

# Tee To Green

January 2023  
VOLUME 54 NUMBER 1

Published by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association





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



Cover: Fenway Golf Club.

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# President's Message

## Education Is the Name of the Winter Game



Winter months in the Met area typically offer superintendents the downtime they need to reflect on the previous season—what worked well and what could be improved—and to adjust maintenance plans accordingly for the upcoming season. It's also the time we are afforded numerous educational opportunities to support the growth of our maintenance operations.

Our Fall Seminar (see p. 8), held this year at Fenway Golf Club, offered a great roster of speakers hitting on topics that ranged from winter damage to disease and water source management. Our Winter Seminar brought us together yet again for another superb day of vendor visits and topics pertinent to the management of our courses.

My all-time favorite educational opportunity is fast-approaching: The GCSAA Conference and Show, which is running from February 6 – 9. I am looking forward to learning about trends in our industry that I might be able to bring back and apply to our maintenance operation in 2023. These ideas might involve making only minor adjustments to my plan for the upcoming season, but this practice is part of my ongoing commitment to improving the experience at Redding.

Though not technically educational, please be sure to join fellow MetGCSA conference-goers at our Nor'easter event on February 8 at the Blue Martini Lounge in Orlando. See the Upcoming Events (page 12) for details. It's a great way to kick back and enjoy the company of your colleagues.

Another must-attend educational event geared, this time, specifically for assistant superintendents is the Class C Professional Development Seminar. Watch for details. This career-enhancing event will have a new look as we partner with the USGA to provide educational and networking opportunities for our assistants. The USGA is focused on aiding turfgrass management professionals in maintaining their club's top asset, their golf facility. This is a great event, and I hope to see many of you there.



*Brett Chapin*  
*MetGCSA President*

### **New Perspective on Green Speed**

Speaking of educational opportunities, be sure to check out this issue's feature. It offers new insight into how ever-increasing green speeds have encouraged both architects and golf course superintendents to rethink how new greens are constructed and old ones are altered to ensure more pinnable areas and a good round of golf.

At Redding, pin locations have been a hot topic. As a result, my club went through a greens analysis process to accurately determine usable pin locations. We were then able to share reliable data with our membership, which showed that several of our greens have less than 20 percent usable pin locations.

This information will be the topic of my January Green Committee meeting to determine what our club's goal for 2023 will be regarding our green speeds. Does the club want to continue to focus on variety when it comes to course setup, or do they want to be more data-based in regard to setting locations on our greens? A maintenance issue on the table for the new year!

### **Carve Out Some 'Me' Time**

As we plan for the upcoming season, be sure to carve out time to simply enjoy the off-season. Whether it's a home project, a getaway, or an event with your family, like the Frozen Four Hockey games I saw at Fenway Park with my wife and kids, enjoy the rest of the winter, 'cause let's face it, spring will be here before you know it!

*Brett Chapin*  
*President*





Feature

# Superfast Greens: Friend or Foe?

*Todd Quitno offers an architect's perspective on the pros—and mostly cons—of ultrafast greens*

*The practice green at Rye Golf Club has ample flat space with dramatic transitions between, allowing for fun and engaging pin positions that are accessible no matter the speed of the green.*



# A

ello. My name is Todd Quitno. I am a golf course architect.... And I am a HYPOCRITE.

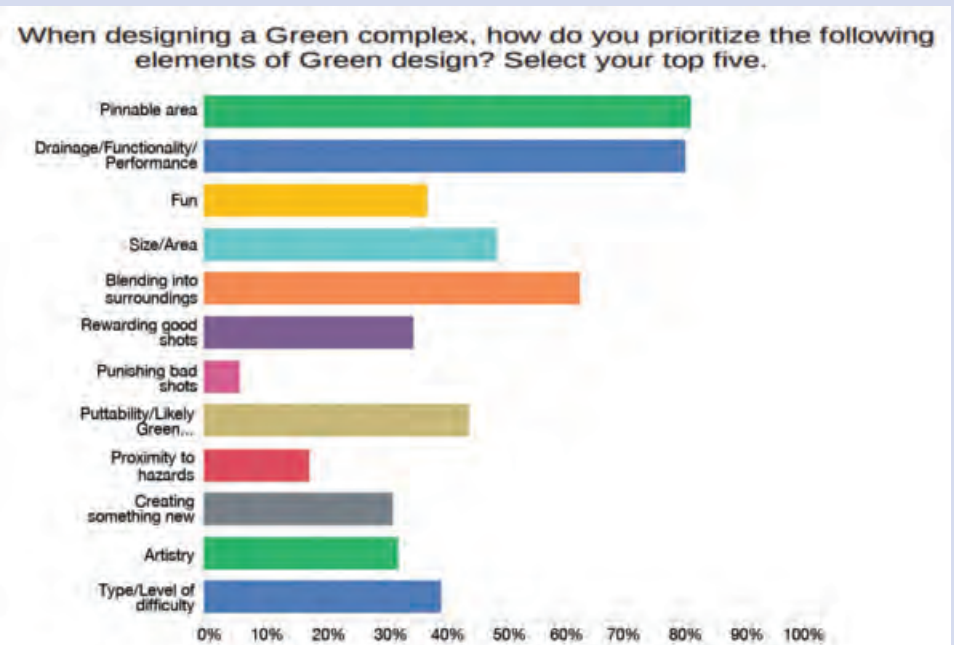
I am writing today to shed light on this personal flaw, beginning with the following declaration: **I LOVE fast greens**. As a middling amateur golfer (8 hcp), I'm admittedly not always the best at playing them. Heck, I'm even prone to a 3- or even 4-putt multiple times a round when the greens are blazing. But when I'm rolling it well, which happens enough to just barely qualify as "most" of the time, I find nothing more rewarding than judging a screaming-fast lag putt or pounding the back of the cup with an aggressive 5-footer that I barely tap. There's just something about it that feels really good when I can pull it off!

But here's where the hypocrisy thing hits me and hits me hard. As an architect, **I DESPISE fast greens** and think excessive speed spoils the game.

Turns out, I am not alone in this mental ping pong, something I learned recently while in Rhode Island with a hundred or so fellow members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (and a few architect guests from Europe). We were gathered to play some local gems—Newport, Wampanoissett, Shelter 'Hah-bah'—but more importantly, to banter about the game. This year's topic: Anything and everything greens. Our three days of play and discussion were kicked off with this quote by revered Golden Age architect Harry Colt, who quipped:

**"In no case should a green be contoured so that a ball runs away from the putter like a swine possessed by the devil."**

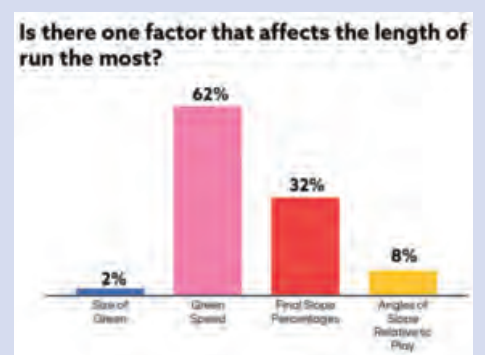
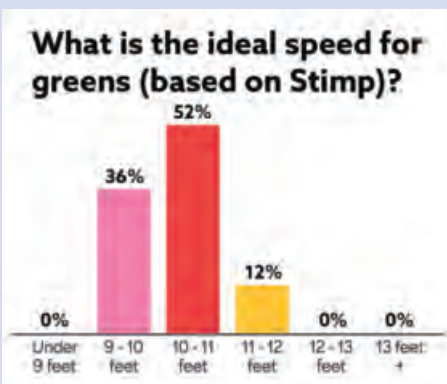
Of course, this does not exactly refer to green speed, but the quote is just too good not to share! Nonetheless, what Colt *was* indicating is that excessiveness in a green, whether slope or speed, can directly impact the quality of a hole or the entire course and, more importantly, the experience one has playing it. This became one of the fundamental tenets of our group discussion, reinforced by some very unscientific flash polling of the attendees who were asked questions about greens and what they prioritize when designing their putting sur-



faces. The results presented were varied and interesting (see above).

Besides functionality, "pinnable area" was a top priority for more than 80 percent of the architects polled. More probing revealed that most strive for at least two-thirds of a green surface to be pinnable, but less than half of those polled indicated "likely green speed" as a top design priority, this despite unanimous (verbal) agreement that slope and pace have a direct impact on pin-ability. Not exactly a cry for help when it comes to speed, right?

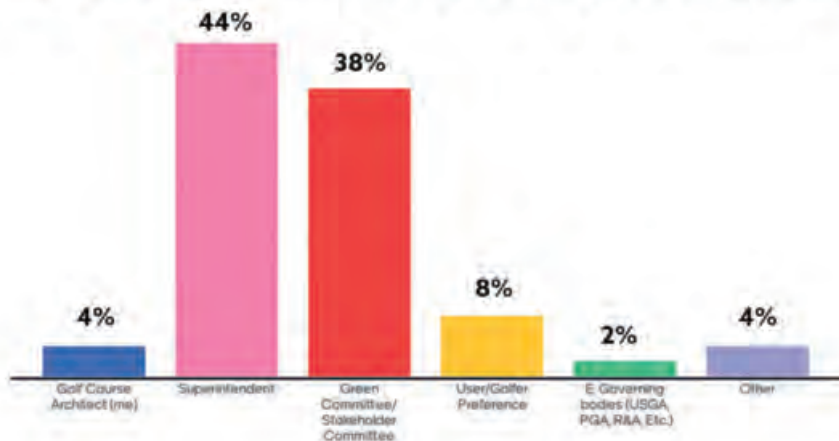
At face value, I would agree, but some additional live polling and small-group discussion on the topic revealed a bit more concern:



As you can see, more than 86 percent of those polled above believe that the ideal green speed is 11 feet or less, and that speed has the most significant impact by far on ball runout. When asked whether they always design to this ideal, most of the architects indicated they would like to, but the decision on speed is typically out of their hands, indicating that green committees and superintendents tend to drive the bus, with the latter often directed by the former.

The architects also agreed that educating clubs on the problem of excessive speed is difficult given the annual turnover of committees and constant concern about keeping up with the competition.

## Who currently drives the bus on green speeds?



USGA STIMPMETER READINGS, 1977.	
AUGUSTA NATIONAL	7'11"
CONGRESSIONAL	6'4"
CYPRESS POINT	7'8"
HARBOUR TOWN	5'1"
MEDINAH	7'8"
MERION	6'4"
OAKLAND HILLS	8'5"
OAKMONT	9'8"
PINE VALLEY	7'4"
PINEHURST #2	6'10"
SAN FRANCISCO GC	7'2"
SHINNECOCK HILLS	7'2"
WINGED FOOT	7'5"

## GREEN SPEEDS BY DECADE

	Max Slope	Mow Height	Typ. Speed
1910's	10%	?	4?
1920-30's*	8%*	0.375-0.5	5?
1950'-60's	5-6%	0.33"	6?
1970's-80's**	3-4%	0.25"	7.6
1980's-90's	2.5-3%	0.2"	8.5
2000's-2010's	2.25-2.8%	0.15"	9.5
2020's	1.5-2.5%	0.100"	12.5+

## Ultrafast Can Be Ultrabad

All of this brings us to a natural question: *What exactly is the problem with ultrafast greens?*

Knowing most of you reading this are superintendents, there's not much need to dwell on the agronomic issues that arise from maintaining bentgrass (or *Poa*) within .01" of its effective life. It is well known that more manicured always means more inputs. Less leaf head means more potential exposure to tissue damage, more energy needed to create substantial rooting, and more susceptibility to stresses (water, drought, heat, disease, etc.). Sure, bentgrass can handle being short, but cutting heights less than .100" is borderline grass suicide.

That's just one side of the issue. Let's look at how speed has impacted architecture, especially when it comes to pinning interest, diversity, and strategic setup. The diagrams top right tell a fascinating story of how Stimpmeter readings have increased over past decades.

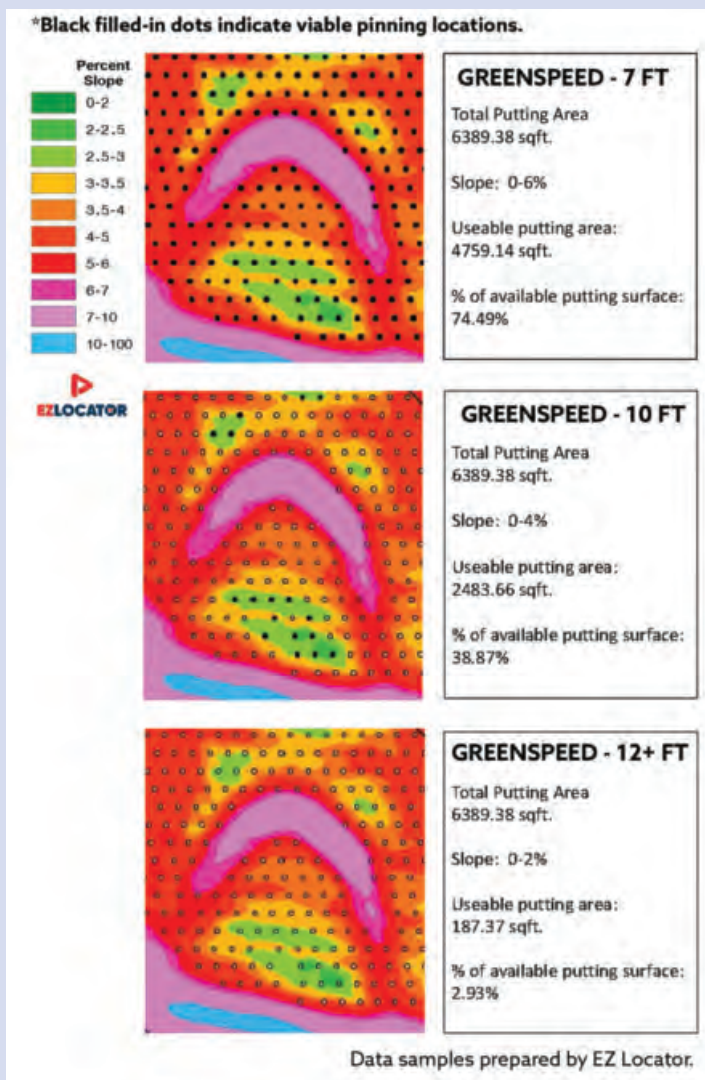
I think the data here seems a bit conservative, particularly for the current decade. Many superintendents report that they're asked to maintain 13'+ daily, employing mowing heights under 0.100" and incorporating rolling to further speeds. The golf courses we played while in Rhode Island were running every bit of 12', and more like 13' at two of the venues (just my guess; no actual data provided). Our group reported numerous putts running off the front of the greens, 4-jacks, and other crazy putting woes. We did play in a 25-mph wind, which certainly added to the challenge, but the fast surfaces undeniably impacted pace of play and shot values.

Here's another interesting tidbit shared at the meeting. The diagrams to the right show a snippet from a green at a top club

where the surface contours have reportedly remained intact since their inception. The ezLocator® software program was used to illustrate how the viable pinning locations have changed as speeds have increased over time, rendering some dynamic pin locations unusable. Many architecture "aficionados" revere these old clubs for having preserved

and/or restored their strategic value through time, but can we honestly say that strategy here hasn't changed when speed has so obviously altered the way these greens are set up and played?

*continued on page 11*





# Accommodating Ever-Increasing Green Speeds

*Superintendents Join Former USGA Agronomist David Oatis in Sharing Their Thoughts and Solutions to Elevated Green Speeds*

## Green Industry Professional's Perspective

*Dave Oatis, now of David Oatis Consulting LLC, 908-347-9436*

While fast greens can be fun to play, excessive speed is detrimental to pace of play and can adversely impact golfer enjoyment and turfgrass health (frequently from wear due to loss of usable cupping area). Furthermore, maintaining excessive speeds (based on a given design) prevents golfers from playing to hole locations designed by the original architect. Depending on the design, this can actually reduce the challenge and eliminate variety and playability options for a golf hole. It can convert a very special design into a boring, one-dimensional design.

The challenge is to identify the green speed range that provides adequate golfer challenge without excessively limiting the amount of usable cupping area. Often a green or two out of eighteen have lower "speed limits," and this complicates the situation.

Some courses choose to maintain all the greens at the same speed but maintain them at a slightly lower speed. Others choose to maintain most of the greens at higher speeds but maintain the more severely contoured greens at a slower speed. This complicates management but can be accomplished at many facilities.

Still other courses opt for rebuilding or adjusting grades on more severely contoured greens so they are able to support faster green speeds. This can produce surfaces that are consistent but results in more expense and may significantly alter the original design. Rebuilding a green or two on an old course increases the complexity of the maintenance program as new greens usually react differently to stress and extreme weather events. With modern technology and a skillful manager, this can be managed, but rebuilt greens are always referred to as "the new Number X" forever, and the old green, regardless of how poorly it may have played, magically gets better in the minds of many!

The most appropriate option varies from course to course, depending on myriad factors including available resources, level of play, the perceived value of the original design, golfer desires, etc. It is worth preserving "good old architecture" yet perfectly acceptable to adjust contours a bit to account for how the game has changed.

Realistically, some old designs simply must be changed to remain relevant. Frequent three- and four-putts frustrate golfers and slow play, and that can turn people away from the game. At the end of the day, it's important to maintain sensible values and put golfer enjoyment, healthy, reliable turf, and reasonable management ahead of extreme green speeds that the vast majority of golfers don't enjoy on a regular basis.

## Superintendents' Solutions

*Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, Golf and Grounds Superintendent, Fairview Country Club, 203-223-5403*

Fairview's greens have considerable undulations, and many hole locations have been lost due to the modern green speeds. In some of the areas that still can be used, the square footage of usable space has shrunk. Since rolling back the green speeds, at this point, is not an option, my club is currently looking at recontouring several greens to accommodate current speeds, which will be at a considerable cost!

After touring the course with Rees Jones, we are planning to alter greens that require less than 20 percent surface modification, which means stripping the sod and layers of material, adjusting the subsurface, adding back the top layer, replacing the *Poa* sod, and installing XGD drainage. Greens that require more than 20 percent surface modification will be fully rebuilt to USGA specifications.

*Steve Finamore, CGCS, retired Alpine Country Club Superintendent, 201-376-8235*

We had eight greens at Alpine Country Club that did not have sufficient pin locations. We had modified two greens in the early '90s and were never satisfied with the results. Between 2001 and 2012, we rebuilt those two greens and six additional ones, this time, according to USGA specifications. Results were excellent, and the new greens blended with the older greens, playing very similarly.

*Tony Girardi, CGCS, MG, Golf Course Superintendent, Rockrimmon Country Club, 203-904-8715*

To date, Rockrimmon has rebuilt three greens due to severe undulations that green speeds of 9.5-10.5 couldn't handle. That was 15 years ago. Fast-forward to current conditions where green speeds are regularly in the 10s and mid-11s during tournament

times. This has forced us to schedule two to three more greens for full reconstruction. We've simply lost all but a handful of hole locations. Members have commented on how the hole location "is always in the same spot." Even with using modern hole location software like ezLocator®, we still struggle to find usable locations. If all goes as planned, we will be rebuilding our 13th green in the fall of 2023 and our 9th green in the fall of 2024, using the same method we implemented 15 years ago that included full USGA rebuilds and using our existing *Poa annua* sod. In my opinion, this will be a continuing trend.

*Scott E. Niven, CGCS, Property Manager, The Stanwich Club, 203-962-3732*

I have seen the greens at Stanwich go from a stimpmeter reading of 8' when I arrived up to 14' and have since softened all greens except for one which still has plenty of slope. It was the most benign when compared to the others. As speeds have continued to escalate, with today's average ball roll at 13'ish day-to-day, some greens that we rebuilt back in 2005 again have little cupping area. With a cutting height of .100" on our bentgrass greens, we can grow healthy turf without excessive inputs, and the resulting 13' +/- speeds are reasonable and, in my mind, fast enough for any event that the club might want to host. If we were to lower the height of cut, which would further increase green speed, I think that both the turf and members would begin to cry uncle.

*Sean Cain, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendent, Sunningdale Country Club, 914-826-4296*

Since we have rebuilt all of our greens with architect Mike DeVries and added more contour and movement to all of them, we are not under pressure anymore to lower heights, double-cut, or over roll the greens to get the desired speeds we want on a weekly basis.

*Sean Foley, Golf Course Superintendent, Round Hill Club, 203-869-6477*

At Round Hill Club, we softened just a few super severe contours during the complete rebuild and installation of USGA greens. Our small greens are very limited in pin locations at the desired green speeds. This situation creates predictability and a reduced opportunity for variance to the golfing experience.

## MetGCSA Assistants Take Home 2022 Battle of the Bridges Trophy

by James White

At the November 1 Battle of the Bridges Assistants Championship, the MetGCSA emerged victorious for the fourth consecutive year and fifth time since the tournament's inception in 2016. This annual low-net team event, contested this year at Metuchen Golf and Country Club in Edison, NJ, gives assistants from both the MetGCSA and GCSA of New Jersey an opportunity to put down their cup-cutters and blowers, pick up their drivers and putters, and engage in a little friendly competition.

This year's championship winner was based on the top 10 overall team scores. Out of those 10, the Met had 7 teams. Chad Lamere and Carlos Montero from Bonnie Briar Country Club led the pack with a Net score of -11!

### The Site of the Competition

Metuchen Golf and Country Club was founded in 1915. Originally 9 holes, the club became its current 18 in 1931. From the championship tees, the course plays 6,766 yards. Fairways are narrow and lined with trees, along with small greens protected by bunkers and stingy rough. Metuchen's signature hole — the 14th — has their famous Metuchen tree 160 yards out from the green. Our tournament players were challenged to decide which side of the tree they wanted to play their approach shot from. But that's not all: This green is protected by a greenside pond that also challenged tourney participants to a difficult putt.

History is also a part of the 15th hole at Metuchen. It was dedicated as "The Edison Hole" in October 2014. Over 130 years ago, this hole served as the end of the line for Edison's railroad, which ran 2.5 miles across town and was used to show electricity's many uses.

Many thanks to Metuchen Superintendent Jason Osterhoudt and to Assistant Superintendent Elizabeth Holmes for all their hard work in providing our group with great course conditions.



The winning MetGCSA team proudly displays their trophy.

### A Bit About Assistant Elizabeth Holmes

Elizabeth Holmes has been at Metuchen since 2019. She received her bachelors in Plant Science from Rutgers University. Before Metuchen, she interned at Baltursol Golf Club for two summers while in school and then became an assistant in training at TPC Jasna Polana.

Elizabeth was more than pleased to host the event: "I love any event where I get to interact with my course in a different way and use it to play golf and see the results of all our staff's work during the season," she said.

One of her favorite parts of the job is mowing rough. She also enjoys creating the landscape design for their annual plantings. In her free time, she likes to hike, bake, and relax at home.

### How the Contestants Fared

In the seventh year of the Battle of the Bridges Assistants Championship, the GCSANJ and the MetGCSA battled it out for the title. For the fourth consecutive year, the Met team blew out the competition and took home the trophy. Here is a look at the winning results:

**Battle of the Bridges Final**  
**MetGCSA ~ -7**  
**GCSANJ ~ -3**

### Contest Winners

#### Team 1st Low Net ~ MetGCSA

-11 Chad Lamere/Carlos Montero  
*Bonnie Briar Country Club*

#### Team 2nd Low Net ~ GCSANJ

-10 James Surcio/Nick Alley  
*North Jersey Country Club*

#### Team 3rd Low Net ~ MetGCSA

-7 Ben Messenger/Dan Murphy  
*The Stanwich Club*

#### Closest to the Pin

# 2 Tim Pleskach 23' 2"  
*Wild Turkey at Crystal Springs Resort*  
 # 18 Brian Rykaczewski 11"  
*Knickerbocker Country Club*

#### Longest Drive

##### Men

Travis Wilder, *Bedford Golf & Tennis Club*

##### Women

Elizabeth Holmes, *Metuchen Golf and Country Club*

*James White, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee and Class C rep, is an assistant superintendent at Wykagyl Country Club in New Rochelle, NY.*



# The MetGCSA Slips to 10th Place in the 2022 Met Area Team Championship

by Andy Drohen

This year's Met Area Team Championship was hosted by John Chassard at the famed William Flynn Lehigh Country Club in Allentown, PA. Little did John know when he agreed to host the event that he would not only have to manage a record field of 136 players from all 15 chapters, but also an untimely, drenching rain that stopped play during the middle of the round. Unfortunately, by the time the course became playable again, there was not enough daylight to finish the 18-hole championship, so the event was cut to a 9-hole shootout!

No matter! John had Lehigh in tremendous condition with greens smooth and fast and fairways pure and tight. Perennial competitors are familiar with the Met Team Championship's challenging, yet fair setups, and Lehigh was no different. William Flynn created a gem in the rolling hills of Lehigh Valley with dramatic topography and changes in elevation, with great green complexes that demand good shots.

Taking home this year's trophy was the team from Long Island. This was the only association that had all four teams shoot even par or better! Led by one of the low net scores of the day, Ken Lochridge and Daniel Wolf shot -2, followed by the second lowest gross team of the day at -1, Shamus O'Connor and Tom Weinert. Rounding out the team, both with even par scores, were Shawn O'Sullivan and Luke Knutson on the gross side and Jon Semmig and Graig Patti on the net side.

After finishing fifth in the last Met Area Team Championship, the MetGCSA team unfortunately slipped to 10th place. The team was led by the pairing of Steve McGlone and Brian Gjelsvik, who shot 2 under Net, followed by Steve Wickstrom and Mike McCormick at plus 3 Net. On the Gross side, David McCaffrey and Matt Lapinski shot plus 4, and Josh Haugh paired with Zak Brooks to shoot plus 6.

"The Met always has high expectations going into this event," says team member and MetGCSA Executive Director Mike McCall. "But obviously it just wasn't our day. John Chassard definitely had the course primed for the event. It's a shame everyone did not get to experience the full 18. Hats off to Long Island for playing con-



*MetGCSA team members strike a pose at the site of the Met Area Team Championship. From left to right: Mike McCall, MetGCSA executive director; Steve Wickstrom of Burning Tree Country Club, Steven McGlone of Siwanoy Country Club, Matt Lapinski and Brian Gjelsvik of Noble Turf.*

sistently well across all of their teams. The good news is it is a lot easier to be the underdog. We'll be back!"

With the rain-shortened event, we decided to raffle off the skill prizes, because half the field had not played all the holes. After hearing the tragic news of the untimely passing of Chris Strehl's son Jack, it was unanimously decided to pass along all Skins money and 50/50 money to Chris's family to support them in this time of need.

Please keep Chris and his family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

## Special Thanks

Once again, the Met Area Team Championship was generously supported by our seven major sponsors who continue to step up to make this one of the best events across the country! Please join me in thanking Allied Nutrients, BASF, Bayer, Ocean Organics, Plant Food, Syngenta, and Toro as they continue to support this fantastic event.

Many thanks, as well, to our host John Chassard and his entire staff, and all the folks at Lehigh Country Club, for another successful championship. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to our local GCSAA representative, Kevin Doyle, and the Philly association's Kristen Liebsch for their help with registration. We also can't forget to recognize our resident photographer, Shaun Barry, for photographing the

event. We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements over the winter!

## The Complete Results

What follows is a list of both the team and proximity winners. Congratulations to one and all!

### Team Scores / Rain-shortened event (9-hole scores: Ties broken by lowest gross scores, then net)

1st	Long Island GCSA	-3
2nd	Pocono Turfgrass Association	E
3rd	Hudson Valley GCSA	+1
4th	GCSA of New York	+3
5th	Philadelphia AGCS	+4
	(+1 low gross)	
6th	Connecticut AGCS	+4
	(+2 low gross)	
7th	GCSA of Cape Cod	+7
	(+3 low gross)	
8th	GCSA of New Jersey	+7
	(+4 low gross)	
9th	Eastern Shore AGCS	+9
10th	MetGCSA	+11
11th	Mid-Atlantic AGCS	+16
	(+2 low gross)	
12th	Central Penn GCSA	+16
	(+3 low gross)	
13th	Rhode Island GCSA	+16
	(+5 low gross)	
14th	Northeastern GCSA	+19
15th	GCSA of New England	+27

### Skill Events

Due to rain, all skill prizes were raffled off and Skins monies were donated to Chris Strehl's family.

### Sponsorship Team Winner

Matt Rogers & Kevin Monaco  
(Score of Even Par)  
Toro Group

*Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chair and a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a regional manager with Allied Nutrients in Granville, MA.*

# Fall Education Seminar Another Success!

by Dave Peterson

On Thursday, November 10, MetGCSA members were treated to the great hospitality of Fenway Golf Club in Scarsdale, NY, for their Fall Education Seminar. The Education Committee put together another great roster of speakers that drew superintendents and assistants from throughout Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey.

We would like to send out a sincere thank you to Fenway Golf Club Superintendent Rob Alonzi for his team's hospitality throughout the day.

What follows are the highlights of each presentation. If you find you'd like to delve deeper into any one of these subjects, you'll find the speaker's contact information at the end of each summary.

### Best Practices for Soil-borne and Root Disease Management

Dr. Paul Giordano, director of agronomy at Harrell's LLC, kicked off the day with a talk on soil-borne diseases, focusing on the control of fairy ring, summer patch, take-all patch, and Pythium root rot. Dr. Giordano emphasized the importance of application timing and rotation and, most important, getting fungicides to the target zone within the soil by utilizing wetting agents and proper timing along with an appropriate amount of irrigation after a soil application. He pointed out that most soil applications are not watered in aggressively enough, and research shows that most of the active ingredient becomes bound to the thatch and never reaches the infected soil below.

Dr. Giordano pulled double-duty, assuming the spot Dave Oatis would have taken next at the podium had he not had Covid! This time, Dr. Giordano focused on how to set up a balanced spray program to control our most challenging turf diseases, including anthracnose, dollar spot, and Pythium. Dr. Giordano emphasized sound product rotation and brought up the idea of utilizing manufacturer-guaranteed programs when possible so that any disease breakthrough would be rectified with replacement products. He also emphasized the importance of



utilizing different chemistries when they are most effective. For instance, some active ingredients work better in spring or fall than in the summer.

For further information, Dr. Giordano can be reached at [pgiordano@harrells.com](mailto:pgiordano@harrells.com) or 734-292-5022.

### Winter Damage of 2022: What Did We Observe and Learn?

Next up at the podium was Steve McDonald, owner of Turfgrass Disease Solutions. Steve spoke about the winter injury he observed during his many visits to Met-area clubs this past spring. He also noted how isolated the damage was and that, in his opinion, most of it was caused by crown hydration. Steve also mentioned how difficult it is to predict the type of winter injury that will occur each season, however lack of surface drainage and excessive southern shade are two factors that not only increase the incidence of winter injury, but also hinder recovery. Tree pruning and removal after careful assessment, surface grading to improve water flow from problem areas, and temporary surface drains were a few of the methods discussed for improving these conditions.

For further information, Steve McDonald can be reached at [turfgrassdiseasesolutions@yahoo.com](mailto:turfgrassdiseasesolutions@yahoo.com) or 610-633-1878.

### Understanding Your Irrigation Water's Impact on the Soil and Nutrient Content of Your Turf

After a wonderful lunch buffet, Greg Moore of the Plant Food Company, provided insight into how to properly interpret an irrigation water test. He discussed the most important numbers to pay attention to which include SAR, EC, Bicarbonates, and Potassium to Sodium Ratio. Greg then went through a few real-world examples demonstrating the relationship between your water test, soil test, and saturated paste test, as well as ways to identify and remedy imbalances. In the Northeast, the more common imbalances revolve around sodium and potassium. Making sure that you have more potassium than sodium will help prevent premature wilt. If your water tests show more sodium, it may be necessary to apply potassium, calcium, and/or magnesium in order to balance these key nutrients in the soil.

For further information, Greg Moore can be reached at [gmoore@plantfoodco.com](mailto:gmoore@plantfoodco.com) or 315-491-5859.



# West Point Tailgate Event Proves Good Time for All!

by Blake Halderman, CGCS

## Irrigation Water Supply: Source Development and Management

Finally, Michael Kapareiko, a hydrogeologist with Weston & Sampson, provided a very interesting talk on water source development, permitting, and well maintenance. His introduction of the water cycle and different types of underground water sources gave everyone some valuable knowledge on the general movement of underground water and the differences between a well drilled into bedrock versus an overburden well, which resides in a layer of gravel or sand.

He went on to explain the pros and cons of both types of wells. Bedrock wells tend to be cleaner and need less maintenance, but they typically don't produce nearly as much water in gallons per minute as an overburden well. Overburden wells need more frequent cleaning, but they are generally more reliable. Finding the proper location to drill a bedrock well also proves more difficult as it is hard to know exactly where a fracture in the bedrock will produce viable water.

Kapareiko showed some interesting videos of the well-drilling process and a few scopes of both good wells and wells in need of maintenance and remediation. He stressed the importance of regular well maintenance. Every well has different maintenance guidelines based on the amount of particulates, iron, and other minerals in the well shaft and around the pump and screen. Having a well scoped by a knowledgeable well professional is a great first step in coming up with a maintenance plan for your wells.

Finally, Kapareiko talked about the permitting process, cautioning attendees that permitting can take as long as one year depending on circumstances. It's best to plan ahead for any well projects.

For further information, Kapareiko can be reached at [Kapareiko.michael@wseinc.com](mailto:Kapareiko.michael@wseinc.com) or 959-777-5821

*Dave Peterson, a member of the MetGCSA Board of Directors, is superintendent at Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT.*

If you didn't make it to the MetGCSA/HVGCSA Army Football Tailgate event this year, you should definitely be on the lookout for this special outing next year. It's a wonderful opportunity to spend the day with your family and friends on West Point's amazing campus.

The day is not only about football, although the game was great with Army scoring 21 points in the second half to defeat UConn 34-17. It is also about seeing the cadets enter the stadium in perfect formation; it's about seeing the West Point parachute team jump from high above your head and land with the American Flag perfectly on the 50-yard line; it's about the helicopters doing a flyby at the conclusion of the anthem and cannons blasting constantly in the background. There is some-

thing for all ages to see and enjoy, and it's impossible to leave there without feeling a sense of patriotism and respect for our current and future servicemen and women.

I would like to thank Steve Whipple, golf course superintendent at West Point Golf Course, for hosting us at the Buffalo Soldier Pavilion and the rest of the HVGCSA Board and MetGCSA Board for organizing all of the food and libations for the day's event. This is an indoor tailgate, so even if it's cold, there is a place to stay warm, with couches, TVs and many games for the kids (and adults) like pool, ping pong, skeeball, and others. For the 40-plus tailgaters, it was a fabulous day, and we hope to see many more of you at next year's event.

*Blake Halderman is superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY*



*Jonathan, UConn's Husky mascot, joins Rye Golf Club Super Chip Lafferty and his son Travis at the Army-UConn game.*



# MetGCSA Holiday Party!





Feature continued from page 4

## The Push for a Reasonable Pace

So . . . what to do about this pace phenomenon? Quite honestly, no one is exactly sure, though there were a few things agreed on by the architects who pondered the question recently. Unlike the equipment and ball debate, which is a matter mostly of regulating technology, green speed does have a finite limit because it involves a living organism. At some point, if not already, we will reach the limits of the plant to be cut any shorter without grave damage occurring.

It was also agreed that the conversation needs to continue and be led by the architects and the superintendents who design and manage the game, but just as important, by properly educated club officials, especially from the upper echelon of clubs who have so much influence on the way golf is perceived and consumed.

I, however, will continue to be a certified hypocrite. Having spent the better part of the last decade mapping greens and rebuilding numerous putting surfaces, I can say that excessive green speed has helped pay the bills. And I do still love the thrill of navigating short, tight bentgrass surfaces whenever I get the chance. But . . . I also realize that speed can kill, especially when it comes to architectural creativity. This means I will continue encouraging clients to consider more reasonable mowing heights, opening more opportunities to create fun, dynamic surfaces that explore a great variety of slopes.

And if they want to mow them down every once in a while to let the ball really glide, then have at it. I mean, who am I to judge?

*Todd Quitno, ASGCA, is a golf course architect based out of the greater Chicago area with 25+ years of design experience and clients from New York to Nebraska. The opinions shared here are his own, and he promises no architects or superintendents were hurt in the writing of this story.*



## Member News

### Retiring

We wish the following members the best of luck in their retirement:

**Mike Maffei** has retired after 51 years as superintendent of Back O'Beyond (originally Morefar) in Brewster, NY. A past MetGCSA president and Sherwood A. Moore Award winner, Mike has always been a leader and fierce advocate for our industry. In addition to serving the MetGCSA, Mike devoted 50 years to the Hudson Valley GCSA, 30 years as a NYSTA board member and two-time president, and also served as a SUNY Delhi Plant Science board member and a board member and treasurer of the New York Green Industry Council, GreenPac, and the Empire State Council of Agricultural Organizations.

**David Pijnenburg** of Green Acres Co. recently retired and sold his business. Dave joined the MetGCSA in 1984 and became Siwanoy's superintendent in '86 and '87, a Greenwich Country Club assistant super in 1988, and then the superintendent at Redding Country Club in '89 and '90 before starting Green Acres.

**Robert Welch**, a MetGCSA member since 1985, retired the end of December after 20 years as superintendent of Connecticut Golf Club.

### Member on the Move

**James Simonian** is the new superintendent at Back O'Beyond in Brewster, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Back O'Beyond.

### New Baby

**Jarard Luknicki** of Metropolis Country Club and his wife, Kali, welcomed their daughter, Laila, on December 2, 2022, 7 lbs. 5oz and 19.5 inches.

### New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Pat Callahan**, Class C, Silvermine Golf Club, Norwalk, CT
- **Sam Hess**, Class C, The Mill River Club, Oyster Bay, NY
- **Tyler Kwalek**, Class C, The Golf Club of Purchase, Purchase, NY
- **Nigel Quinlivan**, Class C, Knickerbocker Country Club, Tenafly, NJ
- **Herb Stevens**, Class AF, Grass Roots Weather, Wakefield, RI

## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Industry Events

#### 2023 GCSAA Golf Championships

*Saturday – Monday, February 4 – 6*  
Championsgate Golf Resort & Orange County National  
Orlando, FL

The GCSAA Golf Championships offer four different events over three days. Whether you're a casual golfer looking for a good time or an intense competitor hoping to be crowned National Champion, the GCSAA Golf Championships offer something for everyone. Play one day or all three. The choice is yours.

#### MetGCSA Nor'easter Event

*Wednesday, February 8*  
Blue Martini Lounge  
Pointe, Orlando

Join fellow MetGCSA members from 7:30 to 10 at the Nor'easter gathering, where you will be treated to an open bar, appetizers, food station, and live band, as well as the company of your Met colleagues.

#### 2023 GCSAA Conference and Show

*Monday – Thursday, February 6 – 9*  
Orange County Convention Center  
Orlando, FL

Don't miss this year's GCSAA Golf Industry Show and Education Conference with an incomparable lineup of seminars and educational sessions, as well as one of the industry's most comprehensive trade shows.

For details on the conference's educational offerings and trade show, log onto [www.golfindustryshow.com](http://www.golfindustryshow.com).

#### Nor'easter Ski Day

*Thursday, March 2*  
Killington Ski Resort  
Killington, VT

#### 26th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show

*Tuesday – Thursday, March 7 – 9*  
Rhode Island Convention Center  
Providence, RI

For the 26th consecutive year, the conference and show provides turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, supplies, services, and equipment available while offering a host of informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities.

#### 2023 MGA Green Chairman Seminar & Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leader Award Luncheon

*Thursday, March 16*  
Harrison Meadows Country Club  
Harrison, NY

The MGA Foundation, in conjunction with the USGA Green Section, has organized this educational series for golf course superintendents, green chairmen, and club officials throughout the Met Area. The seminar will focus on educating attendees on the best practices and philosophies of golf course maintenance while strengthening the relationship between golf course superintendents and club membership.

A highlight of the meeting is the presentation of the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award, which recognizes an MGA member club that demonstrates environmental leadership through their efforts in golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research.

**Watch for details on the upcoming NYSTA Turfgrass Advocacy Day.**



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