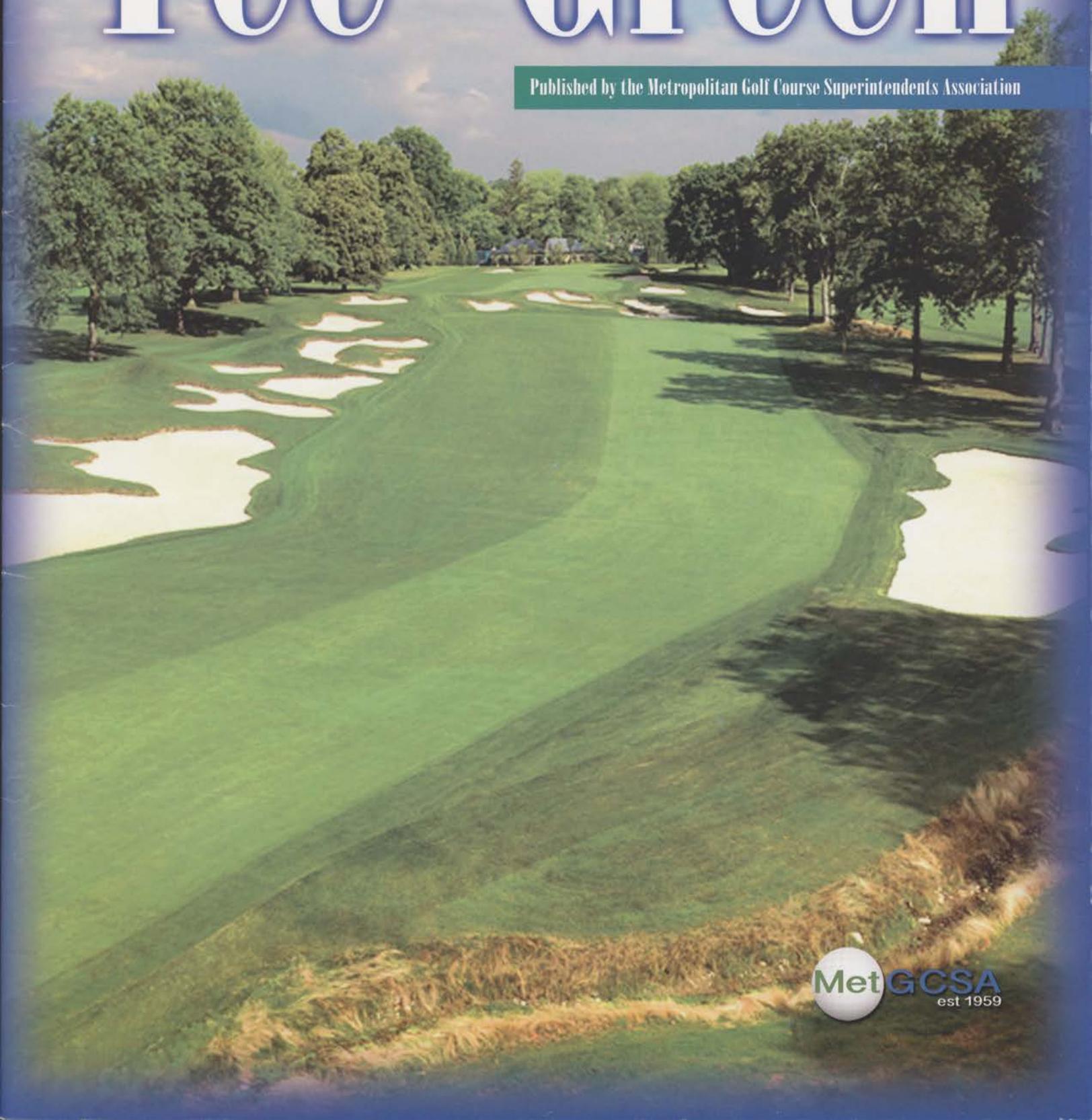


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Tee To Green

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est 1959

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President's Message

A Mighty Fine Season

A

s I sit down to write another President's Message on this muggy, late-August morning, I'm reflecting on how the season has transpired up until now. All in all, at least up here at Centennial, the season has been a good one. Wacky spring weather transitioned into a moderate summer. The only issue we're facing now is the lack of regular rainfall. Unless you have access to municipal water, ponds are at critically low levels. Couple that with the fact that we are right in the middle of aerification season and turf management can get pretty dicey.

Hopefully everybody gets through this dry stretch unscathed, and all of your fall projects can start without issue.

A Little R&R Goes a Long Way

One thing that I'm particularly grateful for is that my facility has no problem with my getting away for a few days this time of year, when I need it most. Every year, toward the end of August, my family rents a beach house in Massachusetts for one week, and I join them for part of it. It's something I look forward to every summer.

Even though the trip is short, getting away pays dividends. After a few days of rest and relaxation, and enjoying some sun and fun at the beach with family, I'm refreshed and can return to work with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

I highly recommend a planned getaway for you and your family. When you have a moment to recharge, your club reaps the benefits as well!

Afterhours Fun

July and August have been busy for the MetGCSA. Our Summer Social, held July 13, drew a sizable crowd to the Orienta Beach Club in Mamaroneck, NY. Members were treated to a picture-perfect evening and an impressive seafood feast served by the shores of the Long Island Sound. (See photos, page 8.)

On the heels of that event was our Family Picnic at Bedford Memorial Park. This fun-



*Glen Dube, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

filled afternoon featured a bouncy castle, snow cones, and the ever-popular piñata. It was nice to see a number of new faces there with their families having a great time. Special thanks to Bayer's Dave Sylvester for making his famous BBQ delicacies and assuming the role of grill master for the day! (See photos, page 9.)

I'd also like to extend a special thank you to Brett Chapin, our Social Committee chair, for organizing these two very special events.

Last but not least was the Scholarship & Parent/Child Tournament held August 4 at Mosholu Golf Course. Many thanks to our host, Dave Moffett, for providing both a great venue and a great playing field. By all accounts, our parent-child teams had a wonderful time on the links.

This tournament is also the time we present scholarship awards to well-deserving children of MetGCSA members. I want to congratulate our eight scholarship winners on a job well done and wish them the best of luck in the coming school year. Many thanks to Scholarship Chair David Dudones and his *continued on page 16*

Feature

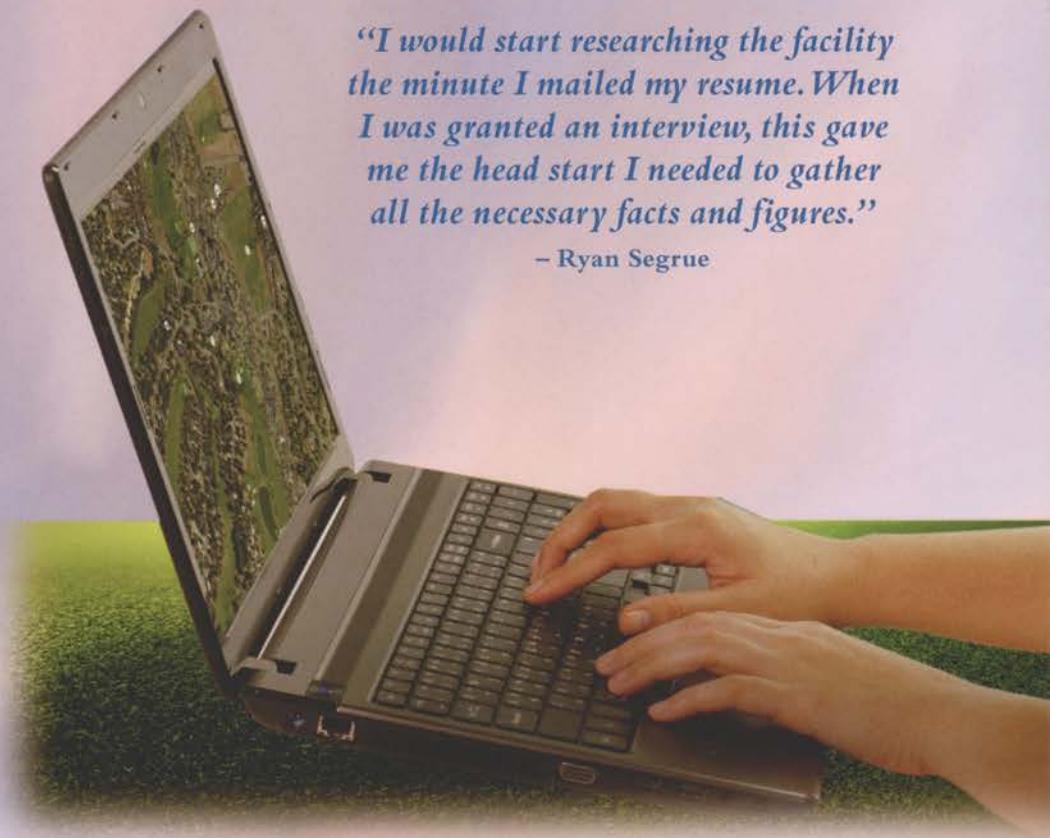
Insider's Guide to Scoring That 'Super' Job

*Superintendents and Headhunters Share
Their Trade Secrets With Assistants
Looking to Climb the Ladder*

by Jim Pavonetti, CGCS

"I would start researching the facility the minute I mailed my resume. When I was granted an interview, this gave me the head start I needed to gather all the necessary facts and figures."

— Ryan Segrue



If there is one topic that rarely gets old among assistant superintendents, it's how to up their chances of landing that super job. That's why, after a six-year hiatus, we decided to revisit the topic, this time seeking the counsel of area assistants who recently landed premium superintendent positions, as well as several headhunters, who are on the inside track of what it takes to impress a prospective employer.

If you're hoping to read about how to build a resume, website, or cover letter, you won't find it here. Instead, we'll take you to the next level, sharing the often-unspoken rules of a successful job search and interview process. The goal: to help you boost your chances of winning that job you're hoping for.

Beginning the Job Search

#1: Walk the walk and talk the talk. If you want a superintendent's position, look—and act—the part. Dress appropriately, shave regularly, and just as important, maintain a professional attitude both on and off the course.

You can begin by cleaning up your social media. Be sure it does nothing but reflect well on you. "If you are Googling the golf facility or club, you know they're Googling you," cautions Shorehaven Superintendent Ryan Segrue.

"Assistants should put as much work into themselves as they do their daily maintenance duties," says Wykagyl Superintendent Dan Rogers. "Behave like a professional, and dress for the position you want, not the one you have. After all, you never know when or where you'll run into a member—or a prospective boss."

"To talk the talk," says Greg Wojick, whose company Playbooks for Golf offers job consulting services for professionals in the turfgrass management industry, "it's essential that you not only know turf, but the game of golf as well: the rules, the top professionals, the best courses and their architects. This will set you apart from the average candidate and show a hiring committee that you're well rounded and knowledgeable."

#2: Be proactive when searching for a job. "I can't emphasize enough that it's not your boss's duty to get you your next job," says Wykagyl's Dan Rogers. "We, as superintendents, can make contacts, provide knowledge and insight, but it's up to the assistant to be the driving force behind his or her own career. They need to want that job bad enough to get it. And that attitude will ultimately come through in the interview process."

#3: Accept every opportunity to interview. Practice makes perfect—or at the very least offers the experience you need to feel more at ease when that big job interview comes along.

"Assistants need to be put in that uncomfortable position of being judged and questioned about things they know, and don't know," says Wykagyl's Dan Rogers. "They will undoubtedly have some failures, but that's the kind of experience they need to succeed when there's a job interview that really counts."

Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue encourages job hunters to include in their interview repertoires any job openings with management/maintenance companies. "I know there's a stigma out there about these companies," says Ryan, "but I worked for ValleyCrest for three years and I learned more in that time than I ever could have imagined about the business side of the superintendent's job. Do good work, and better opportunities will come along," he adds.

Playbooks for Golf's Greg Wojick advises making the most of every interview experience by reflecting on what you did well and what you could improve on. "It's wise to keep a notebook of the questions you were asked and the answers you gave," says Greg. "Over time, this notebook of questions will be a valuable resource in helping you prepare for future interviews."

Executive Golf Search's Bruce Williams advises looking at the GCSAA website to view the most often asked interview questions, many of which Williams, himself, developed years ago when he was on the GCSAA board.

Prepping for the Interview

You just got the call from the club's search chairman or general manager inviting you for an interview. Now's your chance to differentiate yourself from the other applicants by learning more about the golf facility and job you're applying for than any other candidate—and then preparing to demonstrate why you're the best fit for the position.

#1: Research club and course particulars. Job number one is to investigate the facility's history and philosophy and any particulars about the maintenance operation and golf course. Find out if there are any renovation projects planned, underway, or recently completed and what they might be looking for in a new superintendent.

Come to the Course Equipped

Most everyone we spoke to noted the tools needed on a site visit:

- a notebook or portfolio for taking notes
- a camera or Smartphone for taking pictures and documenting what you see
- a soil probe to determine how well the course has been aerated and topdressed and whether there are issues with such things as drainage or thatch



Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue believes in getting a jump on the research process. "I would always start researching the facility the minute I mailed my resume," he says. "When I was granted an interview, this gave me the head start I needed to gather all the necessary facts and figures."

Ryan recommends perusing the club's website for information or photos that could improve your understanding of the club and property. He also suggests viewing the course on Goggle Earth. "I always tried to gain an intimate understanding of the property before I made a site visit," says Ryan.

Yet another information-gathering tack Ryan suggests: Understand the course from the golfers' perspective by checking out course reviews. "You'll find golfers' comments for public courses, for instance, on sites like GolfNow," says Ryan.

Country Club of New Canaan's Mike Roe begins his investigation during the very first phone call: "I request a copy of the operating and capital budgets, equipment inventory, USGA reports, and the square footage of the greens, tees, fairways, and rough," he says, suggesting that you also inquire about staffing levels and the average hourly wage of the staff.

And while you're at it, Bruce Williams of Executive Golf Search suggests that you also request a copy of any maintenance standards or standard operating procedures that the club has established. But probably more essential, says Williams, is that you investigate the club's financial standing to be sure it's on firm footing. The last thing you want to do is sign on with a sinking ship—or one that may not have the resources necessary to do the kind of job that will reflect well on you.

#2: Put your network to work. The best way to get the rub on the job you're applying for is to speak with your contacts: your boss, industry mentors, and any contractors or sales reps who might have had dealings with the club. In addition to offering insight into the position and why it's open, you might be put in touch that all-important someone who would be happy to put in a good word for you. As we know, it's often *who* you know,

not *what* you know, that will give you that edge in a job search.

New Canaan's Mike Roe found it helpful to reach out to the members of his club who had contacts at New Canaan. "This was a huge factor in my getting the job at CCNC," says Mike. "Many of the New Canaan members were familiar with Wee Burn and came to play before my interview."

In the end, your success comes down to taking some initiative. If you know, for instance, that a headhunter is doing the search, don't hesitate to get in touch with that person, if not directly, through a contact you have. Everything you can do to stand out will help increase your chances of being selected from that pool of capable candidates.

#3: Get it from the source. Try to contact the club's former superintendent and even his or her predecessor. Inquire about the course, the golfers, the club's staff and resources.

Executive Golf Search's Bruce Williams recommends taking your inquiry behind-the-scenes to understand previous superintendents' successes, failures, and length of time on the job.

Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue always focused on the current super and why he was being replaced. Did he retire, move to another position, or lose his job? "The circumstances behind a superintendent leaving can make a big difference in the way you approach the job, both in your cover letter and interview," says Ryan.

Another source of valuable information is the club's equipment manager. He can give you the lowdown on the grounds crew and the maintenance facility. You can ask about the shop and the equipment fleet: what should be replaced or upgraded and what is missing that you should think about purchasing.

Yet another good resource: salespeople who call on the facility. They can tell you things that staff may not feel comfortable divulging. Ask about the morale of the staff, if the club pays its bills, and even what kind

of products the superintendent likes to buy. The objective of this type of in-depth investigation: to make your interviewers feel you are so familiar with their operation, and what it needs, that it would be the easiest transition for everyone if they were to choose you, rather than another candidate, for the job.

#4: Conduct a site visit. Even if you've played the course, you can't set foot in the boardroom without having conducted a site visit—or two or three. The site visit is your time to scrutinize course conditions and look for ways you might enhance play or course conditions.

Walking the course with a committee member or the green chair is a great chance for the committee member to get to know—and hopefully like—you. It's your chance to demonstrate your knowledge and the member's chance to disclose any pet peeves that you can use to your benefit during the interview.

Listen closely to what the committee member points out about the course. Don't worry if you don't have all the answers at that point. Just be sure to jot them down and then address them during the interview or in your presentation.

Most everyone we talked to agreed that it's always wise to talk to employees, the golf pro and other facility managers, and members to get a feel for what they like about the course and what they would change if they could. "During each of your contacts, leaving a personable impression should be high on your list of objectives," says Playbooks for Golf's Greg Wojick.

"Plan to spend at least three hours out there," says Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue. And both Ryan and New Canaan's Mike Roe emphasize walking the course, even if you're offered a cart, to get a better sense of the layout and conditions.

"You are looking for minor details and areas you can improve on with your skill set," says Old Oaks Superintendent Shannon Slevin. While there is always something that could be improved, both Wykagyl's Dan Rogers and Ryan caution against ap-

pearing overly critical. "Be a positive problem solver who can provide ideas and solutions," says Dan. "The last thing you want to do is put your foot in your mouth by looking for little issues that you know need to be fixed but the members never noticed. They may perceive you as overly critical and feel you're putting down their property," he adds.

"Try to focus on the major issues that members are aware of, rather than focusing on the more minor flaws," continues Ryan. "And if the course is in great shape and the previous superintendent was well liked, I would take nice photos of the signature hole and vistas around the property and use them as background photos in my PowerPoint or report."

#5: Come to the course with a plan. Make the most of your site visit by not only putting together the materials you need, but also a thoughtful plan of action.

Be sure, first and foremost, to wear nice golf attire with golf shoes or good walking shoes. Prepare for whatever the weather might bring. It rained about two inches while I performed my first site visit at Fairview. The benefit there was that I was the only one on the course, and I got to see how water moved across the property.

When I made a site visit, my to-do list was lengthy. I would look at the trees, noting whether there were too many positioned too close to fine turf. I evaluated whether or not the trees, water features, bunkers, and other hazards were being well maintained. Is the irrigation system adequate? How are the cart paths? Has the course been well aerated and topdressed? Are there drainage or thatch issues? What is the condition of the maintenance facility, clubhouse grounds, and practice facility?

"The devil is in the details," says Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue. In addition to looking for general agronomic and drainage issues, he recommends that you take time to view the course from the members' perspective. "Check for details like edged curbing, the condition of tee markers and ball washers, weeds in flowerbeds," he says. "You will be



Come to the Course Knowing What to Look For

Make the most of your site visit by taking a comprehensive look at the property—the good, the bad, and the ugly of the golf course and clubhouse grounds—making a photographic record of what you see. Here are a few specifics on what our respondents were always on the lookout for:

- The composition of turfgrass species on the greens, tees, and fairways, as well as their conditioning
- Course aeration and topdressing
- Topdressing layering, root depth, and moisture content on the greens, tees, and fairways
- The appearance of the clubhouse grounds and surrounding flowerbeds
- Drainage or thatch issues
- The maintenance of trees, water features, bunkers, and other hazards
- The condition of the cart paths
- Irrigation system coverage and efficiency and pump house operation
- The condition of the maintenance facility, inside and out
- Equipment inventory and condition
- Maintenance operation staffing levels

Last but not least, secure a copy of the maintenance operation budget, the maintenance standards, and the club's standard operating procedures so you will get a good look at the club from the inside out!



surprised at how much members notice these types of details compared to what we, as turf professionals, see.

Ryan also recommends gaining an understanding of the protocol and circumstances of your site visit so there are no surprises. "I've been on site visits," he says, "where I was expecting to be on my own, but the committee ended up joining me." Forewarned is forearmed!

Some of the details New Canaan's Mike Roe feels are important to note are the topdressing depth, if it exists; topdressing layering, root depth, and moisture content on the greens, tees, and fairways. On the tees," he says, "I also check to see how quickly the divots are recovering or if the tees are rotated properly."

Last but not least, Mike recommends checking for the composition of turfgrass species, as well as the irrigation layout and the number of quick couplers around the greens, tees, and fairways.

Crafting a Plan of Action

After your research is complete, your next step is to quickly craft a plan of attack. TMG Golf's Jim McLoughlin recommends that your plan of action include what you would like to accomplish in your first year, your first two to three years, and then highlight a longer range vision for the operation.

#1: Show them what you can do. Do your best to describe how you plan to manage each portion of the facility, including greens, tees, fairways, bunkers, water features, landscaping, trees, rough, practice

facility, paths, equipment, irrigation. Leave no stone unturned.

Old Oaks' Shannon Slevin recommends taking pictures of areas that you can relate to one of your past projects or experiences and then incorporate those photos into a PowerPoint presentation. "The PowerPoint is the biggest opportunity to showcase your skills," says Shannon. "Ninety percent of the candidates will have similar looking resumes."

New Canaan's Mike Roe prefers to present his information in report form. "I used a PowerPoint twice," says Mike, "and both times I felt like I lost my audience." Mike shows up to his interviews with a spiral-bound booklet that he has prepared at Kinkos, adding the club's logo for a finishing touch.

"I like to have the report tell the story of the course and then back up what I say with photos," says Mike. "The report I did for CCNC was 37 pages long. It detailed how I was going to take what they have now and build off that to raise the conditioning and level of golf."

Placing pictures from courses where he's worked, side-by-side, with pictures from the course at New Canaan, he demonstrated how specific areas might be improved.

#2: Show them the money. Keep in mind that it's wise to demonstrate not just how you plan to spend the club's money, but also what you can accomplish for no additional cost or, better, *less* money.

But Mike cautions against telling a club you can do the changes you're proposing for the current budget, just to sell yourself. "I

went through what I thought could be done to improve every playing surface and then explained, realistically, how that would affect the current budget," says Mike.

#3: Go for the extra credit. Executive Golf Search's Bruce Williams recommends going for the extra credit points when preparing your report by including copies of any documents that you, yourself, have written. "Items such as Maintenance Standards, Standard Operating Procedures, Budgets, Equipment Replacement Plans, Daily Checklists, etc., will give the club a glimpse into what you can do for them to take them to the next level," says Williams.

And don't forget to include any articles you have authored or even an example of your club communications. Communication is one of the keys to long-term success on the job.

The Interview

With all that's been written about interviewing, you probably know about the power of first impressions. Many surveys have been conducted in the business world that say it takes most interviewers just 6 to 10 minutes to draw a conclusion about a candidate. That means that you have to be on your game well before you set foot in that meeting room. Here's what our sources recommend you keep in mind:

#1: Pay attention to the details. Extend a firm handshake, maintain eye contact, and present a professional image. This includes ensuring your shoes are shined, clothing is pressed, hair is cut, and your nails are clean and trimmed.

I, personally, recommend having two different well-tailored suits ready to go for your first and second interviews. When called for an interview, you won't have time to run to Jos. A. Banks to be fitted for a suit and then wait a week for it to be tailored.

#2: Know the key players. "If possible," says Playbooks for Golf's Greg Wojick, "you should learn the names and titles of the people you might be interviewing with. You'll appear more confident and interested if they know you took the time to learn their names."

Old Oaks' Shannon Slevin and Wykagyl's Dan Rogers place this practice high on their pre-interview to-do list. Says Shannon, "It's important to make a connection not only with the names of the club officials and staff involved in the interview process, but also their professions. That will help you talk turf in terms they can relate to and understand."

Dan adds, "If you've made it to the interview, these people know a lot about you. Knowing their backgrounds and understanding where they might be coming from will help you better navigate their questions."

Dan also recommends writing down the names of the interviewers in the order in which they're sitting in the boardroom. "That way," he says, "you can use their names when talking to them, which helps establish a personal connection."

#3: Ace the likely questions. Make sure you know how you will respond to predictable questions, such as, "Can you tell me a little about yourself?" Review interview questions you've been asked in the past and prepare answers. At the same time, think about the insights gained from your network so you can couch your responses in the context of how you can benefit this particular course and club.

"Ideally," says Playbooks for Golf's Greg Wojick, "you should try to gain enough control of the interview to insert the points you feel are important to your getting the job offer."

#4: Rehearse. I'm an advocate of typing answers to potential questions and then rehearsing the responses out loud. Take it a step further and record your responses. Play it back to see how you sound. Repeat the process until you're satisfied that you sound natural, relaxed, and confident.

Executive Golf Search's Bruce Williams suggests a more impromptu rehearsal approach: "Do mock interviews with your current superintendent or peers. And make sure they ask you the tough questions," he adds.

#5: Take it outside. TMG Golf's Jim McLoughlin touts the value of encouraging an on-course interview with the search committee. "The rationale for this recommendation," he writes in a June 26, 2014 Turfnet blog entry, "is that a search committee will learn far more about their golf course and each candidate through collaborative on-course exchanges than they will be able to via routine sit-down interviews, primarily because search committees find it difficult to develop a meaningful line of questioning when dealing with technical course issues."

#6: Don't be cocky. Strike the right balance between presenting your accomplishments in a positive light and coming across as overly confident. Being arrogant is one of the worst mistakes a candidate can make.

"From my perspective," says Wykagyl's

Dan Rogers, "most important is being confident that you're the person for the job, yet humble enough to know you don't have it yet. Confidence comes from preparation, and humility comes from failure. It's going to take both to make it happen," he adds.

#7: Tell memorable stories. Give specific examples of how and why you've been successful. "You'll make a positive impression on the hiring committee by sharing interesting anecdotes about how you helped to solve a tough turf or staffing problem or contributed to saving the club money," says Playbooks for Golf's Greg Wojick. "Be clear about your specific role at each course, and make sure to discuss topics that you know are top-of-mind for the club, whether it's widespread tree removal or a large-scale course renovation project.

"Just be sure never to alter the truth or exaggerate the facts," continues Greg. "Even if the committee doesn't recognize then that you've stretched the truth, they're bound to find out later. And that's a deal breaker."

New Canaan's Mike Roe cautions against sharing negative stories about the former superintendent or his or her maintenance practices. "I would be truthful," he says, "about what I wanted to change or disliked, but I would steer clear of any comments that may be perceived as sour grapes."

#8: Be yourself. "Avoid coming across as overly rehearsed," says Greg Wojick. "Interviewers want to get a sense of your personality and how you would fit into the fabric of the club."

"Search committees can sense nerves," adds Shorehaven's Ryan Segrue, "so find a way to calm down before you enter the room." Deep breathing helps.

#9: Follow up. If you really want the job, following up is critical. Rule of thumb: Touch base within 24 hours.

Handwritten thank you notes can go a long way in this electronic age. Address a note to the general manager and to the head of the hiring committee, reconfirming your interest. Mention the high points of the interview, and restate why you're right for the job and how you can meet the club's needs. This is also a great time to correct an answer that you may have stumbled on during the interview.

In the end, this is the perfect opportunity to put your name in front of the hiring committee one more time.

In the End

As an assistant, you really aren't expected to know all. The key, however, to your interview success now, and in the future, will be your ability to demonstrate a positive, can-do attitude. This skill will serve you well beyond the interview and into your everyday work, helping you navigate the politics and the stresses and strains involved in running your own golf course one day.

Jim Pavonetti is the editor of Tee to Green and superintendent at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, CT.



Camaraderie at the Clambake!

MetGCSA 2015 Summer Social



Megan Baggott & Mike Warantz



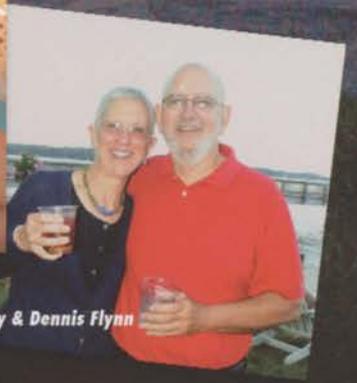
Glen Dube & Melodee Benoit

Aaron Crouse & Andrew White



Jesse & Alicia Shannon

Shannon Roe, Dana Drugo, & Kelly Miller



Cindy & Dennis Flynn

Terri & Paul Gonzalez, Eve Gentile



Bob Wolverton, Blake Halderman, & Bob Nielsen



Greg Wojcik & Peter Rappocio



Emily Conrad, Dan Rogers, Dave Conrad, & Samantha Rogers



Carolina Errazuriz & Dana Niven



Carolina Errazuriz, Dana Niven, Jeff Thrasher, Scott Niven

Brett Chapin, Dave & Brienne Morrow



Old friends meet again



Michele Collins & Doreen Warantz



Convening at the clambake tent



Frolicking Fun and Games...

at the MetGCSA Family Picnic



2015 Scholarship Recipients Recognized at the Mosholu Parent/Child Scholarship Tournament

by David Dudones, MetGCSA Scholarship Chairman

The 2015 Scholarship Awards Ceremony was held on August 4 as part of the fourth Annual Scholarship & Parent/Child Tournament at Mosholu Golf Course, one of America's premier First Tee golf courses.

Dave Moffett, who is in his fourth season as superintendent at Mosholu, had the course in great shape. And the nine-hole, 2,300-yard par 32 course proved, once again, to be the perfect setting for kids and adults of all golfing abilities.

Nearly 40 participants (parent/child teams) played in a nine-hole shotgun, two-man scramble format, which was free to members and, by all accounts, a great success.

The Scholarship Award Winners

After golf, everyone reconvened at the clubhouse for a delicious buffet dinner on the patio overlooking the ninth hole. With everyone seated, the winning team from the golf event —Wee Burn's Doug Drugo and his daughter, Claire—was awarded a prize, and scholarship awards were presented to eight deserving recipients, all MetGCSA members' children.

In addition to maintaining stellar GPAs, these students are all very involved in their communities and participate in numerous extracurricular activities. "It's great to see such time invested in their communities," says Scholarship Chair David Dudones. "This is one of the best things we do as an association, and nothing makes our committee more proud than to hand out scholarships to sons and daughters of our peers. It is an investment well spent."

Please join me in congratulating this year's scholarship recipients—and their proud parents:

Courtney Cook, daughter of Lisa and Mike Cook of The Care of Trees, will be a senior at the University of Delaware studying Interpersonal Communications and Organizational and Community Leadership.



At the Mosholu Parent/Child Golf Event, MetGCSA scholarship winners receive their well-deserved awards (left to right): Courtney Cook with her grandmother and sister, Julia; Greg and Pandora Wojick with their son, Christopher; Will Heintz with his son, Will III; Joan Pollak and Pat Cragin with their son, Andrew; Steve Renzetti accepting the award for his son, Austin; Jim Weiland accepting the award for his son, Zachary; and Elizabeth and Tim Marcoux with their son, David.

Andrew Cragin, son of Joan Pollak and Pat Cragin of Turf Products Corporation, will be a freshman at The Ohio State University and plans to pursue a degree in Business Management with a focus on Logistics and Supply Chain Management.

Will Heintz III, son of Linda and Will Heintz, superintendent of Pound Ridge Golf Club, will be a freshman at Lewis & Clark College and plans to study Molecular Biology.



Scorecard

Brae Burn Country Club Claims Invitational Trophy

David Marcoux, son of Elizabeth and Tim Marcoux of Atlantic Irrigation Services, will be a freshman at Daniel Webster College and plans to study Game Design and Development.

Sarah Perlee, daughter of Lorah and Bill Perlee, superintendent of The Apawamis Club, will be in her junior year at The University of Vermont, majoring in Molecular Genetics.

Austin Renzetti, son of Angela and Steve Renzetti, owner of Pinnacle Turf, will be a sophomore at Norwich University, studying Civil Engineering.

Zachary Weiland, son of Shannon Mulligan and Jim Weiland, superintendent of Connecticut Golf Club, will be a freshman at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, pursuing a degree in Chemical Engineering.

Christopher Wojick, son of Tee to Green Managing Editor Pandora Wojick and Greg Wojick, principal, Playbooks for Golf, will be a sophomore at the University of Connecticut, pursuing a bachelor's in Horticulture and Resource Economics.

In addition to congratulating our recipients, I'd like to recognize those past boards who had the foresight to initiate our Scholarship Fund, which has enabled us to assist in the ever-increasing college costs thanks to our Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, the 50/50s at our monthly meetings, and last but not least, a portion of our dues. Finally, a special thank you needs to go out to the entire Scholarship Committee for their hard work in reviewing and awarding each scholarship.

Please remember to support our scholarship raffle. It is the major income-generator for our Scholarship Fund!

David Dudones, chairman of the Scholarship Committee, is superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY.

Despite a few raindrops, Invitational contestants were able to get in all 18 holes on the pristinely conditioned course at Century Country Club prepared by our superintendent host, Kevin Seibel, and his crew. We had a sold-out field of players and some great golf rounds. Many thanks to all the Century staff who had a hand in making this an event to remember.

The event teams were made up of two club officials, the golf professional, and the golf course superintendent from each club, making this a wonderful opportunity to network with not only your club officials and coworkers, but also neighboring clubs.

The team from Brae Burn Country Club, led by our past president, Blake Halderman, placed first in the Net Division with a 55, claiming this year's Invitational Trophy. Congratulations!

Following the round, there were many awards to be distributed. Here are all the winning results:

Net Team Winners

- 55 Brae Burn Country Club
Blake Halderman, Bill Schultz, Jon Rachlin, Nick Yaun
- 58 Metropolis Country Club
Dave McCaffrey, Don Capelin, Gordon Paris, Craig Thomas
- 59 Canoe Brook Country Club
Jamie Devers, Taylor Rossi, Woody Garavente, George Deitz

Gross Team Winners

- 64 Due Process Stable & Golf
Tony Hooks, Bill Costigan, Dan Marino, Brett Jones
(match of cards)
- 64 Fairview Country Club
Jim Pavonetti, Ric Apter, John Heffer, Shaun Powers
- 66 Sunningdale Country Club
Sean Cain, Davi Kubie, Stephen Karotkin, Chris Toulson

Closest to the Pin

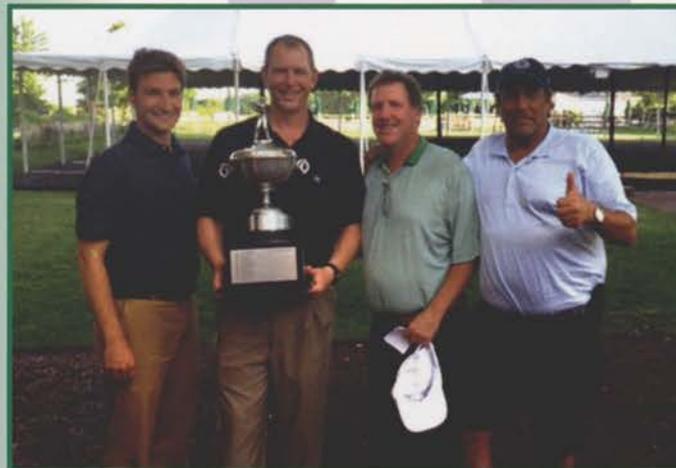
- #4 Jim Woods, Professional
Putnam County Golf Club 5' 2"
- #4 Bob Kenney, Club Official
Leewood Golf Club 6' 1"
- #13 David Dudones, Superintendent
Westchester Country Club 2' 9"
- #13 Nick Lombardi, Club Official
North Jersey Country Club 5' 9"

Longest Drive

- #11 Nick Yaun, Professional
Brae Burn Country Club
- #11 Sean Cain, Superintendent
Sunningdale Country Club
- #11 Dan Marino, Club Official
Due Process Stable & Golf

Low Professional

- 64 Shaun Powers, Fairview Country Club



The team from Brae Burn Country Club claims this year's Invitational trophy. Left to right: Golf Professional Nick Yaun, Superintendent Blake Halderman, Green Chairman Jon Rachlin, Club President Bill Schultz.

Calling All Assistants!

Join Fellow MetGCSA Member Assistant Superintendents at the Annual Assistants Championship at Brae Burn Country Club

by Tom Reyes

On October 6, Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY, will host the annual MetGCSA Assistants Championship. Assistant superintendents throughout the area will have the opportunity to come together for a day of comradery, networking, and, of course, great golf. This year's assistant superintendent hosts, Dave Peterson and Bobby Jewett, are excited to showcase their efforts on a day that gives back to fellow turf professionals.

The Course: Then and Now

Founded in 1964 by a group of friends from Harrison Country Club, Brae Burn was first known as Purchase Hills. The club quickly abandoned the name, however, because of its similarity to another club in the area, and in a "name-the-club" contest, members settled on the current Brae Burn Country Club.

Open for play in June 1965, the course was designed originally by Frank Duane, a long-time protégé of Robert Trent Jones Sr. Toward the end of 2006, Brae Burn brought in another Trent Jones disciple, Golf Course Architect John Harvey, to produce a master plan for the property. In the fall of 2007, the club put the plan into motion, embarking on a bunker renovation project that would not only make fairway bunker slopes gentler, but also create multiple areas to enter and exit the bunkers.

No small undertaking, the renovation included everything from reshaping the bunker floors to installing new drainage, liners, sand, drip irrigation on south facing slopes, and sod on most bunkers. Several entirely new bunkers were also created.

Drainage was installed to pick up bunker outfalls and fix any problem areas in the roughs and fairways. And fairway expansions were added in many locations to bring the fairway closer to the new bunkers, enhancing playability and visual appeal. As part of the project, Brae Burn also made a large cut on the par 3, eleventh hole to create better visibility to the green complex. In addition,

the 9th green was expanded by an extra 1,500 square feet to provide more pinable areas.

More recent improvements have focused on enhancing the visual appeal and dramatic sightlines of the course and area around the clubhouse. A pond restoration project that includes dredging and creating waterfalls between the ponds is well underway. In addition, they have added or improved on rock walls and naturalized areas throughout the course.

"A very active membership, who takes pride in their golf course, allows us the opportunity to complete several capital improvements each year," says Brae Burn Superintendent Blake Halderman, who is pleased to take part in providing a venue for MetGCSA assistants to enjoy time away from their daily responsibilities.

In addition to the upcoming Assistants Championship, this year Brae Burn has hosted a number of outside events such as the Westchester Open, the Met Open Qualifier, and the MGA Senior Championship.

Word to the wise when playing the course: "The length won't beat you up, but on these sloped greens, keeping the ball below the hole is a must!" warns Blake.

About Dave Peterson . . .

Starting his career in turfgrass while studying at Penn State University, Dave Peterson's first internship brought him to Winged Foot in 2005, where he returned in 2006 for the U.S. Open. After a second internship at the Kittansett Club in Massachusetts and subsequent graduation from Penn State in 2008 with a B.S. in Turfgrass Science, he headed West for the better part of three seasons to Pebble Beach. While there, he put a second U.S. Open under his belt. His third Open was in 2012 at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, where he took time off from work to volunteer at the event. "No surprise," says Blake, "Dave asked to use his vacation to go work on another golf course. Now that's dedication!"



Dave Peterson and Bobby Jewett

October of 2010 marked the beginning of Dave's tenure at Brae Burn Country Club, which he's quick to note has been a great fit for him. "Blake gives his assistants plenty of responsibility, which has helped me improve, both personally and professionally. The crew has been a pleasure to work with, and of course, being closer to family and friends is a great benefit too," says Dave.

A native of Pearl River, NY, Dave now calls Ramsey, NJ, home with his new fiancé Kait. Also in the golf industry, Kait works for the USGA in the Merchandising Department. "She travels to every U.S. Open, staying onsite for about two months at a time," says Dave, who recently grabbed the opportunity to propose to the love of his life at the airport on her way home from Chambers Bay. Congratulations, Dave!

As an outdoor enthusiast, Dave enjoys any and all sports, from catching a wave and doing a mud run (favorite Pebble Beach pastimes!) to playing hoops, which he admits is probably his favorite. "Golf isn't bad either, when I'm hitting it well," says Dave, with a smile.

Jack of All Trades

Turfgrass management is not the only skill in Dave's bag of tricks. His superb ability to troubleshoot and repair just about anything has made him a part-time mechanic, IT technician, electrician, plumber, and even a carpenter, going so far as to handcraft some of his own furniture. "Whatever needs to get done, it's pretty certain Dave can do it," says Blake.

"It's no secret that I call Dave my best assistant ever," says Blake. "He is one of those guys who everybody loves, and he has an incredible work ethic."

"As an example," continues Blake, "one Sunday in January around 5 p.m. I stopped by my office with my wife to pick something up. As I pulled in, I see all the fertilizer pallets outside, and there's Dave cleaning the shop. All of a sudden, my wife starts cursing me up and down saying I am working my staff too hard, etc. Finally, when she calmed down a bit, I was able to explain that I never asked him to come in. That's just the way Dave is: always looking to improve the facility in any way he can—and obviously at any hour of the day, even in the dead of winter.

"There's no doubt, when Dave's onsite, you know the golf course is in great hands. He's made my life so much easier the past five seasons," says Blake.

About Bobby Jewett . . .

Bobby Jewett may be new to the crew this year, but he brings with him valuable golf course experience, not the least of which is knowledge of what it takes to prep for a PGA Tour.

"Like Dave," says Blake of the newest member on his team, "Bobby has jumped

right in like he's been here for years. He is the kind of guy who just loves being on the golf course—working or playing a round.

"He's a first-to-arrive and last-to-leave type of person," Blake continues. "Even with a 5:30 a.m. start on Fridays, Bobby will be in and have the range tee cut before that time and then want to dry-cut the greens that night so they are just that much better for the weekend. You can always count on Bobby to finish all the details after everyone else is gone," adds Blake.

A Desert Storm Veteran, Bobby served on the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy. His turfgrass career started with graduating cum laude from SUNY Delhi with a B.S. in Turfgrass Management, after completing four season-long internships. His first job out of school was as the assistant superintendent at CordeValle Golf Club in California, where he hosted two PGA Frys.com Opens and the Women's Senior Amateur.

In addition to gaining valuable tournament experience on the job, Bobby has also volunteered at many events, notably the 2009 Women's Amateur at Red Tail Golf Club and the 2010 U.S. Women's Open at Oakmont. He went on to gain Major Championship experience at the 2011, 2012, and 2013 Men's U.S. Opens at Con-

gressional, The Olympic Club, and Merion Golf Club respectively.

Bobby moved on to become an assistant superintendent at Metedeconk National in New Jersey before joining the team at Brae Burn in February of 2015. "My experience here has been nothing short of amazing," says Bobby. "Blake is a great mentor in all respects to both Dave and me and allows us to be involved in all aspects of the course operations.

"We strive for perfection on a daily basis and continue to go above and beyond our members' expectations," continues Bobby. "It is a pleasure to work with individuals who are as passionate about the game as I am."

When asked about favorite hobbies or pastimes, Bobby mentions bowling, skiing, and hiking but then is quick to point out his number-one preoccupation: "My true passion is golf, period," he says. Committed to viewing the course from the player's perspective, Bobby can be found on the course, club in hand, almost every night.

With the level of commitment, skill, and experience Blake, Dave, and Bobby bring to the Brae Burn Country Club, there is no doubt this year's Assistants Championship will be an event to remember. October 6. Be there!

Superintendent Blake Halderman Welcomes Assistants Tourney

Blake began his career in golf course management when he was just 15 in his native New Hampshire. He worked at the local nine-hole Angus Lea Golf Course for Scott Niven's father, Russ, and then Scott's brother, Curt. While pursuing his turf degree, Blake interned at The Stanwich Club with Scott, completing the Niven trifecta. To round out his experience, he also completed an internship at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Columbus, OH, alongside friend and Two-Ball partner Glen Dube. Blake received a B.S. in Turfgrass Management with a minor in Business Administration in 1995 from the University of Rhode Island.

His first job out of school was as an assistant at Woodway Country Club with then Superintendent Larry Pakkala. After just two-and-a-half years there, Blake landed his first superintendent's job at Minisceongo Golf Club in Pomona, NY. "I just wanted to be a superintendent," says Blake of his speedy rise to the top. "I applied everywhere, from Puerto Rico to California."

After three years at Minisceongo, Blake's next stop was Trump National-Westchester as the grow-in superintendent. In 2004, just four years later, Blake accepted his current position at Brae Burn, where he's quick to tell you, he is grateful for his members, co-workers, and especially his two assistants, Dave and Bobby.

What More Could a Super Ask For?

"I am so fortunate to have two extremely hardworking, dedicated, and professional assistants watching over the property every day. I couldn't ask for a better combination of assistants. I am so proud to have both of them on our staff—and pleased, now, to host an event that honors not just their contributions, but also the hard work and dedication of the many other assistants in the Met area. I encourage my assistants go to meetings and events and network with their peers, but hosting an event like this allows them to be in the spotlight," says Blake.

Hosting the Assistants Championship is just one example of Blake's commitment to giving back to the association—and industry as a whole. He has been an active member of the MetGCSA since 1995, serving on various committees and the Board of Directors for the past 11 years. His current role on the board as past president allows him to remain involved but also affords him more time with his wife and two children. "Before," says Blake, "I would make it to all the kids' sports events, but now I actually have the time to coach their teams too!"

Speaking of time, October 6 will be here before you know it. We hope our superintendent members will encourage their assistants to come out for some friendly competition and what promises to be a great round of golf with their peers.

Tom Reyes, a member of the Tee To Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at Century Country Club in Purchase, NY.

Met Area Team Championship Returns to Met Area

by Andy Drohen

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Met Area Team Championship, one of the season-ending events that brings together superintendent associations from Maryland to New England. Each year, up to 15 chapters send eight-man teams to battle it out on some of the East Coast's finest courses.

This year, after a four-year hiatus from the Met area, the championship will be held on October 20 at Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale, NY, where our host, Tom Ashfield, has been the superintendent for the past eight years.

About the Playing Field

Opened in 1916, this par-70, 6,976-yard course is renowned for its world-class golf conditions. A classic A.W. Tillinghast design, Quaker Ridge Golf Club is often referred to as "Tillie's Treasure," receiving numerous recognitions over the years. In March 1989, Quaker Ridge was voted the number one course in the Met area by *The Met Golfer* magazine. The course is also highly regarded on both national and international levels. In 2015, *Golf Digest* ranked Quaker Ridge among its Top 100 courses—#71—in the United States.

According to famed architect Pete Dye, "Quaker Ridge has some of the greatest golf holes ever seen," while 31-time PGA Tour event winner Jimmy Demaret has touted Quaker Ridge as worthy of hosting any tournament, including a U.S. Open and PGA Championship. Quaker has, in fact, hosted its share of events, starting with the 1936 Metropolitan Open, in which Byron Nelson achieved his first significant professional victory. In 1997, there was the Walker Cup; add to that three Met Opens, three Met Amateurs, and, yes, three Met PGA Championships. In 2018, the club will have the honor of hosting the Curtis Cup. On an annual basis, Quaker Ridge hosts the Hochster Tournament, which is an amateur event attracting some of the best golfers in the Metropolitan Area, as well as from around the country.

Now, on October 20, Met Area Team Championship contestants will have the opportunity to experience this Tillinghast gem that so many have talked about.

Quaker's Evolution

Though it's fair to say that Quaker has undergone relatively few changes in its nearly 100-year history, it has made some notable refinements to the course. The most significant, perhaps, was in 1925, when the purchase of additional land at the northern corner of the property prompted the club to bring Tillinghast back to change a few holes. In 1965, Robert Trent Jones added some new tees and removed some outdated bunkers, and from 1991 to 1993, Rees Jones assisted Quaker Ridge in restoring all bunkers and adding five new championship and four new forward tees.

Over the past 10 years, architect Gil Hanse has been hard at work restoring much of the course's original design. Bunkers have been renovated and greens expanded to their original shapes. Some of the greens were even digitally scanned and rebuilt to USGA specifications.

Among the most unique projects Quaker completed this spring was relocating several sizable trees—a 90-foot oak tree and two 70-foot Linden trees—from one area of the course to the perimeter of the second hole. The intent was to protect homeowners' properties from errant golf balls since it wasn't possible to install large-scale netting.

Environmental Design out of Texas was called in to do the work; this was the same company that moved some of the large-scale trees at Pebble Beach prior to the U.S. Open. The trees were dug up, balled, and moved on a bed of airbags with a bulldozer and the largest excavator you have ever seen on a golf course.

Needless to say, this was new territory for someone who has planted nothing larger than a 12-inch caliper variety! "The stressful part," notes Tom, "is not moving the trees. It's when the company tells you its



Tom Ashfield

work is done and it's up to you to keep these humongous trees alive!"

But all's well that ends well: "None of the trees have lost a single leaf," says Tom, adding with a wink and a smile, "So please keep it left of the trees on the second hole to protect the club from any future lawsuits or having to plant any other large trees!"

Where It all Began

Tom's love for the game dates back to his first regular job as a caddy at Orchard Lake Country Club in Michigan. He was 15 and would spend all of his summer days "looping" where he quickly became one of the top pro-jocks at the club. Tom would regularly get under the straps for some of the better players of the club, as well as for Mrs. Walters, who was blind and, according to Tom, had a pretty good game.

"Walking Mrs. Walters back and forth from her ball to the cup during her pre-putting was my first encounter with just how important it was to have a feel for the contours of the greens," says Tom. "Isn't it ironic how someone with this kind of disability could teach another person so much about the game?"

After finishing high school in 1983, Tom entered the army on the G.I. Bill to earn money for college and to become a military police officer. Tom originally thought about becoming an FBI agent like his cousin who was taking a similar career path. But Tom still had a hankering for a good game of golf and would play on whatever golf course he could find, whether it was in Germany or Belgium or in upstate New York when he was stateside.

"We have all kidded about playing golf on a course that looked like a cow pasture," says Tom, "but in Germany, it was actually a cow pasture. On several of the holes, cows would be grazing in the fairways and rough!" Tom laughs, "I liked to think of them as moving hazards!"

After his three-year stint in the army, Tom took a job working on the grounds crew at Oakland Hills Country Club in Birmingham, MI. But having had a longtime passion for law enforcement, Tom decided to take a brief hiatus from turf and joined the Bloomfield Hills Police Department as a dispatcher. It didn't take him long, however, to realize that turfgrass management was his true calling.

He enrolled in the two-year turf program at Michigan State University while working as a crew member and then an assistant at Franklin Hills Country Club, in Franklin, MI. After completing the program, Tom decided to further his education, earning a B.S. in Crop and Soil Science.

Degree in hand, Tom accepted a position on the crew at Oakland Hills Country Club, where he had the opportunity to experience all that went into prepping the course for the 1996 U.S. Open. The following year, Tom was offered the superintendent's position at Edgewood Country Club in Commerce Township, MI. He worked there two years, cutting his teeth on a 60-acre golf course that averaged more than 36,000 rounds a year! Talk about having to keep up with divots!

From there, Tom headed East to the New

York Metropolitan area's Canoe Brook Country Club. He remained there for seven years before landing his current position in 2007 at Quaker Ridge.

A Family Man

Tom and his wife, Karla, will be celebrating 19 years of marriage on October 12, just several days before he hosts the 124 Met Area Team Championship players at Quaker. Their first encounter was clearly by chance, when Tom was an assistant superintendent and invited to join a fellow assistant at his relative's birthday party. Working long hours, Tom wasn't eager to go, but after some prodding, he relented, and it was there that he had the good fortune of meeting his future bride, Karla.

They lived on opposite sides of the State of Michigan, but lucky for Tom, Karla was willing to make the trek to see him while he was busy spending long days on the golf course at Oakland Hills. After dating a few years, they planned a wedding a few months

after the 1996 U.S. Open, when Tom knew there would be a break in the action.

Tom and Karla have two children: Andrew, who is 14 and in his first year of high school, and Kylie, who is 9 and in the fourth grade.

Bring Your 'A' Game!

The membership and Tom's staff are very much looking forward to having everyone play Quaker Ridge on October 20. The course is truly a great test of golf. Tom's best advice: "Keep the ball below the hole whenever possible, because as you know, Tillinghast was known for having great green complexes with lots of movement!"

Andy Drohen, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee and co-chair of the Met Area Team Championship, is the Northeast U.S. & Canada Sr. Regional Sales Manager for the Turf & Ornamental Group at Koch Agronomic Services.



Upcoming Events

Save the Date for These Upcoming Events!

Nine and Dine Event

Wednesday, September 23
Silvermine Golf Club
Norwalk, CT
Host: Larry Pakkala, CGCS

Assistants Championship

Tuesday, October 6
Brae Burn Country Club
Purchase, NY
Assistant Hosts: Dave Peterson and Bobby Jewett

Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier PLUS The Poa Annual Tournament

Tuesday, October 13
Meadow Brook Club
Jericho, NY
Host: John Carlone, CGCS

Met Area Team Championship

Tuesday, October 20
Quaker Ridge Golf Club
Scarsdale, NY
Host: Tom Ashfield

MetGCSA Christmas Party

Saturday, December 5
The Stanwich Club
Greenwich, CT
Host: Scott Niven, CGCS

Educational Events

MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar

Thursday, November 12
The Patterson Club
Fairfield, CT
Host: Jason Meersman

Turf & Grounds Exposition

Tuesday–Wednesday, November 17–18
Rochester Riverside Convention Center
Rochester, NY

The Turf & Grounds Exposition offers an excellent opportunity to network while remaining current on the latest research and trends in turfgrass management. As always, the expo will feature key speakers from all segments of the green industry, as well as a comprehensive trade show with more than 100 exhibitors.

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

40th Annual New Jersey Green Expo Turf and Landscape Conference

Tuesday–Thursday, December 8–10
The Borgata Hotel Casino and Spa
Atlantic City, NY

The New Jersey Green Expo offers a comprehensive educational program providing cutting-edge applications and tactics to guarantee green industry professionals' success on the job. Offering one of the largest trade shows in the tri-state area, the expo also provides attendees with the opportunity to view the latest and greatest products and services on the market.

For further information, call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 13, 2016
Westchester Country Club
Rye, NY
Host: David Dudones

President's Message continued from page 1
committee for their hard work in organizing this event and in conducting the scholarship selection process. (See article, page 10.)

Speaking of Awards

We are pleased to announce two special honors that will be awarded at our annual Winter Seminar on January 13: Matt Ceplo, superintendent of Rockland Country Club and a MetGCSA past president, has been selected to receive our coveted Sherwood A. Moore Award, and respected Golf Course Architect Rees Jones will be honored with our John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award. You can read all about these deserving award recipients in the upcoming issues of *Tee to Green!*

More in Store

As summer ends, we have a golf-packed September and October ahead of us. The Nine and Dine will be hosted by Larry Pakkala at Silvermine Golf Club on September 23.

The Assistants Championship will be held on October 6 at Brae Burn Country Club and hosted by Assistants Dave Peterson and Bobby Jewett. I urge superintendent members to encourage their assistants to attend this special event and enjoy much-deserved time away from their job and course.

Finally, on October 13, John Carlone will host the Poa Annual/Met Championship/Met Area Team Championship Qualifier at the Meadow Brook Club.

As you can see, we have a great lineup of venues. Please mark your calendars and take some time to enjoy one of our many upcoming MetGCSA events.

Glen Dube, CGCS
President

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