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# Tee to Green

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# Tee To Green



Cover: Metropolis Country Club.

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# President's Message

## Some Things Worth Cheering—and Jeering—About

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Though we are just heading out of what has become a very long and difficult season, I wanted us all to take pause and recognize some of the good and, yes, the bad of the season. Specifically, there are happenings within the association and industry that deserve to be, as I refer to it, *Cheered or Jeered*. This is an area in which, I'm sure, we could find infinite things to discuss, but I've kept it to a pertinent few. Here goes.

#### Cheers...

To the fact that participation and attendance has been up across the board at all MetGCSA events. Our golf events have been well received and attended. We enjoyed record attendance at both the Summer Social at Orienta Beach Club and the Summer Picnic at Bedford Memorial Park. (See snapshots from the picnic, page 11.) And it's been nice to see many new faces at all of these events. Special thanks to our Board of Directors for working so diligently to pull off these events without a hitch. Now our charge is to make sure this kind of participation continues!

#### Jeers...

To the weather. Just when we think things can't get any worse, it inexplicably does. First, we had an abnormally warm then cold start to the season. Then in June and July came the irrigation-pond-depleting drought with high temps and no humidity. Next, we experienced devastating thunderstorms and oppressive humidity. This vicious weather pattern has put our turf and crews on the brink of exhaustion. We need a break!

#### Jeers...

To the two recent articles that *The Journal News ~ Lohud* ran on its cover that portrayed



Glen Dube, CGCS  
MetGCSA President

the use of pesticides on golf courses in an extremely negative manner. Not only did these articles reflect poorly on golf courses and the people who maintain them, they were also inaccurate—based largely on emotion, not scientific evidence.

Our executive director, Mike McCall, sent out an email on August 11 containing the links to the articles, as well as some talking points that GCSAA shared with us. In his letter to the membership on page 2, Mike encourages everyone to bone up on GCSAA's talking points so that you will be prepared to educate club members or members of your community who may, in the future, express concern about pesticide use. Unfortunately, no matter how much talking we do, I don't think this type of discussion will go away anytime soon.

#### Cheers...

To the upcoming fall season. At the time of this writing, it looks like this nasty weather is moving out, offering some much-needed relief. Once the challenges of the season are truly behind us, I hope everyone can get away for a little rest and relaxation.

And speaking of R&R, please be sure to encourage your hardworking, and no doubt weary, assistants to take a day away from the course and attend this year's Assistants Championship. It's being held on October 27 at Upper Montclair Country Club in Clifton, NJ, and promises to be a great time.

In the meantime, best of luck with your aerification and upcoming projects.

Glen Dube, CGCS  
MetGCSA President

# Educating the Misinformed

**O**n August 11, I sent out an email to share with members the two recent articles published in *The Journal News ~ LoHud*, which essentially vilify the use of pesticides on golf courses, as well as the people who apply them.

Feeling compelled to react to the articles' serious misrepresentation of golf course pesticide handling and use, our association contacted officials from the GCSAA Government Affairs and Public Relations offices and the MGA to discuss the best approach. We decided not to respond publicly, and we didn't feel it would be beneficial for individual members to respond on their own.

### Points Worthy of Mention

Instead, we would like to encourage all members, when addressing any future concerns related to the use of pesticides, to convey the following points that have been developed by the GCSAA Public Relations department:

1. There is no scientific evidence to show that golfers face any chronic health risks from the pesticides used to maintain golf courses.
2. Golf courses employ licensed applicators to handle and apply pesticides in adherence with regulations and manufacturer guidelines.
3. The application of pesticides is made with low concentrations of active ingredients, often 1- to 5-percent solutions.

4. Simple attention to proper application procedures, especially avoiding direct discharges into water bodies or near well-heads, should typically suffice. Golf course monitoring programs conducted in New York indicate little to no risk of water contamination from pesticides applied to golf turf.
5. Pesticides and pesticide use are regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The DEC works with golf course managers to assure safe use of pesticides.
6. An approved pesticide product has typically undergone more than 120 studies at a cost of \$50 million before it is registered with the Environmental Protection Agency.
7. Golf course managers have adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a sustainable approach to managing pests (including weeds, insects, pathogens and diseases, and vertebrates) by combining biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools in a way that minimizes economic, health, and environmental risks and maintains turfgrass quality.

### Talk Up the New York BMPs

In addition to these points, it is also useful to mention that golf course superintendent chapters throughout the state have been one of the most progressive groups in developing Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses in conjunction with Cornell University and the New York



*Mike McCall, CGCS  
MetGCSA Executive Director*

State Department of Environmental Conservation. The ultimate goal: to protect water quality throughout New York State.

For those interested in further information on the BMPs, you might refer them to the Best Management Practices website: <http://nysgolfbmp.cals.cornell.edu/>

### Finally . . .

Be sure to commit to memory the points GCSAA has suggested so you will be ready with a factual response if and when a member of your club or community calls into question our industry's turfgrass management practices.

*Mike McCall, CGCS  
MetGCSA Executive Director*

*. . . golf course superintendent chapters throughout the state have been one of the most progressive groups in developing Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses in conjunction with Cornell University and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.*

# Sharing Golf's Many Benefits at National Golf Day

*MetGCSA Makes Its Mark at WE ARE GOLF's Ninth Annual National Golf Day*

by Mike McCall, CGCS, MetGCSA Executive Director

**W**E ARE GOLF, a coalition of golf's leading organizations, hosted its ninth annual National Golf Day on May 18 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Bob Nielsen and I traveled to D.C. to participate in this year's event, which offered a unique opportunity for the industry to voice concerns, discuss issues, and share golf's many benefits with Congressional leaders in D.C. More than 150 Congressional meetings were scheduled throughout the day, a record number!

The event drew representatives from GCSAA, the Club Managers Association of America, the Ladies Professional Golf Association, the National Golf Course Owners Association, PGA of America, the PGA TOUR, the USGA, the United States Golf Manufacturers Council, the World Golf Foundation, and others. The largest contingent of attendees was superintendents representing their local GCSAA chapters.

Steve Mona, CEO of World Golf Foundation and administrator of WE ARE GOLF, was there to kick off the event, emphasizing the significance of National Golf Day in reminding our country's decision-makers of the benefits golf provides our society and how it supports countless charitable causes, including many related to our nation's military. He also went on to emphasize that with the game making its return to the Olympics, our industry is positioned to reach new global audiences, making it all the more important that we communicate the positive role golf plays in local communities.

## The Benefits We Need to Talk About

WE ARE GOLF has developed a list of golf's many benefits, which, as professional representatives of the game of golf, we should all be well aware of. Here are some of the easy-to-share facts and figures surrounding our industry's contributions.

**Economic:** Golf contributes \$68.8 billion to the American economy and impacts 2 million jobs. In fact, one in 75 jobs in the United States is impacted by the golf industry. Golf is a bigger job creator than spectator

sports, performing arts, and the amusement and recreation industries.

**Charitable:** Golf raises more money for charity than all other sports combined. Annually, the game generates \$3.9 billion for philanthropic causes, almost all of which are unrelated to the golf industry.

**Environmental:** Golf courses are responsible uses of green space, providing wildlife habitat, a filter for runoff, and a cooling effect on developed areas.

**Health and Wellness:** Golf is an excellent source of exercise. Playing 18 holes of golf burns roughly 2,000 calories when walking and 1,300 when riding a cart.

**A Game for All:** Golf is very accessible, with nine out of 10 golfers playing public-access facilities. That adds up to 76 percent of golf being played at public courses.

## The Issues at Hand

While extolling the many benefits of the game of golf, WE ARE GOLF had some specific items for us to address with our legislators, dealing mainly with environmental and labor issues.

The "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) rule was front-and-center on everyone's mind. The message we took to legislators was to support legislation that would force the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw the current WOTUS rule and work closely with industry professionals to develop a more precise rule. In addition, we sought to eliminate the redundancy of the Clean Water Act NPDES Pesticide General Permit that requires additional permitting for pesticide applications on, over, or near the water of the U.S.

Our next objective was to address the Department of Labor Overtime Rule. Unfortunately, we were too late. The Department of Labor had just released the new Overtime Rule that morning. It will go into effect December 1 of this year.

Bob and I expressed our disappointment to our elected representatives and the negative effect this ruling is likely to have on golf course superintendents' operating budgets.

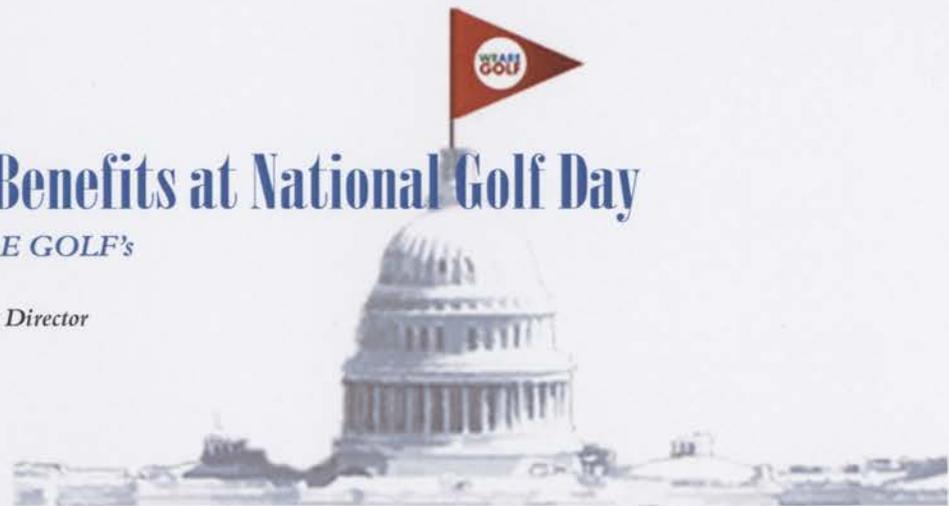
On a positive note, however, Representative Kurt Schrader (D-OR) introduced the Overtime and Reform Enhancement Act last month, which proposes phasing in the overtime ruling over the next three years. We are waiting for this legislation to reach the House floor for a vote.

Next on our agenda was to discuss reducing the delay for issuing H-2B Visas and making the "returning worker exemption" permanent. Senator Charles Schumer has been trying to overhaul the immigration system for years and almost succeeded in 2013. He vows it will happen next year. Senator Gillibrand and Representatives Carolyn Maloney and Sean Patrick Maloney all support him in his efforts. Although all are strong supporters for immigration reform, the H-2B Visa system does not sit well with many New York unions and, as a result, does not garnish a lot of support from our congressional representatives.

In addition to presenting the WE ARE GOLF agenda, Bob and I were able to update legislative affairs directors about the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses initiative and its ongoing development. Our association is well respected by lawmakers, and we are increasingly becoming a resource for them.

## Mission Accomplished?

So, was it worth the trip? Did we make a difference? Right now I would say both yes and we'll see. It has been said throughout history that decisions are made by those who show up. And we did show up and will continue to be a presence, doing our best to present the scientific facts and honest assessments of the effects laws and regulations may have on our industry and the members of our association.



# Feature: Part 2

## Escalating Green Speeds: A Look at Where Our Survey Respondents Weigh In

by Scott Niven, CGCS

by Scott Niven, CGCS



Stanwich assistants  
Ian Blackmar (left) and  
Greg Rotter rolling the  
17th green.

In this, Part Two of our investigation into the ever-evolving green speed trends and philosophies, we reveal the results of our third green speed survey, which we've conducted every eight years since 2001.

For our 2016 survey, a total of 50 MetGCSA member superintendents from clubs in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut (see list on page 9) responded, offering insight into the current trends and sentiments on the increasing need for speed and

the special grooming practices that go along with it.

What follows is a look at what respondents had to say, along with a careful tabulation (see page 8) of each of their responses. Where do your greens fall in the mix? Read on for a look at how your practices—and green speeds—compare to fellow respondents', keeping in mind, of course, that this is just a sampling of the many maintenance programs out there—here, and across the country.

### 1. WHAT TYPE OF GRASS IS ON YOUR GREENS?

As in 2008, our latest survey revealed that the majority of our respondents share the same turf in common: About 90 percent have either *Poa* or *Poa/bent* turf on their greens. That leaves only 10 percent with the more desirable bentgrass-only putting surfaces.

### 2. HOW OFTEN DO YOU CHECK GREEN SPEEDS EACH WEEK?

It is often said, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it." And it seems that more supers than ever are adhering to this premise as slightly more than half the courses surveyed check speeds most days of the week, versus less than one-third eight years ago.

Steve Finamore of Alpine Country Club Stimps his greens a couple of times a day, which he feels has helped him keep his putting surfaces relatively consistent.

Milbrook Club's Doug Snyder checks green speeds daily, along with moisture levels to gain better control of his green speeds. "I am able to know how long it will take to speed up the greens to 12' for a tournament on the weekends," says Doug, "and bring them back down to 9' on Wednesdays for ladies play. I know how long it will take to have acceptable green speeds after heavy rains and how applying wetting agents are going to affect green speeds. It gives me complete control," he adds.

### 3. DO YOU POST GREEN SPEEDS?

Though a majority of superintendents check green speeds more often than not, few are in favor of posting the numbers. The reason: The superintendents we surveyed believe posting green speeds encourages them to chase speed during times of stress when it wouldn't be prudent to do so.

Paul Dotti of Arcola Country Club not only doesn't post his green speeds, he rarely Stimps them. "We are a golf club, and I believe our greens should be relatively fast each and every day, which is why I seldom, if ever, Stimp them," he says. "If the members ask me what the speeds are, I tell them they are as fast as I can get them for today.

"We are already mowing low," he continues, "so it isn't wise to go any lower. And we are double-cutting and rolling and, like many, only hand watering to keep moisture levels minimal at all times. We are also very aggressive with Legacy to reduce clippings, and we spoonfeed one to two times per week for plant vigor. We are doing whatever we can to achieve the best speed possible while maintaining healthy conditions."

#### 4. WHAT IS YOUR AVERAGE GREEN SPEED?

Green speeds are on the rise. Since our last survey in 2008, the average speed reported by Met area clubs has made a significant jump, increasing by 1'3" to 11'3". More than 40 percent of respondents report maintaining an average daily speed between 11' and 11'6".

Despite the undeniable climb in green speed, there are those club members who are convinced that greens were significantly faster "in their day."

"I love when members tell me that the greens are *almost* as fast as they were in the '70s when they were kids," says Winged Foot's Steve Rabideau. "These members have no idea that greens were rolling only about 7'6" back then. And when you try to correct them, they look at you like you're lying, suggesting that it's impossible for our greens to be rolling that much faster."

"But as we know, it is, indeed, possible, and as each decade passes, speeds continue to escalate, from 7', which was thought to be fast in the '70s, to a top speed of 14'-plus today at high-end courses."

Of course, as superintendents know well, not all courses are made equal, and speeds and conditioning that are right for one course, just may not be attainable at another. As Round Hill Club's Sean Foley points out, "Course construction and turf types vary. Budgets and resources aren't in line, but we all are expected to be the same."

#### 5. WHAT IS YOUR RANGE OF GREEN SPEED?

At the *low end* of the range, courses are Stimping at 9'9". That number is up by nearly a foot since 2008.

At the *high end* of everyone's range, ball roll has increased by exactly one foot to 12'6". In 2008, this milestone was achieved by only three clubs. In 2016, 50 percent of the group achieved this speed, while another dozen clubs reported pushing their green speeds as high as 13'6" to 14'6".

"Personally," says Pelham Country Club's Jeff Wentworth in response to escalating speeds, "I have the most fun playing on greens with speeds of 9'6" to 10'. I know that with the tools we have today, it's easier to manage green speed and turf health than it was 5 to 10 years ago, but I feel we often end up sacrificing optimal playing conditions by chasing high speeds."

#### 6. WHAT IS YOUR USUAL HEIGHT OF CUT?

To attain these faster ball roll distances, superintendents are cutting lower, which

has proved to have the greatest impact on green speed of all the cultural practices. With that, it's no surprise that the average height of cut has dropped another .010" since the last survey in 2008 and .020" since 2001. The current average: .110".

#### 7. HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU CUT PER DAY?

Three-quarters of the group still cut their greens once a day, while only a small percentage are double-cutting daily or mixing it up with double-cutting some days and single-cutting others.

#### 7A. WHAT TYPE OF MOWER ARE YOU USING?

It appears that, for whatever reason, clubs are favoring Jacobsen (up by 7) and John Deere (up by 4) over the various Toro (down by 13) models. Very few courses are using Triplexes.

#### 8. HOW OFTEN DO YOU ROLL PER WEEK?

Since 2008, much research has been done on the positive effects of rolling, showing that, in addition to increasing ball roll distance, it provides many benefits to the turf. So it only follows, then, that nearly all respondents (94 percent) roll their greens on most days of the week (4 days or more).

To achieve green speeds in the high 11s as his membership expects, Steve Finamore of Alpine Country Club makes good use of both rolling and growth regulators. "These have been great tools in maintaining green speeds without lowering the height of cut," he says, noting that alternating between Tru-Turf and Triplex rollers has been helpful in sparing collars and surrounds from excessive wear.

#### 8A. WHAT TYPE OF GREENS ROLLER DO YOU USE?

Respondents' roller type preferences have changed. Tru-Turf (up by 13) and Salsco (up by 7) have grown the most in popularity, while the Triplex (down by 7) and Vibratory (down by 7) rollers have suffered the greatest losses.

#### 9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU TOPDRESS?

Topdressing intervals have changed significantly as superintendents have begun to apply sand more often in lighter amounts. In 2008, no one was topdressing weekly; now nearly a third of the clubs surveyed are using this approach to steadily dilute their thatch.

#### 10. DO YOU USE PGRS REGULARLY AND WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TYPE OF PGR?

Use of plant growth regulators (PGRs) is on the rise, making significant inroads since 2001, when only about 60 percent of our survey respondents used them. Now nearly 100 percent of those surveyed have incorporated them into their greens' maintenance programs. Of that group, 86 percent have made Primo their PGR of choice.

Fairview Country Club's Jim Pavonetti feels his cultural program has enabled him to maintain "tournament conditions" on *Poa* greens while keeping their dark, green color and sparing them from excessive wear-and-tear. His formula for success: weekly Primo, biostimulants, and liquid N applications; daily light-weight rolling and mowing with 14-bladed reels at low heights of cut; light, frequent topdressing applications; and extreme water management.

Explains Jim, "I feel that the 14-bladed reels, daily rolling, higher Primo rates (our rates went from 5-6 fl. ozs. per acre to 9), and shorter intervals have elevated our current green speeds to an average of 13'6" and a high of 14'. Before making those changes, our speeds were 12'3" to 13'."

#### 11. DO YOU USE GROOMERS, BRUSHES, OR VERTICUTTERS AND HOW OFTEN?

Use of groomers, brushes, and verticutters is as prevalent as ever, with little change in grooming practices over the past 16 years. A total of 92 percent of respondents say they groom, brush, or verticut their greens, with a good number of them—28 percent—grooming on a weekly basis.

#### 12. WHAT IS THE AVERAGE MOISTURE LEVEL OF YOUR GREENS?

Before the TDR 300 moisture meters were invented, most clubs reported their moisture level maintenance as "field capacity" or "on the dry side." Even though the survey didn't require it, this time, 75 percent of respondents referred to their moisture meters when reporting their greens' moisture levels.

Due to meter calibration variations and the different soil types at each course, these numbers can vary significantly, but for what it's worth, the average level of moisture noted by survey respondents was 16 percent.

To maintain reasonable moisture levels on his *Poa* greens, Fairview's Jim Pavonetti has had great success with his hand-watering program, which starts every morning with lightly hand watering the entire green and perimeter behind the roller. "Using a TDR moisture meter," explains Jim, "an assistant

## *As in past surveys, the overwhelming majority of memberships reported that putting green speeds remain high on their priority list.*

marks any spots on greens that are below 15 percent and the hand waterer will give those spots a little extra. Then, starting at 1 p.m., we monitor greens until the sun sits low in the sky. At this time, we use only visual observations and foot printing; we do not use the TDRs during the afternoon.”

### **13. WHAT IS YOUR ANNUAL NITROGEN FERTILITY USE?**

By 2008, survey respondents had begun upping their fertility rates based on research touting its merits, particularly in anthracnose and moss control. Eight years later, fertility rates remain much the same, with the majority of clubs applying between 2 to 4 lbs. of nitrogen/1,000 sq. ft. per year.

In addition to weekly liquid nitrogen applications, Fairview’s Jim Pavonetti takes action to prevent anthracnose and other turf issues from overtaking his greens. “We use a preventive anthracnose program, with Daconil Ultrex and Chipco Signature being the two cornerstones of the program,” he says. “We also take preventive measures against summer patch, pythium root rot, and hyperodes to ensure that disease and insect pressures won’t force us to reduce speed to allow recovery.”

### **14. DO YOU FEEL THE GREEN SPEEDS YOU ARE ASKED TO MAINTAIN ARE APPROPRIATE FOR THE RELATIVE SEVERITY OF THE CONTOURS?**

In our 2008 survey, the majority of respondents—more than 90 percent—felt that the speed they were achieving was about right for their particular greens. But now, with average speeds climbing, the number of courses reporting the speed too fast for their contours has risen to 20 percent of the group.

Fairview Country Club’s Jim Pavonetti is one who admits to pushing his speeds beyond where they should be, but, apparently, with his members’ blessing. “My speeds aren’t appropriate for the relative severity of the contours,” he says, “but the members are used to it and absolutely love it. They consider it the ‘teeth’ of the course,” he adds.

Others, like Jamie Kapes of Woodway Country Club, feel that despite doing their

best to maintain appropriate speeds, they’re still asked to “back off” periodically.

“We focus on creating a healthy agronomic environment that allows us to push our greens as much as possible on a consistent basis,” says Jamie. “Our goal is to have day-to-day consistency regardless of who is playing or the day of the week, with a maximum speed that is challenging yet fair for our green contours.

“Despite this,” he continues, “we have at times been asked to pump the brakes a bit. For the most part, though, I feel we’ve found a nice place. The consistency assures that we never sacrifice plant health. And we strive to keep the greens as lean and dry as possible to avoid allowing Mother Nature to drastically change the way they play. We feel we can always slow them down with water and cultural practices to maintain consistency.”

### **15. HOW MANY GREENS DO YOU HAVE WITH EXTREMELY LIMITED CUPPING AREA?**

With ball roll distances escalating, the average number of greens per course with very limited cupping area has grown over the past eight years, with the average being four. But more than half—54 percent—of respondents reported having more than the average number of greens with limited cupping area. Last survey, that number included just 40 percent of respondents.

Westchester Country Club’s David Dudsones always has his eye on the ball—or rather on how it’s rolling, often having to adjust hole locations based on the speed of the greens.

“When speeds are excessive,” says David, “we putt to all our hole locations to make sure they are fair and then recut any cup that’s questionable.”

According to Blind Brook Club Superintendent Les Kennedy, there are several greens that have very little cupping area at 12’ and above. “Our greens are very undulating,” says Les, “so when they reach 12’ or higher, the members aren’t happy!”

### **16. HAVE YOU REBUILT ANY GREENS TO REDUCE SLOPE. IF YES, HOW MANY?**

It only makes sense that the number of greens being rebuilt to reduce slope contin-

ues to escalate. The 2008 survey showed that 44 greens had been recontoured to accommodate faster green speeds; since then, another 78 have been softened. A total of 122 greens have been modified since the first survey in 2001. And there are more clubs following suit, Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY, among them.

“Given the desire for speed, firmness, and cupping variety,” says Sleepy Hollow Superintendent Tom Leahy, “the club has decided to rebuild all the greens in 2016 and 2017.”

Has the need for speed superseded the desire for the interest and challenge inherent in the more contoured and sloped greens of our older courses?

### **17. HOW IMPORTANT ARE FAST GREEN SPEEDS TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP?**

As in past surveys, the overwhelming majority of memberships reported that putting green speeds remain high on their priority list.

With a membership of largely low-handicappers, the club that seems to have one of the greatest needs for speed is the Meadow Brook Club on Long Island. “On a scale of 1 to 10,” says Superintendent John Carlone, “I would say my members’ need for speed is a 12! It’s gotten to the point,” he continues, “that my members enjoy when they sometimes can’t finish a hole due to green speed/slope issues. We just try to get them as fast as we can every day given environmental conditions.”

At the other end of the spectrum are two public course venues, Silver Lake Golf Course in Staten Island, NY, and Oak Hills Park in Norwalk, CT, where the superintendents take great care to tone down green speeds for the average golfer.

Oak Hills Park Super Jim Schell notes that his green speeds, which average 10’3”, actually exceed golfers’ expectations. “Many of our golfers feel the speeds are fast due to lack of exposure to superfast greens,” says Schell, adding, “I am finding that more important than speed, here, is true roll. These golfers want their ball to travel on the line they start it on.”

At Silver Lake, Superintendent Doug Johnstone “amps up” only for the special

events they host each year, the NYC Amateur qualifier among them, and even then, by most course standards, they're not super-fast.

"I will groom more often, drop height of cut, topdress, and reduce hydration. If we Stimp at 10.5, I'm happy," says Doug. "But for the general public, that's too fast. Nobody wants to 3- and 4-putt all day long."

The other priority among many club members is consistency, often over speed. The Milbrook Club's Doug Snyder and Pine Hollow's Brent Peveich were two who pointed to consistent greens as more important to members than green speed. While National Golf Links' Bill Salinetti only wishes that were the case: "It would be great if we could convince our clubs that consistency is much more important than speed," he laments.

#### 18. WILL YOU SACRIFICE SOME TURF FOR INCREASED GREEN SPEED?

While the need for speed at most clubs continues to grow, the number of superintendents who are willing to sacrifice turf to get there remains remarkably unchanged. Similar to 2008, this year's survey turned up a total of only nine courses.

"Plant health trumps green speed, especially during peak periods of environmental stress," says St. Andrew's Robert Milar, echoing the sentiments of most superintendents.

Recognizing the precarious nature of his putting surfaces, Tim Garceau of Haworth Country Club, keeps fertility up, along with mowing heights. "When I started here at Haworth," he explains, "they had poor expe-

riences with the reliability of greens. We do about 22,000 rounds a year, so I need to be cautious with thinning turf from wear-and-tear. But as the membership evolves and turf reliability issues fade from the rearview mirror, pressure will, no doubt, rise regarding green speeds. For now, speeds of 11' satisfy most of our membership."

"Among our better golfers," says Silver Spring Superintendent Peter Rappoccio, "the desire for more speed on our greens is increasing. But will they tolerate the brown and biscuit look that often goes along with faster putting surfaces? To me," Peter continues, "it's better to focus our efforts on producing healthy turf and true-rolling greens, along with green speeds that will satisfy the majority of our members."

#### 19. DOES THE ESCALATING DEMAND FOR FASTER GREENS GIVE YOU MORE PERSONAL STRESS THAN MEETING OTHER MAINTENANCE DEMANDS?

This year, only about 25 percent of our survey respondents mentioned feeling stressed by the escalating demand for faster green speeds. This figure is quite a bit lower than in 2008 when 40 percent admitted to feeling the strain. It's likely that better maintenance tools and techniques make it somewhat easier to keep the turf healthy and, as a result, sleep a little better at night.

But stresses do exist. Siwanoy Country Club's Steven McGlone, like a number of other survey respondents, finds doing battle with Mother Nature's unpredictable shifts in temperature, humidity, precipitation, and wind along with trying to maintain consis-

tency in *Poa* pushup greens the biggest challenge. "This often takes more luck than skill," says Steven, adding, "Those managing USGA bentgrass greens are the ones sleeping well at night during the summer."

#### Final Thoughts

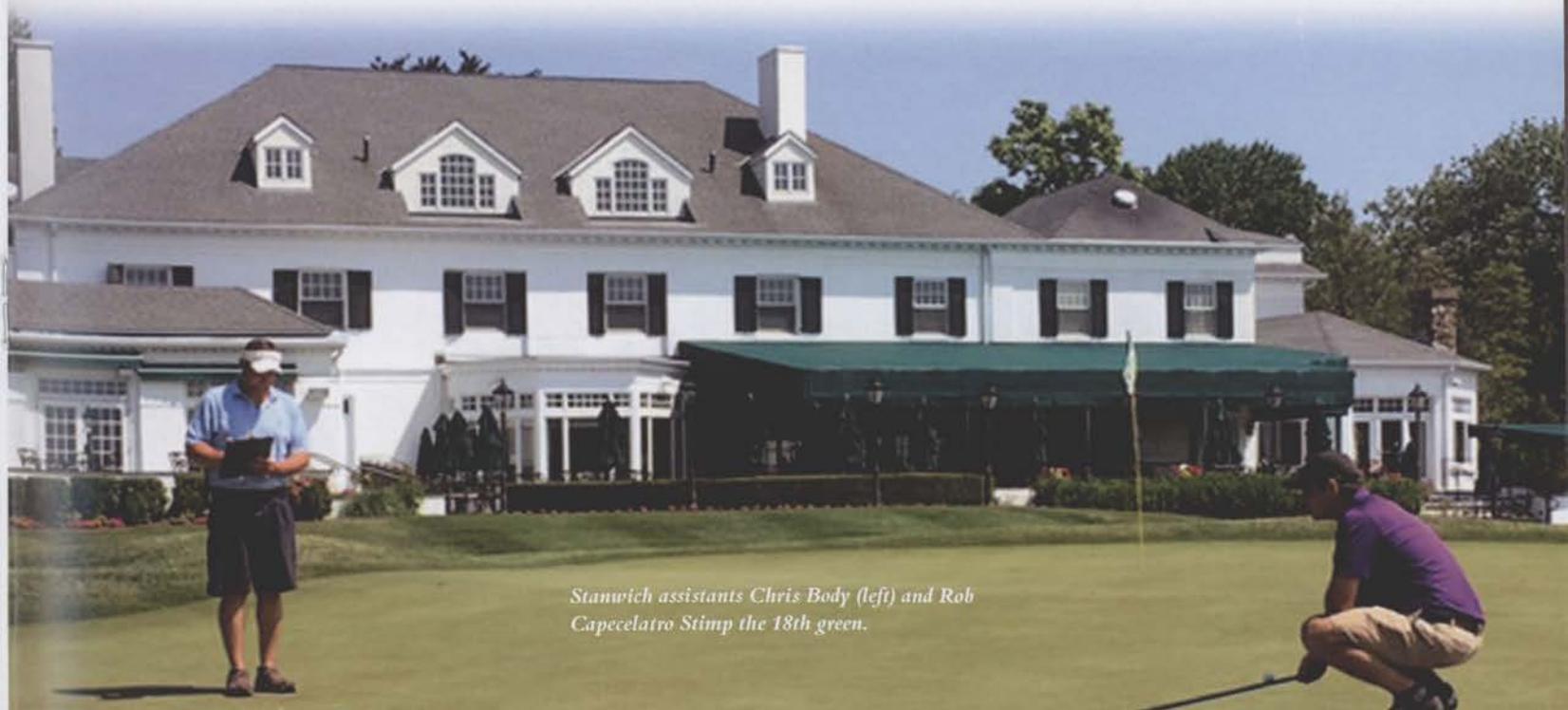
When all is said and done, is it speed that makes for a great round of golf, or is it providing healthy, true, and consistent putting surfaces for our golfers?

As Sunningdale's Sean Cain implies in his comment on the Stimpometer—"The Stimpometer is the most misused tool in our industry due to ego and the pressure to excel."—we should take great care to put both our egos, and the egos of our memberships, aside when preparing our greens maintenance programs.

As the experts and many of the superintendents we surveyed seem to indicate, most important is that we prepare our greens with an eye toward not just the needs of the few vocal, speed-seeking golfers, but the majority of our memberships. We must set programs with our greens topography and our resources and budgets in mind to achieve conditions that are both realistic and attainable. The need for speed? We may want to rethink it.

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

Special thanks to Stanwich Assistants Rob Capecelatro and Greg Rotter for their help in processing the data gathered for this article.



Stanwich assistants Chris Body (left) and Rob Capecelatro Stimp the 18th green.

# Survey Results at a Glance

**Number of Respondents**  
2016 2008 2001

<b>1. What type of grass is on your greens?</b>			
Poa Annua	9	5	
Bent	6	7	
Poa/Bent	36	41	
<b>2. How often do you check the green speeds each week?</b>			
1 day	4	14	10
2 days	5	13	5
3 days	11	12	5
4 days	7	4	2
5 days	6	2	2
6 days	1	1	1
7 days	12	3	4
0 days	4	4	5
<b>3. Do you post green speeds?</b>			
Yes	5	3	5
No	45	50	29
<b>4. What is your average green speed?</b>			
8'6"-9'	-	4	6
9'-9'6"	1	4	4
9'6"	-	8	7
9'6"-10'	3	9	4
10'	5	13	6
10'-10'6"	2	2	2
10'6"	11	10	4
10'6"-11'	2	1	1
11'-11'6"	21	2	0
11'6" and up	5	-	-
<b>Average green speed =</b>	<b>11'3"</b>	<b>10'</b>	<b>9'8"</b>
<b>5. What is your range of green speed?</b>			
<b>Low End...</b>			
<8'	-	1	0
8'	2	8	8
8'6"	1	6	4
9'	8	15	14
9'3"	1	-	1
9'6"	8	15	3
9'9"	1	2	1
10'	20	5	1
10'6"	3	-	-
11'	1	-	-
11'8"	1	-	-
13'3"	1	-	-
<b>Average Low =</b>	<b>9'9"</b>	<b>8'11"</b>	<b>8'10"</b>
<b>High End...</b>			
9'	-	2	1
10'	-	11	3
10'2"	-	-	2
10'6"	2	3	4
10'9"	1	-	1
10'10"	-	-	1
11'	2	18	8
11'2"	1	-	-
11'6"	4	-	6
12'	10	15	3
12'2"	1	-	-
12'6"	6	1	2
12'9"	1	-	-
13'	7	2	1
13'6"	6	-	-
14'	2	-	-
14'3"	1	-	-
14'6"	3	-	-
<b>Average High =</b>	<b>12'6"</b>	<b>11'6"</b>	<b>11'1"</b>
<b>6. What is your usual height of cut?</b>			
0.080	-	-	1
0.085	1	-	-
0.090	-	1	-
0.093	-	1	-
0.090-0.093	4	-	-
0.095	2	2	-
0.100	6	1	-
0.103	1	-	-
0.105	7	3	-
0.110	5	11	-
0.115	9	3	1

**Number of Respondents**  
2016 2008 2001

0.117	-	1	-
0.118	-	1	1
0.120	7	3	2
0.125	5	13	14
0.130	1	2	3
0.135	1	4	-
0.140	1	6	2
0.150	-	1	3
0.156	-	-	1
<b>Avg. Height of Cut =</b>	<b>0.110</b>	<b>0.120</b>	<b>0.130</b>
<b>7. How many times do you cut per day?</b>			
1x	38	44	17
2x	3	1	5
3x	-	1	1
1x or 2x	9	7	11
<i>What type of mower are you using?</i>			
Toro 1000	-	11	20
Toro Flex	18	19	-
Toro 800	-	1	-
John Deere	10	6	2
Jacobsen	18	-	-
Jac 422	-	5	8
Jac Flex	-	2	-
Jac E-Walker	-	4	-
PGM	1	-	-
Ransomes	-	-	1
Triplex	3	5	-
<b>8. How often do you roll per week?</b>			
Occasionally	-	-	4
0x	-	4	5
1x	1	5	4
2x	1	10	11
3x	3	17	9
4x	15	15	-
5x	17	1	-
6x	9	-	-
7x	2	1	1
8x	4	-	-
<i>What type of greens roller do you use?</i>			
Speed roller	7	11	-
Salsco	17	10	-
Triplex	1	8	-
Vibratory	4	11	-
Smithco	3	2	-
Tru-Turf	14	1	-
Agrimetal	3	-	-
Toro 1240	2	-	-
Greens Iron	-	1	-
<b>9. How often do you topdress?</b>			
Weekly	14	-	1
Biweekly	20	21	7
Every 3 weeks	9	9	5
Monthly	3	15	18
Bimonthly	4	-	2
With arification	-	3	1
As needed	-	5	-
<b>10. Do you use PGRs regularly?</b>			
Yes	49	48	21
No	1	5	13
<i>What is your preferred type of PGR?</i>			
Primo	43	-	-
Primo Trimmit	3	-	-
Trimmit	2	-	-
Legacy	1	-	-
Legacy+Primo	1	-	-
<b>11. Do you use groomers, brushes, or verticutters?</b>			
Yes	46	45	31
No	5	8	3
<i>How often?</i>			
Weekly	14	9	7
Biweekly	3	15	11
Monthly	12	14	7
Bimonthly	-	-	-
As needed	8	7	3
Spring/Fall	6	-	3

**Number of Respondents**  
2016 2008 2001

<b>12. What is the average moisture level of your greens?</b>			
Damp	8	6	
Field capacity	18	14	
Dry	25	14	
10%	1	-	
11%	3	-	
12%	1	-	
13%	3	-	
14%	5	-	
15%	6	-	
16%	5	-	
17%	2	-	
18%	3	-	
19%	1	-	
20%	3	-	
24%	1	-	
27%	1	-	
30%	1	-	
<b>Average moisture level =</b>	<b>16%</b>		
<b>13. What is your annual nitrogen fertility use?</b>			
< 1 lb.	0	0	3
1-2 lbs.	12	4	18
2-3 lbs.	25	21	10
3-4 lbs.	12	20	3
> 4 lbs.	1	8	-
<b>14. Do you feel the green speeds you are asked to maintain are appropriate for the relative severity of the contours?</b>			
Yes	39	48	24
No	10	5	8
<b>15. How many greens do you have with extremely limited cupping area?</b>			
0	4	12	6
1	4	4	3
2	9	8	4
3	7	9	5
4	9	4	6
5	3	4	2
6	7	3	2
7	1	2	1
8	4	3	2
9	1	2	2
12	1	1	-
18	1	1	1
<b>Average =</b>	<b>4 greens/course (2016)</b>		
	<b>3 greens/course (2008)</b>		
	<b>4 greens/course (2001)</b>		
<b>16. Have you rebuilt any greens to reduce slope?</b>			
Yes	18	20	
No	31	33	
<i>If yes, how many?</i>			
1	8	10	
2	4	3	
3	4	4	
4	1	1	
5	1	1	
6	1	-	
7	1	1	
8	1	-	
20	1	-	
<b>Total greens rebuilt =</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>44</b>	
<b>17. How important are fast green speeds to your membership?</b>			
Very	26	23	16
Somewhat	18	24	16
Minimal	5	6	2
<b>18. Will you sacrifice some turf for increased green speed?</b>			
Yes	9	10	10
No	40	43	24
<b>19. Does the escalating demand for faster greens give you more personal stress than meeting other maintenance demands?</b>			
Yes	9	21	6
No	37	32	28

## Special Thanks to Our Survey Participants

Drew Agnew, Mount Kisco CC, Mt. Kisco, NY  
Tim Benedict, CGCS, Woodmere Club, Woodmere, NY  
Chris Body, The Stanwich Club, Greenwich, CT  
Scott Blough, Nassau CC, Glen Cove, NY  
Peter Bly, Brooklawn CC, Fairfield, CT  
Mike Brunelle, CGCS, Upper Montclair CC, Clifton, NJ  
Sean Cain, CGCS, Sunningdale CC, Scarsdale, NY  
John Carlone, CGCS, Meadow Brook Club, Jericho, NY  
Bert Dickinson, Willow Ridge CC, Harrison, NY  
Paul Dotti, Arcola CC, Paramus, NJ  
David Dudones, Westchester CC, Rye, NY  
Jon Ferruccio, Mahopac Golf & Beach Club, Mahopac, NY  
Steve Finamore, CGCS, Alpine CC, Demarest, NJ  
Sean Foley, Round Hill Club, Greenwich, CT  
Mark Fuller, CGCS, Connecticut GC, Easton, CT  
Tim Garceau, Haworth CC, Haworth, NJ  
Joe Gardner, Fresh Meadow CC, Great Neck, NY  
John Genovesi, CGCS, Maidstone Club, East Hampton, NY  
Tony Girardi, CGCS, Rockrimmon CC, Stamford, CT  
Peter Grace, H. Smith Richardson GC, Fairfield, CT  
Blake Halderman, CGCS, Brae Burn CC, Purchase, NY  
Doug Johnstone, Silver Lake GC, State Island, NY  
Jamie Kapes, Woodway CC, Darien, CT  
Les Kennedy, CGCS, Blind Brook CC, Purchase, NY  
Dave Kerr, CGCS, Ridgewood CC, Danbury, CT  
Chip Lafferty, Rye GC, Rye, NY  
Tom Leahy, CGCS, Sleepy Hollow CC, Scarborough, NY  
Nick Lerner, Bonnie Briar CC, Larchmont, NY  
Ken Lochridge, Glen Head CC, Glen Head, NY  
Steve Loughran, Rock Ridge CC, Newtown, CT  
Luke Lownes, Aspetuck Valley CC, Weston, CT  
Steve McGlone, Siwanoy GC, Bronxville, NY  
Rob Milar, St. Andrew's GC, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY  
Tyler Otero, North Jersey CC, Wayne, NJ  
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Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, Fairview CC, Greenwich, CT  
Brent Peveich, Pine Hollow CC, East Norwich, NY  
Steve Rabideau, CGCS, Winged Foot GC, Mamaroneck, NY  
Todd Raisch, CGCS, Ridgewood CC, Paramus, NJ  
Peter Rappoccio, CGCS, Silver Spring CC, Ridgefield, CT  
Josh Reiger, Spring Lake GC, Spring Lake Heights, NJ  
Bill Salinetti, CGCS, National Golf Links of America, Southampton, NY  
Jim Schell, Oak Hills Park GC, Norwalk, CT  
Ryan Segrue, Shorehaven GC, East Norwalk, CT  
Jesse Shannon, Manhattan Woods GC, West Nyack, NY  
Shannon Slevin, Old Oaks CC, Purchase, NY  
Doug Snyder, Milbrook Club, Greenwich, CT  
Tim Walker, CGCS, Leewood GC, Eastchester, NY  
Jeff Wentworth, CGCS, Pelham CC, Pelham Manor, NY

## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming MetGCSA and Regional Events

#### Met Area Team Championship

Monday, September 26  
The Country Club of Scranton  
Clarks Summit, PA  
Host: Greg Boring

#### The Poa/MetGCSA Tournament

Monday, October 3  
Metropolis Country Club  
White Plains, NY  
Host: Dave McCaffrey

#### Assistants Championship

Thursday, October 27  
Upper Montclair Country Club  
Clifton, NJ  
Assistant Hosts: Kyle Zarnetski, Sean Blatz, Steve Benally

#### Annual Fall Meeting & Elections

Wednesday, November 2  
Rye Grill & Bar  
Rye, NY

#### MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar

Thursday, November 10  
The Patterson Club  
Fairfield, CT  
Host: Jason Meersman

For further information, contact our Education Chair, Brett Chapin, at 203-938-9640.

#### MetGCSA Christmas Party

Thursday, December 8, 1-4 p.m.  
Bonnie Briar Country Club  
Larchmont, NY  
Host: Nick Lerner

Mark your calendar and watch for details on our upcoming Christmas Party's all-new format!

#### MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 18, 2017  
Westchester Country Club  
Rye, NY  
Host: David Dudones

For further information, contact our Education Chair, Brett Chapin, at 203-938-9640.

### Regional Events

#### Turf & Grounds Exposition

Wednesday – Thursday, November 16 – 17  
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](http://www.nysta.org).

#### Long Island Regional Conference

Thursday, December 1  
Upsky Long Island Hotel  
Hauppauge, NY

The Long Island Regional Conference offers a variety of educational sessions with

leading turfgrass educators and industry professionals. For further information, visit [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org) or contact the NYSTA office at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229.

#### 2016 GREEN EXPO Turf & Landscape Conference

Tuesday – Thursday, December 6 – 8  
The Borgata Hotel & Casino  
Atlantic City, NJ

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](http://www.njturfgrass.org).

# 2016 Scholarship Recipients Recognized at the Mosholu Parent/Child Scholarship Tournament

by David Dudones

The 2016 Scholarship Awards Ceremony was held on August 2 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 fifth 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 30 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 and some much-needed air conditioning. 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 10 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. "As scholarship chairman, it amazes me every year the talent and commitment of our members' children," says David Dudones of Westchester Country Club. "The Scholarship Committee and board couldn't be more pleased to recognize deserving applicants with Scholarship

Awards every year. Please join me in congratulating this year's scholarship recipients—and their proud parents."

**Julia Cook**, daughter of Lisa and Mike Cook of The Care of Trees, will be a freshman at the University of Scranton studying Business.

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

**Skylar Dorsch**, son of Misty and Rob Dorsch of Richter Park Golf Course, will be a freshman at Arizona State University and plans to major in Business Communications.

**Sarah Garceau**, daughter of Tim Garceau, superintendent of Haworth Country Club, is pursuing a master's at Clemson University in Applied Economics and Statistics.

**Nicholas Girardi**, son of Christine and Tony Girardi, superintendent of Rockrimmon Country Club, will be a freshman at The University of Wisconsin studying Biochemistry.

**William Jones**, son of Patricia and Bill Jones, superintendent of Friar's Head, will be a sophomore at The University of New Haven and plans to major in Sports Management with a minor in Sport Economics.

**Sarah Perlee**, daughter of Lorah and Bill Perlee, superintendent of The Apawamis Club, will be in her senior year at The Uni-

versity of Vermont majoring in Molecular Genetics.

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

**Zachary Weiland**, son of Shannon Mulligan and Jim Weiland, assistant superintendent of Connecticut Golf Club, will be a sophomore 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 junior at the University of Connecticut, pursuing a bachelor's in Landscape Architecture 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.*

*At the Mosholu Parent/Child Golf Event, MetGCSA scholarship winners receive their well-deserved awards (left to right): Bill Jones with his son, William; Pandora and Greg Wojick with their son, Christopher; Steve Renzetti with his son, Austin; Mike Cook with his daughter, Julia; Jim Weiland and Shannon Mulligan with their son, Zachary; Pat Cragin with his son, Andrew; Misty and Rob Dorsch with their daughter, Skylar.*



All for fun...



& fun for all!

MetGCSA  
Family Picnic  
2016

# McCaffrey Welcomes Tournament-Goers to Metropolis

by Todd Apgar

Into his fourth season at Metropolis Country Club, Superintendent Dave McCaffrey has been hard at work on a master plan intended to bring the course closer to its original A.W. Tillinghast design. With the guidance of Architect Ron Forse of Forse design over the past three years, the club has undergone extensive renovations.

“Fairway and green expansions have played a major role in the renovation, recapturing lost pin placements and run-out areas,” says Dave. In addition, all 65 existing bunkers were rebuilt, and 40 more of the original bunkers have been reinstated. Most tee complexes have been rebuilt to add length while also providing additional options for shorter hitters.

“In addition,” says Dave, “vistas have been opened up throughout the course, following the removal of more than 1,000 trees, and 30 acres of native grass areas have been established to offer definition.”

Though the club’s ultimate plans for the course are still grander than this, Dave and his staff are eager to showcase their efforts to date at the Poa/MetGCSA Tournament at Metropolis on October 3.

## The Way It All Began

Metropolis sits on the grounds of the old Century Country Club, which opened in 1898 as a 12-hole course and then moved in 1922 to its current site, selling the property to what is now Metropolis.

The course was originally designed by Herbert Strong, but word has it that when Metropolis took over, the club hired A.W. Tillinghast to add six new holes and then reconfigure the others. The course had remained virtually unchanged until 1997 when Metropolis called in Ken Dye to rebuild seven tees and one green and to rework all the bunkers—eliminating some of them in the process.

Metropolis plays 6,900 yards from the back tees and has numerous, 400-yard-plus Par 4s. The toughest hole by far, according

to Dave, is the 7th. “It traditionally plays the toughest for events at the club,” he says.

## Before Metropolis

Growing up in Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England, Dave attended Harper Adams University in England, where he pursued formal training in golf course management.

With degree in hand, Dave accepted a position on the grounds crew at the top-ranked Oakmont Country Club outside of Pittsburgh, PA. Among the best of training grounds, Oakmont set the stage for Dave’s future success in the turfgrass management industry. After six years of experience with Superintendent John Zimmers and prepping for the 2007 U.S. Open and 2010 Women’s U.S. Open, Dave was offered the opportunity to move to the Northeast, working as Superintendent Doug Drugo’s assistant at Wee Burn Country Club in Darien, CT.

With two years at Wee Burn under his belt, Dave assumed his current role as superintendent at Metropolis in 2012.

## Moving Forward

The club’s future plans include continuing its ambitious plan to bring the course back to its original design. Not one to drag his feet, Dave will continue work in the off-season. “The off-season is never really an off-season for us,” says Dave. “We will be forging ahead with the club’s ever-evolving master plan. Because Metropolis has a strong caddie program and cart use is very low,” adds Dave, “the club is taking advantage of this and has plans to remove cart paths, which will mirror more closely the club’s original design.”

Dave is quick to credit his assistants, Jarad Luknicki and Ryan St. Pierre, with providing their support in executing the club’s master plan. “Jarad and Ryan are responsible for putting our theories into practice. Their commitment and talent are clear to see in the product we provide,” says Dave, adding,



Dave McCaffrey

“Jarad made the move to Metropolis from Wee Burn with me and has been instrumental in the entire renovation to date.”

## Life Beyond the Course

After a busy day at the club, Dave likes to head to his North Stamford, CT, home to his wife Alisha, who he met while working with a friend of hers on the crew at Oakmont, and son Kellan, who will turn 3 in September. “Kellan is already getting the swing of golf; although blowers and weed eaters are his real passion. Maybe another superintendent in the making,” says Dave with a smile.

While Alisha and Kellan are Dave’s primary preoccupation, he does find time to take part in a fantasy football league, which he won last year, defeating Doug Drugo and Country Club of New Canaan’s Mike Roe. Dave is also an avid Steelers and Penguins fan, looking for every opportunity to attend their games. While working at Oakmont, and living in the Pittsburgh area, Dave had no choice but to get on board with the area teams. “Rooting for the Steelers and Penguins probably helped me get my assistant’s job at Wee Burn,” laughs Dave, noting Doug’s shared passion for both teams.

Playing the new-and-improved Metropolis will no doubt prove challenging. So bring your A game on October 3 and enjoy all that the course has to offer. Hope to see you all there!

*Todd Apgar, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a sales representative with Metro Turf Specialists in Brookfield, CT.*

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Ray@EvergreenOrganicRecycling.com
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