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Tee To Green

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Tee To Green



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President's Message

A Little Generosity Goes a Long Way



O

n June 15, Met members gathered at Centennial Golf Club to participate in the Paul Dube Open. Paul, the brother of Met Secretary and Centennial Super Glen Dube, passed away June 26, 2009, leaving behind a wife and three children: Maya, Cole, and Anna. Organized by close friends of Glen and Paul, the event raised funds for the Dube children's college education.

I want to personally thank everyone who came out in support of Glen and his family during this difficult time. Last year, members joined together in a similar show of support for our beloved friend and colleague Dave Mahoney and his family. These acts of kindness are a testament to the compassionate spirit and generosity of so many members of our association. THANK YOU ONE AND ALL!

Another Way to Give

We recently held a Tri-State Turf Research Foundation meeting, and among the topics of discussion were our annual contribution numbers, which are down from previous years. Though supporting research endeavors may not feel as imperative—or certainly as personally gratifying—as supporting a fellow member, it is another worthy and ongoing cause we should all be sure to contribute to annually.

The foundation is aware that our decline in contributions is due, in part, to the economy, but we also recognize that some of it has to do with “getting the word out.” To that end, we'd like to start, now, by asking for everyone's support.

The \$200 annual contribution is a small price to pay when you consider what you receive in return. Funds go toward university research targeted at resolving turfgrass ills and maintenance challenges pertinent to golf courses in the tri-state area. To date, we've funded research that has spared us costly trial-and-error attempts to control such devastating pathogens as anthracnose and summer patch and such insects as white grubs and the annual bluegrass weevil. But this is just a small sampling of the Tri-State-funded research projects that have helped us in protecting and enhancing our golf courses.

To ensure better contribution rates, we

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*Tony Girardi, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

plan to expand our efforts through the summer months with a call to donate. In addition to a phone campaign, we'll make announcements at our annual meetings and send email blasts to members.

We'd also like to make it easier to contribute through the use of invoicing. When you volunteer to contribute, rather than having to manually fill out the tri-fold brochure you receive in the mail, we'll send you an official invoice you can submit to your club.

We're working to have this system in place soon. So PLEASE help us meet our goals within the Tri-State so we can continue to support our local universities and researchers in helping us do our jobs better!

Come One, Come All

Please keep a lookout for announcements pertaining to our upcoming summer events. We'll be hosting our annual Summer Social and Family Picnic, as well as our popular Education Meeting.

Our goal is and always will be to strengthen our member services and our association; your thoughts and feedback on our events and any other aspect of the association are always welcome and appreciated.


See you all at the next meeting and upcoming social functions!

Tony Girardi, CGCS
President


The Deadliest Summer:

How to Avoid a Repeat Performance of the Summer of 2009


by Adam Moeller, USGA Agronomist, Northeast Region



Visible decline in putting green stand density in a low, wet area of a green. Damage not the result of core aeration.



Core aeration along with heavy top-dressing and aggressive brushing can be disastrous if turf health is poor, especially under stressful weather conditions.



With the golf season in full swing, we thought it might be worth revisiting the series of unfortunate events that took a toll on many of our golf courses last summer. Though clearly a summer most would rather not remember, reflecting on what occurred can help us not only identify the strengths and weaknesses of our maintenance programs, but also consider measures we might take to keep a similar tragedy from happening again.

We are pleased to have USGA Agronomist Adam Moeller share his observations on the set of unusual circumstances that put golf course greens in jeopardy throughout the Northeast. If nothing else, it will serve as reminder that, sometimes, no matter how astute our agronomic practices, Mother Nature gets the best of us.

Looking back, 2009 was a challenging season, with turf decline quite common. It all started with one of the wettest May, June, and July on record. In general, single rain events weren't too severe, but the frequency of rainy days was more typical of Seattle than the Metropolitan New York area. In fact, a number of golf courses reported more than 25 consecutive days in June with measurable rainfall.

Air temperatures were cooler than normal, allowing turf—though compromised by prolonged saturation—to keep up appearances until mid- to late August when a period of unusually high temperatures, coupled with coring and ongoing maintenance practices, pushed turf on many golf courses over the edge.

It was a perfect storm of events that challenged even the most experienced superintendents. With problems brewing well beneath the soil's surface, many turf managers were fooled into thinking things weren't as precarious as they were, and they forged ahead in an attempt to satisfy golfers' high expectations and clubs' golf calendars.

With that said, here's a full account of the events leading up to one of the deadliest summers on record . . . along with measures you might take to guard against a similar set of unfortunate circumstances in the future.

Setting the Stage for Disasters

Problem #1 was too much rain. When it comes to water, you *can* get too much of a good thing—particularly on turf. It's no secret that under prolonged saturation, turf problems from mechanical injury, pathogen activity, and root death are difficult to prevent.

The excessive rain last spring and summer made course maintenance a challenge, particularly when it came to mowing. Two scenarios existed. One: Mow too often and risk widespread mechanical injury. Two: Reduce mowing frequency and battle clipping issues, poor mowing quality, and golfer complaints. A good option really didn't exist. Even with reduced mowing frequency, superintendents were left with mower damage on at least a fairway or two. Most problems observed on fairways, however, seemed minor compared

to damage experienced on putting greens.

Putting greens can survive under some very intense and stressful conditions, but turf challenges will eventually surface if soil oxygen is deficient, sunlight is poor, or too little or too much water is supplied.

Ever drive past a cornfield and notice an obvious decline of corn height and quality when a crop is growing in a low, wet area of a farm? It seems fairly obvious, even to non-farmers, that waterlogged soils are to blame.

The same lack of vigor and stunted growth or damage observed in low-lying, waterlogged cornfields were replicated last summer on low, wet portions of putting greens across the Northeast region. Most golfers, however, were hard-pressed to correlate this damage to saturated soils. If turf growing on poorly drained greens survived through the first half of August, core cultivation in mid- to late August proved to be more than the turf could handle.

Core Cultivation: Good Practice Gone Bad

Core cultivation—like fertilization, mowing, and topdressing—is one of the cultural practices essential to producing high-quality putting green turf. As superintendents know, it's a great way to rejuvenate putting greens and improve long-term turf performance by maintaining adequate drainage and soil oxygen levels.

Despite its well-documented benefits—root zone modification, thatch removal/management, improved gas exchange, increased drainage and rooting, compaction relief, and alleviation of root zone layering—most golfers are less than fond of the process. Knowing this, superintendents try to schedule core aeration to accommodate the golf calendar and disrupt play as little as possible.

Traditional coring times used to be late April and early September. Mid- to late August is now the most common time to perform core cultivation. Seasonal workers are generally still available to help and, more important, there are fewer golfers since people typically take their family vacations during that time.

But coring in mid- to late August also

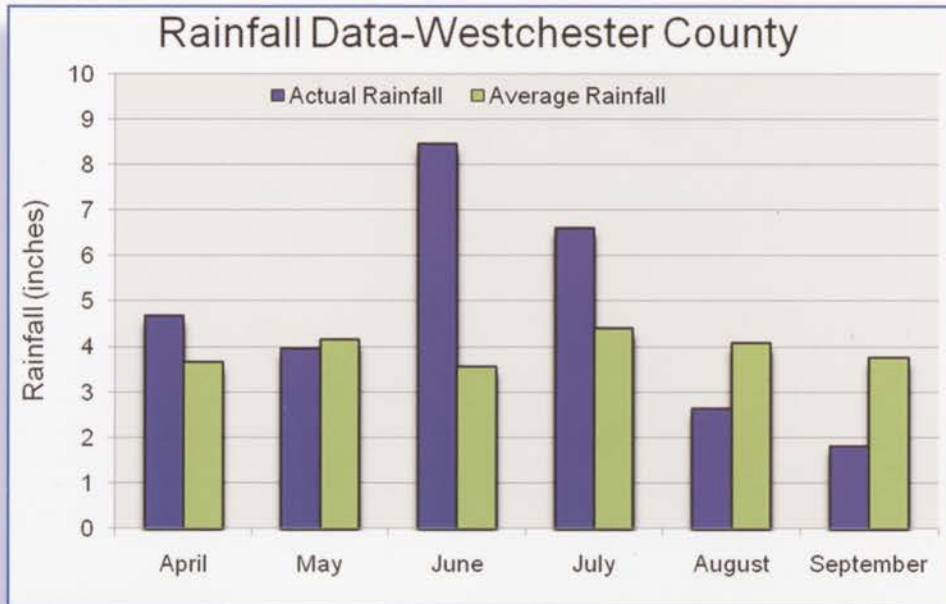
offers some agronomic advantages. Because soil temperatures are warm and the turf is actively growing (by Labor Day, recovery is typically complete), coring during this period usually results in rapid recovery. Another plus: *Poa annua* germination is generally low at this point.

Unfortunately, coring during August does not come without risk. A spell of hot weather can cause serious mechanical injury and may actually stimulate turf diseases that thrive on plant stress, such as summer patch and anthracnose. So while mid- to late-August coring has its benefits, it also carries the greatest risk for turf decline.

It's no surprise, then, that the most severely damaged greens last summer were the result of core cultivation during very stressful weather in the second half of August. In most cases, though, core cultivation was just the straw that broke the camel's back.

Physical injury from coring and heavy topdressing and aggressive brushing pushed a lot of weakened greens over the edge right away. In other cases, the unrelenting heat and humidity following coring resulted in a slower death of turf on putting greens.

Heavy rains experienced in many locations easily infiltrated the recently cored surfaces and saturated the root zone profiles. Adequate moisture following coring is essential to avoid rapid desiccation injury, but excessive moisture can be disastrous, especially when combined with the stressful



weather we experienced.

The heat, high humidity, low soil oxygen, wet soils, and succulent leaf tissue made turf more prone to mechanical damage following coring—the crowning blow for many.

Why Didn't We Know Better?

So why did superintendents forge ahead with core cultivation? For two reasons: A history of positive outcomes aerifying in August and the hesitation to alter preset golf calendars.

Unfortunately, the agronomic advantages of coring mid- to late August didn't apply this year, altered by temperatures that were not only atypical, but also unpredictable by weather forecasters. From August 14 through 26, we had a stretch of above-average temperatures, with Monday, August 17—a popular date for coring putting greens—being the hottest day of the year in many locations.

The “predicted” 10-day forecast for the second half of August—as most superintend-

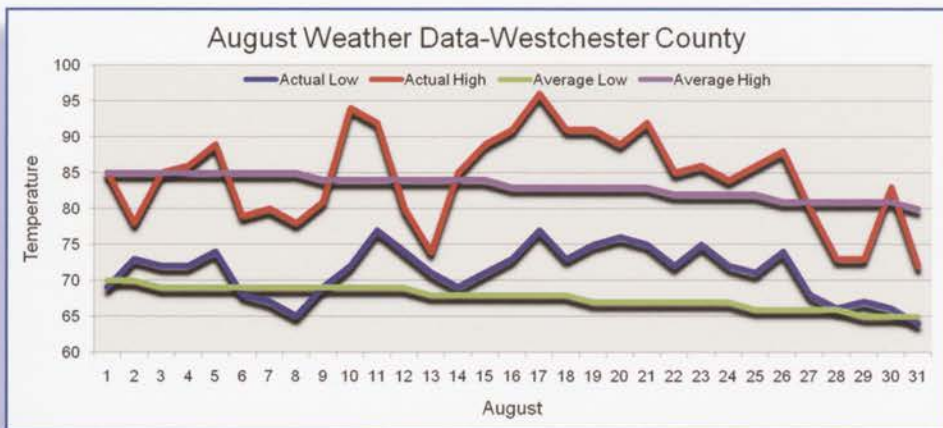
ents clearly remember—was close to 10 degrees cooler than what actually occurred. And air temperatures 5 to 10 degrees cooler during core cultivation probably would have prevented a lot of the damage.

Many frustrated golfers unfortunately blamed the superintendent for the damage, disregarding the weather completely. Sure, the superintendent probably made the final decision to perform core cultivation under those conditions, but who knew just how dangerous a decision that could be given the data they had to work with?

The Trouble, in Short

After the dust settled, we were able to pinpoint more conclusively the factors that contributed to putting green damage. As I alluded to earlier...

- Turf with poorly draining root zones or those with excessive moisture-holding capacity in the upper profile exhibited the most damage. Turf roots on poorly drained, native-soil putting greens were essentially growing in an oxygen-deficient environment from May through July. Research (Jackson and Drew, 1984) has shown that the diffusion rate of oxygen is reduced approximately 10,000-fold in water! Without adequate oxygen in the root zone, root growth is limited, and death of existing roots occurs much more rapidly. To make matters worse,



Average and actual air temperature in August 2010 in Westchester County, NY.

It's no surprise that the most severely damaged greens last summer were the result of core cultivation during very stressful weather in the second half of August.

if soil oxygen is deficient, water/nutrient uptake is decreased and carbon dioxide accumulates to potentially damaging levels.

- Putting greens with poor sun exposure and/or air circulation were also injured more severely.
- Plant carbohydrate status tends to be lowest in July and August, which also may have led to some of the decline.
- Damage was most severe on *Poa annua* turf due to its shallow rooting nature and intolerance to weather extremes. Some creeping bentgrass was injured as well.
- Finally, turf on putting greens may have been weaker than normal due to the wet spring, which compromised root health and development, increasing the likelihood for mechanical injury from coring, as well as the threat of summer patch and anthracnose.

The bottom line: With root health far from optimal, and intolerable heat stress along with core cultivation and abrasive topdressing to backfill cultivation channels, the widespread damage makes perfect sense.

Avoiding Future Fiascos

Turf loss, especially on putting greens, can evoke a firestorm of questions from golfers and course officials determined to place blame on a particular aspect of the maintenance regime, golf course, or superintendent.

In most instances, however, the cause is multi-faceted. Identifying all of the potential causes is necessary to prevent similar problems in the future.

First, the agronomic considerations. Increase your turf's chances of survival by:

- Improving putting green microenvironments by removing trees or installing fans to promote sun and air circulation
- Installing adequate drainage to improve root health and vigor

The importance of adequate drainage and good putting green microenvironments far outweighs just about everything else at the golf facility. After all, the golf course is the primary asset at every facility, and protecting it through various improvements is necessary if turf loss is to be avoided.

Another wise move: Agree on an alternate date for coring. Though, admittedly, the pressure not to disrupt the golf calendar has never been higher, there are times, like last year, when changing a golf outing to accommodate a necessary shift in the coring schedule is well worth any inconvenience.

The reality is that the golf calendar is likely to suffer more disruption if superintendents proceed with coring despite unfavorable weather, turf health, or equipment problems that, in turn, result in greens that are unplayable.

Setting an alternate date at the start of the season will enable superintendents to allow for the unexpected and ensure that coring is performed during the most appropriate time with the least risk for turf problems.

When setting dates, keep in mind that the likelihood for hot, humid weather gradually diminishes as mid-August transitions into late-August and the first week of September. Much beyond that time, turf recovery can be prolonged and other agronomic issues can develop.

In the End

Losing turf always prompts closer scrutiny of maintenance programs and imperfections in course construction. In some instances, providing a backup coring date may be the only adjustment needed, while other courses may need large-scale drainage projects, tree removal, or other measures taken to improve putting green microenvironments. Either way, problems experienced last year exposed weaknesses in both golf courses and maintenance programs that no one can afford to ignore.

Literature Cited:

Jackson, M.B. and M. C. Drew. 1984. Effects of flooding on growth and metabolisms of herbaceous plants. In Kozłowski T.T. (eds.): *Flooding and Plant Growth*. p. 49.

Core aeration is a highly valuable cultural practice for putting greens.



North Jersey Shines for Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier

Supers and Managers Contest Best-Ball Event

On Wednesday, May 19, Met members enjoyed a great day of golf and camaraderie with their managers and friends at the Connecticut Golf Club, where a full field of 34 players hotly contested the Superintendent/Manager/Superintendent Member or Guest Tournament.

The Connecticut Club was very gracious in hosting our event and made everyone feel welcome. Mark Fuller and his assistant, Bob Welch, had the course in fantastic condition. Bobby tested our golfing abilities with challenging pin placements and slippery greens.

The field was divided into two divisions: superintendent/manager and superintendent/member or guest.

Here's a look at the winning results:

Superintendent/Manager Team Results

Gross Team Winners

- 82 Scott Niven/Peter Tunley
The Stanwich Club
83 Anthony Hooks/Carl Collins
Pelham/Split Rock Golf Club

Net Team Winners

- 67 Matt Ceplo/Ed Noroian
Rockland Country Club
68 Joe Alonzi/Bob James
Westchester Country Club

Superintendent/Member or Guest Results

Gross Team Winner

- 80 Mark Chant/Larry Pakkala
Colonial Springs Golf Club/Plant Food Co.
(won in a match of cards)

Net Team Winner

- 69 Bobby Welch/Dennis DeSanctis
Connecticut Golf Club/Syngenta Professional Products

Closest to the Pin

- #8 Doug McHale, Guest 7' 7"
#10 Mark Chant 14' 3"
Colonial Springs Golf Club

Longest Drive

- #6 George Corgan, *Steven Willand, Inc.*
#18 Dennis DeSanctis
Syngenta Professional Products

We had great weather—despite the wind—and a great turnout for the second annual Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier held May 10 at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

Golf Course Superintendent David Dudones and his staff had the course in tremendous shape. North Jersey Country Club is one of the true hidden gems in the Metropolitan New York area. The greens were a particularly hot topic after the event, with many commenting that North Jersey's greens were among the finest they'd ever seen. Well done, Dave!

Many thanks to General Manager John Stanley and the entire NJCC staff for providing such wonderful service. We'd also like to offer special thanks to North Jersey's membership for hosting our event. Without their generosity, we never would have had the opportunity to play such a wonderful course.

For those who qualified to play in the Two-Ball, please remember to complete your matches by the following deadlines:

- Round 1 ~ June 25
Quarter-Finals ~ July 30
Semi-Finals ~ September 3
Finals ~ October 1

Also note that the winning team from each match is required to report its score to Ken Benoit. Check the website for deadline reminders, updated match results, and Ken's contact information. In the meantime, here's a look at the day's golf results.

Two-Ball Qualifier Results

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

First Flight

- 1) Mike Benz/Mark Chant
Middle Bay CC/Colonial Springs GC
vs.
16) Bye
8) Grover Alexander/David Dudones
Hudson Hills GC/North Jersey CC
vs.
9) Scott Niven/Larry Pakkala
The Stanwich Club/Plant Food Company

- 5) Brian Benedict/Bob Lippman Jr.
The Seawane Club/Westchester Turf Supply
vs.
12) Dennis DeSanctis/Guy Gurney
Syngenta/Orange County GC
4) Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
Centennial GC/Brae Burn CC
vs.
13) Tony Hooks/Jeff Wentworth
Pelham/Split Rock GC/Pelham CC
6) Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera
Metropolis CC/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
11) Ryan Batz/Scott Blough
John Deere Golf/Trump National GC/NY
3) Bob DeMarco/Earl Millett
The Powelton Club/Ridgeway CC
vs.
14) Matt Ceplo/Jim Swiatlowski
Rockland CC/Montammy GC
7) Sean Cain/Stephen Rabideau
Sunningdale CC/Wheatley Hills GC
vs.
10) Paul Dotti/Dick Neufeld
Edgewood CC/Plant Food Company
2) Dave Lippman/Matt Topazio
Westchester Turf Supply/New York CC
vs.
15) George Corgan/Matt Severino
Steven Willand, Inc./Scarsdale GC

Second Flight

- 1) Dennis Granahan/Jim Schell
Navesink CC/The Stanwich Club
vs.
16) Bye
8) Jeff Scott/Bobby Steinman
Tamarack CC/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
9) Mark Fuller/Jim Calladio
Connecticut GC/LaCorte Equipments Co.
5) Ken Benoit/Greg Gutter
Glen Arbor GC/Mount Kisco CC
vs.
12) Tony Girardi/Jeff Thrasher
Rockrimmon CC/Second Nature Tree & Landscape Co.

National News

Woodward Steps Down as GCSAA CEO

- 4) Tim Garceau/Ernie Steinhofers
Tuxedo Club/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
- 13) Joe Gardner/Tom Weinert
Fresh Meadow CC/Plant Food Co.
- 6) Kevin Collins/Nick Lerner
Aquatrols, Inc./Bonnie Briar CC
vs.
- 11) Paul Gonzalez/Lou Quick
Whippoorwill Club/Anglebrook GC
- 3) Bob Neilsen/Bill Perlee
Bedford Golf & Tennis/Apawamis Club
vs.
- 14) Brett Chapin/Greg Wojick
Redding CC/Playbooks for Golf
- 7) Rob Alonzi/Mike Cook
Fenway GC/The Care of Trees
vs.
- 10) Joe Alonzi/Bob Alonzi
Westchester CC/Life A
- 2) Eddie Binsse/Dan Cancelleri
Life A/Life AF
vs.
- 15) Paul Boyd/Matt Leverich
Greenwich CC/Playbooks for Golf

Two-Ball Event Results

Low Gross Winners

- 72 Ken Kubik/Tim McAvoy
Grass Roots/Fox Hollow GC
- 76 Bob DeMarco/Earl Millett
The Powelton Club/Ridgeway CC
- 78 Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
Centennial GC/Brae Burn CC

Low Net Winners

- 68 Glenn Gallion/Bruce Pye
Wilfred MacDonald/LaCorte Equipment
- 70 David Lippman/Matt Topazio
Westchester Turf Supply/New York CC
- 71 John Bresnahan/Charlie Siemers
BASF Chemical/Emerald Tree Care Co.

Closest to the Pin

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| #2 | Glenn Gallion
<i>Wilfred MacDonald</i> | 14' 5" |
| #7 | Dennis DeSanctis, <i>Syngenta</i> | 7' 6" |
| #13 | Sean Cain, <i>Sunningdale CC</i> | 9' 6" |
| #15 | Tim McAvoy
<i>Fox Hollow GC</i> | 28' 5" |

Longest Drive

- | | |
|---|----------|
| Charlie Siemers
<i>Emerald Tree Care Co.</i> | 268 yds. |
| Mike Scott, <i>Wykagyl CC</i> | 287 yds. |

Mark Woodward, GCSAA's chief executive officer since July 2008, has resigned to pursue other career interests. He came to GCSAA after serving as operations manager for the City of San Diego, hosting the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines Golf Course. He also served as GCSAA president in 2004.

"Mark is a talented individual who has made solid contributions to GCSAA," says GCSAA President James Fitzroy, noting, in particular, Woodward's role in guiding GCSAA through one of the nation's most severe economic downturns in years. "He has been a fine representative and a strong steward for the organization," says Fitzroy, who credits Woodward with gaining recognition for GCSAA's research, programs, and education regarding golf's relationship with the environment. "We wish him well," says Fitzroy, "in his future endeavors."

Rhett Evans, GCSAA chief operating officer, has been named interim CEO while the organization's board of directors conducts a nationwide search to determine Woodward's successor. Prior to arriving at GCSAA in July 2009, Evans



was director of the parks, recreation, and commercial facilities division for the City of Mesa, AZ, where he managed a staff of more than 700.

The search process to fill the CEO position will involve the services of an executive search firm with the ultimate selection by the GCSAA Board of Directors. The process will begin immediately, although no timetable has been established to identify a replacement.

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MetGCSA Members Roll Out the Red Carpet for UK Counterparts

by Matt Ceplo, CGCS

Early May, nine Met-area superintendents and other industry professionals played host to two environmental award winners from the United Kingdom. After reviewing more than 100 applicants, the UK's Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) awarded its prestigious Golf Environment Awards to Graeme Taylor of St. Andrew's Links Trust and Matt Worster of Minchinhampton Golf Club. The two were treated to a five-day, all-expense-paid trip to some of the finest golf courses in the U.S.

St. Andrew's and Graeme Taylor earned the STRI's Overall Achievement Award for their work in eliminating gorse across the dunes on Jubilee Course and restoring a diverse and ecologically rich grassland.

Minchinhampton and Matt Worster won the Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year Award. The club has fully embraced such positive initiatives as green waste composting, recycling, and energy efficiency, which have enabled the club to operate in harmony with the environment.

Joining Graeme and Matt on the trip was STRI's Ecology & Environment Senior Consultant Lee Penrose. The first stop on their tour was Pine Valley Golf Club with Rick Christian. From there, they went on to the USGA Golf House, Rutgers University with Dr. Jim Murphy, Rockland Country Club with me, Westchester Country Club

with Joe Alonzi, Sebonack Golf Club with Garret Bodington, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club with Mark Michaud, National Golf Links with William Salinetti, and Bethpage with Andy Wilson.

It was interesting talking to Graeme and Matt. Never having been "across the pond," it didn't occur to me that they had to put a substantial amount of time and energy into attaining that wispy links look. Right now, in fact, they're working on a new method for achieving that look we've all been striving for. It involves scarification of the turf, then mowing at different heights, followed by seeding with their trademark fescue. I'll be keeping in touch with them to see how they make out.

I also thought it was interesting that, like us, Graeme and Matt find bunker consistency among the most common complaints and challenges.

During their visit to Rockland, it was fun to see their reaction to some of the course's "wildlife": Catching their attention were a chipmunk that dashed across the cart path and a bullfrog that was sunning itself. Struck by the size of the frog, Graeme and Matt actually hopped off the cart to touch it. Only when it leapt into the water were they convinced that it was real. "They don't grow that big over there," Graeme explained.



For more information on the UK's environmental awards, please visit www.golfenvironmentawards.com

Speaking of Environmental Stewardship . . .

While we're on the subject of environmental initiatives, I want to let you know about a website that is invaluable to anyone looking to draft an environmental plan. What's that you say? . . . You don't need a plan? Hmmm. I'll bet you have a plan for your family, career, and retirement, so why not your environmental efforts?

Carefully grooming and maintaining your golf course isn't enough—when it comes to serving the environment. You need a plan, and fortunately, there's a website that will make getting one up-and-running on your course quick and easy.

Just log onto greengolfusa.com; do the quick sign-in; and after a short time, you'll get approval to start the process.

The GCSA of Oregon and Western Washington—along with Mr. Thomas Calabrese and Envirologic Resources, and many others—have done a great job using point-and-click, with dropdown menus to facilitate the process. It didn't take me long to complete, and when I finished, I was able to print an impressive 38-page IPM plan—for free.

Mapping the property at Rockland has enabled us to define areas that can be taken out of play, while allowing more habitats for animals. We have a much more diverse population of birds than ever before, and the occasional fox and coyote sighting always gives members something to talk about in the grillroom. So I urge you to join the many who have taken the plunge, and start managing your property in a more environmentally friendly way.

Matt Ceplo is MetGCSA past president and superintendent of Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY.



Rockland Country Club's Matt Ceplo hosts UK Environmental Award Winners. From left to right: Joellen Lampman, program manager for Audubon International; Matt Ceplo; Graeme Taylor of St. Andrew's Links Trust; Matt Worster of Minchinhampton Golf Club; and Lee Penrose, the UK's Sports Turf Research Institute's Ecology & Environment Senior Consultant.

GlenArbor Recognized for Environmental Stewardship

by Scott Olson

The March 24 MGA Green Chairman Education Series and Awards Luncheon was a winning day for all who attended, with a roster of informative talks designed to educate club leaders and the golfing public on a variety of topics ranging from the “why” behind various turfgrass management practices to strategies for fostering strong superintendent/green chairman relationships.

Held at Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison, NY, the event was all the more meaningful for GlenArbor Superintendent Ken Benoit and President Morgan Gregory, who were there to accept the prestigious Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Award on behalf of GlenArbor Golf Club.

Created to recognize an MGA member club that has demonstrated environmental stewardship through golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research, the award was named in honor of Arthur P. Weber, whose most lasting impact in golf 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.

He wrote an Environmental Code of Conduct for golf course maintenance nearly 20 years ago, was a past president of the MGA, a longtime member of the USGA Green section, and a cofounder and board member of the MGA Green Committee and the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

GlenArbor is perhaps one of the most environmentally astute clubs in the Met area, with environmental policies and programs in place since the club's inception in 2001. Ken and his staff at GlenArbor clearly take their environmental initiative seriously, considering it part of their larger social responsibility. Through their efforts, the club has put a highly successful wildlife and habitat preservation program into action, planting, over the years, 3,000 trees and shrubs, five acres of wildflowers, and 20,000 daffodils have been established. The club has also fledged 730 bluebirds through an award-winning bluebird program.

“We are always striving to improve and expand our Environmental Excellence Pro-



gram,” says Ken. “It goes without saying our commitment doesn’t end with this award. When it comes to environmental stewardship, we can never do too much. We plan to expand our program each year, the scope of which is limited only by our imagination.”

Congratulations, Ken, and GlenArbor!

Scott Olson, our Class C representative on the board, is assistant superintendent at Scarsdale Golf Club in Hartsdale, NY.

At the MGA Green Chairman Series, MGA President Allan Small (left) joins Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Award recipients for a photo opportunity. From left to right: GlenArbor Superintendent Ken Benoit, his wife Melodee, and President Morgan Gregory.

Members on the Move

- **Ryan Batz** is now with John Deere Golf in New Fairfield, CT. Previous position: Superintendent at Trump National Golf Club, Briarcliff Manor, NY.
- **Ed Kaufmann** is the new superintendent at Pleasantville Country Club in Pleasantville, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Scarsdale Golf Club in Hartsdale, NY.
- **Matthew Mol** is a new assistant superintendent at the Maidstone Club in East Hampton, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Metropolis Country Club in White Plains, NY.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Scott M. Blough**, Class SM, Trump National Golf Club, Briarcliff Manor, NY

- **John Garcia**, Class A, The Patterson Club, Fairfield, CT
- **Daniel Kampa**, Class C, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT
- **Scott Wiiki**, Class C, Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, CT

Well Wishes

Please join us in wishing **Jasmine Ceplo**, wife of Rockland Country Club Superintendent and MetGCSA Past President **Matt Ceplo**, well after her recent surgery.

Recertified

Congratulations to **Ernie Steinhofner**, vice president of sales at Metro Turf Specialists in Danbury, CT, for completing the renewal process for maintaining his CGCS status with the GCSAA.

Dates to Remember

Please be sure to mark your calendars with these upcoming events. For further information on any of our golf meetings, please contact either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Ken Benoit at 914-241-0700 or Mark Chant at 631-643-0047. To discuss any upcoming social events, please contact either of our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs: Mark Millett at 914-949-4203 or Paul Gonzalez at 914-273-3755.

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, August 3
Wykagyl Country Club
New Rochelle, NY
Host: Mike Scott

New Date!

Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier AND Poa Annual Tournament

Monday, September 20
Wheatley Hills Golf Club
East Williston, NY
Host: Stephen Rabideau, CGCS

Met Area Team Championship

Thursday, October 7
The Bridge
Sag Harbor, NY
Host: Gregg Stanley

Superintendent/Green Chairperson Tournament

Monday, October 18
Wee Burn Country Club
Darien, CT
Host: Doug Drugo

Annual Assistants Tournament

Tuesday, October 19
Pelham Country Club
Pelham Manor, NY
Superintendent Host: Jeff Wentworth, CGCS
Assistant Host: George Chavez

Industry Events

Second Biennial University of Connecticut Turfgrass Field Day

Tuesday, July 20
UConn Plant Science Research and Education Facility
Storrs, CT

The field day will offer guided tours of a variety of research projects underway at the university. In addition, turfgrass managers will have the opportunity to participate in a silent auction, visit with a variety of exhibitors, and from 1 to 3 p.m., participate in roundtable discussions with such industry experts and organizations as:

- the USGA's Jim Skorulski, who will speak about current conditions on golf courses
- Oregon State University Agronomist Mike Flowers, who will discuss athletic field conditions and grooming
- the CT DER, which will offer an update on pesticide legislation

For further information, check the website at www.turf.uconn.edu.

Rutgers Turfgrass Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, July 27
Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ

This year's turfgrass research field day will cover advances in disease, insect, and weed control; the latest anthracnose management strategies; traffic trials on cool-season grasses; and the evaluation of newly released products for golf courses.

Call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org for further information.

The 7th Annual Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Classic

Monday, September 27
Fenway Golf Club
Scarsdale, NY

Superintendent Rob Alonzi will host this year's UMass Alumni Turf Group fundraiser in support of turf education and research at the University of Massachusetts.

The program kicks off with a 12:30 p.m. shotgun followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, and awards ceremony, which, this year, will honor Donald Hearn, CGCS. Hearn is a UMass grad and longtime superintendent who has served the industry as a USGA Green Section committee member and a member of the Massachusetts Golf Association Executive Committee. In addition, he's served as president of the New England GCSA and, in 1987, president of the GCSAA, chairing our national organization's Certification Committee and numerous others. The latter two organizations have recognized his service and leadership excellence with distinguished service awards.

Please plan to attend this worthy fundraiser, and join us in honoring a deserving fellow superintendent. Entry forms and additional information will be available online at www.alumniturfgroup.com.



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Keepin' Cool When the Heat's On . . .

Steve Rabideau Invites MetGCSA to Wheatley Hills

by Greg Wojick, CGCS

“This is no fun,” says an embattled but confident Stephen Rabideau, superintendent of Wheatley Hills Golf Club. Steve was referring to the “fire” raging on his course during one of the hottest and driest stretches of weather this area has seen in a long time. “I love the profession and I truly love golf, but this heat makes it hard on everyone in the golf business,” he says, pleased that he’ll have time to recover before the dual event he’s hosting on September 20: the Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier and Poa Annual Tournament.

Wheatley Course and Character

As shepherd of Wheatley Hills for the past eight seasons, Steve has been in charge of a transformation to consistent championship conditions that has earned him high regard in the profession.

“Wheatley has more than 90 single-digit-handicap members, and most are active and passionate golfers,” says Steve. “We have no pool or tennis, just a golf course and a bar. The bar is where trouble lurks,” says Steve, admitting to steering clear of the bar conversations as much as possible. His energies are devoted, instead, to producing stellar course conditions, oftentimes pushing the grass to the brink with low heights of cut and frequent mowings (daily fairway mowing) to get the course to where his membership likes it.

“From April 18 until the first week of November,” says Steve, “there’s a very full golf calendar. Frequent Member/Guest and Member/Member tourneys jam up the season’s schedule. I am fortunate to have a fantastic green chairman who understands many of the subtle nuances needed to provide great conditions,” continues Steve, adding, “I’d be more than happy to have him become the permanent chairman of the Green Committee. He’s that good!”

Steve was also proud to mention that many of Wheatley’s members are accomplished amateurs. One of them, the late Gene Francis, actually led the Master’s tournament one year after the first round. “Over

the years, a number of our members have been in the U.S. Amateur, the Ike, Anderson, and Mid-Amateur tournaments,” says Steve.

Fun but Challenging

Steve says the 97-year-old Devereux Emmet layout is always fun to play but also provides a significant golfer challenge. “Wheatley has five par 5s and five par 3s, and the rough is thick and tough to get out of.” Steve has helped provide that challenge by removing, in his words, literally thousands of trees. “All the pines and spruce trees are gone,” he says, noting that, with the rogue tornado that hit Wheatley several weeks ago, the course lost another 70 trees! “It’s always interesting on a golf course,” Steve muses.

Another enhancement that was two years in the works when Steve signed on at Wheatley in 2002 was a complete bunker renovation project. “I worked closely with Hurdzan/Fry to finish the bunker renovation,” says Steve. “And I’m still working closely with them today on a master plan to remove trees and incorporate native fescue areas around the bunkers and throughout the course.”

A Dedicated Professional

Earning CGCS status in 2002, Steve’s been in the “biz” 19 years. But like many superintendents, golf course management wasn’t first and foremost on his mind. After high school, he had his sights set on a business degree, and while attending Westfield State College, Steve worked two seasons on a four-person crew at Petersham Country Club in Western Massachusetts. It gave him such a good feel about golf course maintenance that he decided to swap his future in a business suit for a degree in turfgrass management.

He enrolled, first, in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture. After completing a two-year turf degree, he pursued a B.S. in Plant and Soil Science at the University of Massachusetts.

While hitting the books, Steve completed two internships, the first at Farm Neck Golf Club on the Vineyard and the second at The



Stephen Rabideau

Apawamis Club in Rye, NY. After graduating in 1995, he accepted a position as assistant superintendent at Seawane Club and then, three years later, landed his first job as superintendent at The Hamlet. After five years in a lead role, he became the new super at Wheatley Hills.

No rest for the weary, Steve serves as treasurer of the Long Island GCSA and is a board member of the UMass Alumni Association.

Steve’s favorite leisure pastime is— you guessed it—golf. “I feel that being a golfer provides a strong link to the job I do day in and day out,” says Steve. “I love to play with some buddies and enjoy playing different courses and experiencing different conditions. My way of paying attention to the detail required by golf club memberships is to make golf and golf course maintenance not just a hobby, but a way of life.

“You have to be passionate about what you’re doing,” he says. “The product that golfers see each day is a direct result of what you do each day on the course. I try hard to instill in my staff the importance of paying attention to the little things because it’s those little things that make a big difference.”

Steve hopes you’ll all come out on September 20 . . . when the heat’s off.

Greg Wojick, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the principal in Communitool, LLC, and founder of Playbooks™ for Golf.

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