tournament also includes the farthest traveled association: the Michigan GCSA!

Contestants played a Two-Man Best-Ball format with half the field playing Gross and half playing an 80-percent-of-Net format. It was so tough out there that one of the Two-Man Gross teams didn't break 90. (Luckily, Dave Lippman was playing for the Hudson Valley team that day!)

Though the MetGCSA team didn't take home the trophy, we had our best finish in many years, placing third with a 301, just behind Philadelphia's 291 and the winning Connecticut AGCS team's 288.

Representing the Met were Gross Division players Sean Cain, Grover Alexander, Mark Chant, and Dennis Granahan, and Net Division players Scott Niven, Les Kennedy, Tony Hooks, and Mark Fuller. In my book, placing third out of 15 teams was a tremendous feat—especially considering Connect-

icut and Philadelphia have been untouchable for years. Great playing, gentleman!

Thank You to Our Hosts—and Sponsors

The success of our Met Area Team Championships has everything to do with our gracious host sites. This year's hosts, Winged Foot Golf Club's Director of Golf Courses Matt Burrows and General Manager Colin Burns, went above and beyond to make sure our day was a success. We would like to thank Matt and his staff for all of their hard work in prepping the course for the event. It was in true U.S. Open condition—despite the high winds and rain we had a couple days before. Matt even had the 2006 Open's Sunday Pins out there for us. We appreciate everything Matt, Colin Burns, and the rest of the Winged Foot Golf Club staff did for us that day. Thank you very much!

Also noteworthy is that all proceeds from this event were assigned to a charity of the MetGCSA board's choice. This year, it's no surprise we voted to allocate all proceeds to the David Mahoney Memorial Fund. We are so fortunate to be able to enjoy a nice day of golf and the company of our peers while raising funds for a worthy cause.

We have Winged Foot Golf Club and our sponsors—Agrium Advanced Technologies, Aquatrols, BASF, Bayer, Syngenta, Toro, and The Care of Trees—to thank for such a wonderful day.



The winning Connecticut AGCS Team strikes a pose with the 2008 Met Area Team Championship Trophy.

The Met Area Team Championship: The Full Account

Here are the results of the day ...
in detail:

Team Scores

1st / 288	Connecticut AGCS
2nd / 291	Philadelphia AGCS
3rd / 301	MetGCSA
4th / 303	GCSA of New Jersey
5th / 304	Central New York GCSA
6th / 306	Long Island GCSA
7th / 307	Pocono TGA
8th / 311	Mid-Atlantic AGCS
9th / 313	GCSA of New England
10th / 314	Central Penn GCSA
T11th / 320	GCMA of Cape Cod
T11th / 320	Hudson Valley GCSA
13th / 321	Michigan GCSA
T14th / 326	Northeastern GCSA
T14th / 326	Rhode Island GCSA

Closest to the Pin

Hole #3	Brian Minemiar	4' 3"
	<i>GCSA of New Jersey</i> (Sponsored by Syngenta)	
Hole #7	Dennis DeSanctis	3' 5"
	<i>Syngenta</i> (Sponsored by Bayer)	
Hole #10	Jason Werbalowsky	3' 7"
	<i>Hudson Valley GCSA</i> (Sponsored by BASF)	
Hole #17	Chet Walsh	10' 1"
	<i>Philadelphia AGCS</i> (Sponsored by Toro)	

Longest Drive

Net	Sean Flynn, <i>Connecticut AGCS</i> (Sponsored by The Care of Trees)
Gross	Paul Dotti <i>GCSA of New Jersey</i> (Sponsored by Agrium Advanced Technologies)
Hickory Stick	Chris Butler, <i>Pocono TGA</i> (Sponsored by Aquatrols)

Individual Gross

78	Chet Walsh <i>Philadelphia AGCS</i>
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Sponsorship Team Winner

70	Kevin Collins & Kevin Seibel <i>Aquatrols</i>
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Two-Man Team High Score

Gross / 90	Dave Lippman & Steve Whipple, <i>Hudson Valley GCSA</i>
Net / 81	Nick Burchard & Jerry Noon <i>Rhode Island GCSA</i>



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