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# Tee to Green



*Cover: The Round Hill Club. Photo by Round Hill Superintendent Bill Gaydosh.*

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# A Time of Change

As most of you know by now, Dave Mahoney has officially resigned as president of our association. When he called to tell me about his resignation, I was, as I am sure most of you are, surprised and shocked. But after speaking with Dave, I understood his choice and could see that he had his priorities in the right place. He explained to me that, with all the other things he had going on in his life right now, he couldn't continue to fulfill his responsibilities as our president.

We will miss Dave and his candor and humor at our board meetings and at our monthly meetings when he addressed the membership. This is, by no means, a eulogy. As Dave explained to me, "I'll still be attending the monthly meetings."

Dave, thank you for your many years of service and hard work. We truly appreciate all you've done for the association.

By the time you read this message, the Annual Meeting will have taken place, and all our voting members will have had a chance to respond to our new slate of officers and directors.

I am looking forward to serving the association as president. I feel it is truly one of life's milestones. I have worked very hard for many years to earn this privilege. I plan to lead our members and board of directors to the best of my ability. Please understand that our association is here for all of you. I will strive to keep an open forum and welcome your comments, suggestions, and even your criticisms.

My very best to all of you and your families for Thanksgiving and the upcoming holiday season.

Will Heintz  
Acting President

## From the Editor

# Tee to Green Wants YOU!

Here we go again: It's our periodic appeal for committee members and contributors to our award-winning newsletter, *Tee to Green*.

First and foremost, we are looking for additional committee members. Our philosophy: The more, the merrier—and the lighter the workload.

For the past few years, we have had a small, but dedicated committee. Each of them worked hard—some above and beyond the call of duty—to be sure we had a newsletter each month that was well worth reading.

If you're at all interested in becoming involved in the association, this committee is a good place to start. It doesn't require that you spend a lot of time away from work. In fact, there are few meetings throughout the year. As a committee member, your primary function would be to research and write an article or two over the course of 12 months—and attend a few meetings to brainstorm timely article ideas.

Another committee function that could use some assistance has to do with selling our advertising space. If you don't mind picking up the phone and making some "will you advertise in the *Tee to Green* in 2005?" calls, then please let us know. This is a worthy function: We rely on advertising to keep our publication afloat.

We also welcome contributions from others in—and outside—our association. In the spring, we received a great unsolicited article from Michael McCall of Casperkill Country Club, a member who was not on our committee but had a wonderful idea for an article on leadership. Please be sure to contact us with any thoughts you might have for an article—whether or not you're willing to pen it.



### A Worthy Pursuit

Sure, joining the *Tee to Green* committee means some extra work. But consider what your efforts will offer in return:

- When you contribute to the *Tee to Green*, you contribute to the welfare of our association by providing members with timely—sometimes job-saving—information.
- You become familiar with fellow members, as you contact them for article information.
- You'll build a portfolio of proof that you have the writing and communication skills increasingly important to our jobs as superintendents and assistants.
- You gain visibility, not just among our membership, but among the many club officials and managers who receive this newsletter throughout the Met area—and see your byline on the article you've written. We could all use some good press.

If you'd like the challenge and rewards of serving on the *Tee to Green* committee—in either an editorial or advertising function—please contact me as soon as possible at 203-762-9484. We are planning to schedule a committee meeting in the next several months.

Glenn Perry, CGCS  
Co-Editor, *Tee to Green*

Feature

# Super Survey

## Professional and Personal Formulas for Success

by Scott Niven, CGCS



For our feature this issue, we surveyed a cross-section of MetGCSA superintendents to uncover their professional and personal formulas for success—or just plain survival—through the rigors of the golf season. We called on 62 superintendents. A total of 39 responded to our 35-question survey, which asked respondents to reveal everything from their management practices and style to their leisure-time activities.

Our survey group averaged 19 years' experience as a superintendent, with some clocking in as many as 40 years and, at the other end of the spectrum, as little as two. Exactly two-thirds are certified, which is a little lower than the 75-percent figure comprising all Class A superintendents in the MetGCSA.

An interesting mix. Our thanks to all of you for taking the time to participate.

Aside from being an intriguing read—let's face it, what superintendent isn't curious about how others handle their operations—we're hoping the survey results will act as a springboard for evaluating your own practices. By looking at how others "get the job done," you may discover ways to either enhance your own operation or, perhaps, better manage the often extreme demands on your time.

Divided into categories, our questions, and the respondents' answers, follow.



## Staffing Stats

1. **How many assistants do you have?**  
 0 assistants – 1  
 1 assistant – 8  
 2 assistants – 28  
 3 assistants – 2

If you have more than one assistant, why?  
 Avoid burnout – 5  
 Too much work for one – 26

Nearly three quarters of the group have two assistants. The increase from one assistant to two is a fairly new phenomenon that's evolved over the past 10 years. According to this survey, the reason for this trend—no surprise—is the ever-increasing demand from memberships for perfection on the golf course.

Of the 39 surveyed, 26 felt more than one assistant was necessary to manage the Herculean workload. Another 16 percent, wanted more than one assistant to allow each of them a break from time to time to guard against burnout.

2. **What is the size of your staff during the high season?**  
 High season: High – 30  
                   Low – 10  
                   Average – 20  
 Off-season: Average – 7

Is your staff allotment adequate for your standards of maintenance?  
 Yes – 18  
 No – 20

Fifteen to twenty years ago, few if any respondents would have had a staff larger than 12 during the height of the season. Today, with the trend toward more hand work and greater attention to detail, the average staff size for an 18-hole course in our area has grown to 20, with some superintendents managing staffs of up to 30.

As maintenance standards rise, so will the numbers on our crews—particularly since more than half the superintendents we polled say they're struggling to get the job done, at the level expected, with their current number of staff.

3. **Who on your staff has a supervisor's pesticide license?**  
 You – 39  
 Assistant – 27

All the superintendents and about 70 percent of assistants now have a supervisor's pesticide license, which allows them the flexibility to prescribe and spray pesticides on their own. For those assistants with an eye toward upward mobility, a pesticide license is more than just nice to have; it's a competitive necessity.



## Managing—to Get the Job Done

1. **When do you prepare the day's work schedule?**  
 Morning – 17  
 Previous day – 29

Most superintendents prepare their crew's daily work schedule sometime before the end of the previous day. Nearly 45 percent work up their schedule every morning, while some do a little bit of both: planning the evening before, tweaking the schedule in the a.m. when they see what the weather will bring. In the end, they all agreed the key to success is flexibility.

"It's important to remember that Mother Nature holds all the cards," says Gregg Stanley of The Bridge in Long Island. "Despite the vast array of technology and resources we have at our disposal today, we can only slightly enhance or minimize what Mother Nature has in store. Each day, the weather usually provides an aspect that can help a certain maintenance practice take place more effectively or more efficiently. We try to capitalize on each day's weather and go *with* it—not against it."

2. **Who manages the staff each day?**  
 Superintendent – 25  
 Assistant – 32  
 Foreman – 0

Two-thirds of the group manage their staff on a daily basis, but more than 80 percent rely on their assistants to keep tabs on crew activities. Interestingly, no one in our sample has a foreman in a management position. At one time, the foreman functioned more as a second assistant would today. Times have changed. As superintendents' responsibilities continue to expand, assistants' functions will become increasingly managerial.

3. **Who schedules daily irrigation?**  
 Superintendent – 35  
 Assistant – 11  
 Irrigation technician – 2

Almost all superintendents schedule their courses' irrigation application each day. And though nearly a third will allow their assistants some responsibility for irrigation setup, it's done with close supervision. All consider this one of the essential aspects of course maintenance.

"It may sound silly," says Rob Alonzi of St. Andrew's Golf Club, "but irrigation—the kind that creates good quality turf and playing conditions—is an art, just as much as a science. It's learned over time, through trial and error. That's why I feel delegating this responsibility requires fairly close scrutiny."

4. **Do you pitch in to help get the course ready for play?**  
 Yes – 23  
 No – 10  
 Sometimes – 6

What jobs do you do when you help prepare the course?  
 Course setup – 27  
 Mowing – 4  
 Spraying – 4  
 Miscellaneous – 9  
 None – 5

Challenged by too much work and not enough staff, about 75 percent of the superintendents we surveyed find they have to pitch in to prepare the course for weekend play and special events. Most say they get involved with course setup, while some—though a small percentage—even mow or spray.

- 5. Who does clerical/miscellaneous office work?**  
 Superintendent – 32  
 Assistant – 13  
 Administrative assistant – 8

Most of the respondents said they do some, if not all, of their clerical work themselves. A portion of those also call on their assistants—or an administrative assistant—to help tend to office work. Ten years ago, administrative assistants were almost nonexistent, but as our managerial responsibilities evolve, superintendents require greater behind-the-scenes support, and some—though still a relatively small share—have been successful in lobbying for it.

Ken Benoit of Glen Arbor Golf Club was able to justify hiring an administrative assistant by pointing out that the person with the most agronomic experience was spending the least amount of time on the course. “I explained that having an administrative assistant would allow me to spend more quality time tending to the needs of the property without sacrificing the level of recordkeeping I had established,” says Ken. “The payoff has been immeasurable. I can’t imagine trying to keep this department organized without the help of an administrative assistant.”

- 6. Do you make use of the USGA’s Turf Advisory Service? Do you use a turfgrass consultant?**  
 USGA visit: Yes – 28  
 No – 10  
 Turf consultant: Yes – 3  
 No – 35

The majority of superintendents—75 percent—see value in setting up annual visits with a USGA agronomist. “I’ve used the USGA Turf Advisory Service for 13 years and have always found it beneficial,” says Tim Garceau of The Tuxedo Club. “The visit is an excellent opportunity to get all committee members on the course to discuss issues, practices, and future projects. It helps to be onsite, rather than in a room somewhere, to actually view what we’re talking about.

“Another added benefit is that the USGA will frequently recommend the same solutions I’ve proposed. When I was trying to win approval on a tree removal program, the USGA supported my recommendations, and that went a long way toward steadying the nerves of any skeptic members.”

Most respondents also agreed on the benefit of having USGA counsel and support when an unexplained turf problem surfaces. It helps, everyone agreed, to have an impartial authority who can back your explanation of the problem.

Though seeking the counsel of an outside turf consultant has gained favor in recent years, among our sample, the majority—90 percent—still shy away from that practice.

## Practices on the Job—and Off

- 1. What time do you arrive at work each day?**  
 3 a.m. – 1  
 5 a.m. – 2  
 5:15 a.m. – 1  
 5:30 a.m. – 13  
 5:45 a.m. – 10  
 6 a.m. – 8  
 6:15 a.m. – 1  
 6:30 a.m. – 1  
 7 a.m. – 1

Although there’s a four-hour window of arrival times, the majority of us show up at the golf course between 5:30 and 6 a.m. No bankers’ hours here.

- 2. How many hours do you work per week?**  
 High season: High – 80  
 Low – 50  
 Average – 63  
 Off-season: High – 50  
 Low – 30  
 Average – 39

Our survey sample shows that superintendents are logging in an average of 63 hours per week during the high season—and about 2,600 hours per year.

According to a recent International Labor Office survey, we’re logging in 45 percent—or 17 hours per week—more than the average worker in the United States. U.S. workers reportedly put in more than 1,800 hours on the job each year, which, by the way, is 350 hours more than the Germans and even slightly more than the Japanese. Somehow, having access to modern-day technology and larger staffs is not doing much to ease our workload.

No surprise: Survey respondents will tell you these kinds of hours make life stressful in more ways than one.

“For me, the long hours are almost the easy part,” says Mike Reeb of Country Club of New Canaan. “What I find stressful is trying to strike a healthy balance of roles and responsibilities on the job and at home. With the unpredictable nature of our work and the potential for long workdays, I’m constantly striving to make sure that no one—and no one thing—suffers unfairly. Whether it’s my assistant or my paperwork, my family or time for rest, I try to achieve a balance that satisfies everyone.”

The real answer to reducing the stress in our lives? University researchers offer an all-too-predictable answer: Reduce the number of hours you’re putting in at work each week. For many superintendents this is little more than an impossible dream.



The one saving grace: the off-season. During the winter months, superintendents work a more tolerable 40-hour workweek.

**3. When do you tour the course?**

- A.M. – 11
- P.M. – 0
- Both – 27

Everyone prefers to tour their golf course in the morning before play, but most—70 percent—also make another round of inspection sometime in the afternoon.

“I believe touring the course is one of the most important things we do at work,” says Neil Laufenberg of Innis Arden Golf Club. “This is the time when we put our years of experience and education to use in scouting for disease and pests and in noting all the maintenance details that need to be tended to during the day. It’s the time we make some of the most critical observations and maintenance decisions about the golf course.

“I tour the course twice a day—in the morning and, again, in the afternoon,” Neil continues. “I use the a.m. tour to decide what needs to get done during the day and the afternoon tour to review what my crew accomplished and to make preliminary plans for the next day.”

**4. What percentage of your time is spent in the office and on the course?**

- Office: High – 95%
- Low – 15%
- Average – 65%
- Course: High – 85%
- Low – 15%
- Average – 35%

The job of superintendent has evolved from hands-on to managerial. Our survey results show that superintendents are spending two-thirds of their time in the office. That’s twice as much time inside as on the golf course. Though this elevates our status in many people’s minds from laborer to manager, it’s an unfortunate evolution for those who got into the business because they enjoyed working outdoors.

“It is unfortunate that we spend most of our time doing office work,” laments Anglebrook Golf Club’s Lou Quick. “But these days, we control everything from a computer: inventory, purchase orders, budget, payroll, irrigation, e-mail, and on and on. So we’re forced to reduce our time outside.

“When I get tired of office work,” he continues, “I get in my cart and look over the great work of my assistant and crew. Many times, I’ll even put the ear plugs in and go out and mow something to reduce office fatigue.

“The job of today’s superintendent may not be exactly what I imagined when I was an assistant, but it is still a fantastic career.”

**5. How many hours do you spend on the computer each day?**

- High – 4 hours
- Low – 15 minutes
- Average – 1.8 hours

Survey participants admitted that it was difficult to track how long they spend on the computer each day because they tend to use it in short spurts rather than all at once. Everyone seemed to agree, however, that the average computer time of nearly two hours per day would grow as our industry continues to add to the myriad functions already being accomplished on computer.

**6. During the high season, do you regularly work weekends?**

- Saturday – 5
- Sunday – 1
- Both – 31

During the summer months, the overwhelming majority—83 percent—work both Saturday and Sunday, with only 15 percent taking off one of the weekend days.

**7. How often are you pressed for time?**

- Daily – 11
- Weekly – 11
- Monthly – 3
- Occasionally – 14

All superintendents experience some pressure, whether it’s from too much to do in too little time or conflicting demands. Have you ever had a day where you’re sitting at your computer checking e-mail, talking on your office phone when your cell phone rings, your fax starts printing, a salesman knocks on your door, one of your staff also shows up and wants to ask a question, and your assistant is trying to reach you on the radio? It happens. And as our use of technology expands and member expectations continue to escalate, demands on our time will only get greater. Good time management will be an essential component of our managerial repertoire.

**8. How many rounds of golf do you play per year?**

- High – 45
- Low – 0
- Average – 17

It’s a commonly held belief among golfers that a superintendent who is an excellent player would readily recognize excellent

playing conditions—and theoretically be able to produce them on the course. Golfer belief or not, most of the survey respondents would agree that knowing the game of golf is essential to grooming the course from the golfer’s perspective.

Unfortunately, with the busy schedule of today’s superintendent, the number of rounds they average per year has dropped. Assuming an eight-month playing season, our survey sample gets out to play, on average, only about twice a month.

Superintendents will always play a certain amount of golf. Whether this trends upward or downward will depend on their ability to free up more time to play.

**9. Where do you eat lunch?**

- Clubhouse – 20
- Office – 13
- Home – 9
- Club kitchen – 4
- Off-property – 1

Nearly everyone we surveyed eats lunch on club grounds, but most seek out a place where they can eat in peace without being subject to general inquiries or, worse, member criticism. Only one respondent reported braving the club grill room each day: Peter Bly of Brooklawn Country Club.

“It’s true. My two assistants and I eat lunch in the grill room every day,” says Peter. “Many times, we’re joined by the pro—and members. It’s been nothing short of positive. It’s good public relations—and a good opportunity to communicate with members. I recommend more guys get out in front of the firing line.”

**10. What do you wear to work each day?**

- Golf attire – 39

It’s unanimous: Everyone in our survey sample wears golf attire to work. Our daily attire, like our image as professionals, has certainly come a long way over the years. We can only wonder if the two go hand-in-hand.

**11. What do you do with time off on the weekend?**

- Travel – 10
- Spend time with family – 8
- Catch up on some R & R – 7
- Participate in a sport – 3
- Work around the house – 4

Superintendents are like any other working professional: On their weekends off, they enjoy getting away from it all and catching up on much-needed R & R and family time.



12. **Do you take a vacation in summer?**  
Yes – 13  
No – 26

Ten to fifteen years ago, summer vacations were unheard of. Slowly but surely, however, superintendents are daring to spend time away with their families during the summer months. In fact, one-third of our survey sample said they take summer vacations that average five days. We can expect this figure to rise as assistants and support staff became increasingly capable of taking the reigns for brief periods during the high season.

As far as total vacation days go, survey respondents average 23 days per year. This wouldn't be half bad if most superintendents didn't have to work for 7 months, 7 days a week, 9 hours a day before they could make use of it.

## Modes of Communication

1. **Do you write an article for your club's newsletter? If yes, how often?**  
Yes – 28  
No – 11  
Times per year: High – 40  
Low – 1  
Average – 7

Almost three-quarters of superintendents publish articles in their club's newsletter, writing an average of seven articles per year. This is further proof that the role of the superintendent is changing, with writing skills more essential than ever.

2. **Do you provide input for your club website? If yes, how often?**  
Yes – 15  
No – 24  
Daily – 1  
Weekly – 4  
Monthly – 5  
Yearly – 1

Websites aren't limited to businesses. This new phenomenon is rapidly becoming commonplace among clubs, with nearly 40 percent in our area having a website up and running. More than a third of our survey respondents already contribute to their club's website, many on a monthly or weekly basis.

As time goes on, this will become a common—and expected—mode of communicating with the membership. Add “computer savvy” to the list of required skills for a golf course superintendent.

3. **How do you communicate with your assistants?**  
Verbal – 37  
Written – 22  
Computer – 3

Almost everyone communicates with their assistants verbally each day, with more than half also using some form of written communication.

## Who's the Boss?

1. **Who do you answer to?**  
Green chairman – 31  
Board of directors – 4  
Owner – 4  
General manager – 12  
Pro – 0  
President – 1

With our maintenance facilities so far removed from other club operations and functions, it's not unusual for superintendents to feel that they're their own boss. But the truth is we all have a superior to answer to—and often more than one.

According to our survey sample, 80 percent report to a green chairman—a longstanding practice. A new line of reporting, however, has emerged over the past several years, which has 30 percent of our survey sample answering to their club's general manager (also sometimes known as the chief operating officer). While GMs have made a conscious effort to broaden the scope of their responsibilities, many superintendents are in favor of maintaining their autonomy.

2. **How many times per week do you communicate with your boss?**  
Average – 3 times per week





Most of the superintendents in our survey said they communicate with their boss three times a week, on average. Their methods vary from phone—often cell phone, where they're most easily reached—to meeting face-to-face on the course. Growing in popularity is communicating by e-mail.

- 3. Who is your biggest supporter at your golf course?**
- Green chairman – 24
  - Pro – 11
  - General manager – 9
  - Golfers – 13
  - President/Owner – 3

As you might expect, most of our survey sample—62 percent—see their green chairman as their greatest ally. But many also find great support from golfers, their pro, and to a lesser degree, their general manager.

“It’s all about relationships and doing what’s best for the facility,” says Country Club of Darien’s Tim O’Neill. “Every club is a little different, but we all still have to work with others as a team to ensure the overall success of the facility. I communicate regularly with my general manager; that’s enabled us to do our jobs better. I try to

think more about the club as a whole, rather than just the golf course. I believe this approach has made me more valuable to my employer, and it shows in the support I receive.”

### Money Matters

- 1. What is the amount of your operating budget?**
- \$600k – \$800k – 4
  - \$800k – \$1mil – 17
  - \$1mil – \$1.2mil – 11
  - \$1.2mil – \$1.4mil – 4
  - \$1.4mil+ – 2
  - Average = \$1 million

Using the median number of each range presented, this survey showed the average budget for an 18-hole course, managed by a MetGCSA member, to be just over \$1 million. We estimate that, during the past 20 to 25 years, golf course budgets in our area have increased steadily by about 6 percent a year. With that assumption, a budget of \$250k in 1980 became \$500k in 1992 and \$1 million in 2004. If budgets continue to follow this course, we wouldn’t be far off in saying that the average golf course budget will be \$2 million in 2016 (rule of 72).

- 2. What percentage of your budget is your salary plus bonus?**
- High – 21%
  - Low – 8%
  - Average – 14%

The average percentage of golf course budgets being allocated for superintendents’ salary and bonus is 14 percent. During the past two decades, salary increases seem to have kept pace with budget increases at 6 percent per year. At this rate of inflation, salaries will basically double every 12 years!

### Job Satisfaction

- 1. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how much you enjoy your job.**
- 1 (hate it) – 0
  - 2 (don’t like it) – 0
  - 3 (it’s ok) – 1
  - 4 (like it) – 18
  - 5 (love it) – 20

Despite having to endure the grueling schedule and stress of the high season, the majority of superintendents we polled seem to thoroughly enjoy their job. Having the off-season to look forward to, no doubt, helps these ratings—and, perhaps, the prospect of having a green chairman or other club official read this article!

One superintendent who gave job satisfaction an extra-high rating was Jon Jennings of Chicago Golf Club. “I can’t imagine working in any other profession,” says Jon. “What other job offers as much daily diversity? We have the ability to work inside or outside, with people or alone, using machinery or hand labor. The physical work and the mental challenges keep me stimulated. And the people at the club—my staff, other managers, the membership—they all are a pleasure to work with and for.

“I enjoy, in particular,” continues Jon, “tournament preparation for the club. We maintain the golf course to a very high daily standard, so it’s always fun to see how much further we can raise the bar for tournaments or special events. I also enjoy the feedback that’s associated with the increased effort.”

- 2. What part of your job do you enjoy the most?**
- Preparing for tournaments – 2
  - Course conditioning – 14
  - Dealing with people – 5
  - Managing the environment – 11
  - Doing projects – 4
  - Other – 3

The categories that received the highest satis-



faction ratings were those that related to the outdoors: course conditioning, first, and managing the golf course environment, second. Again, no surprises here. After all, who gets into this business because they like the office work?

### Final Note

Again, many thanks to all those members of the MetGCSA (see box, right, for list) who took the time to fill out and return our survey. Thank you, too, for your patience in trying to fax your responses to a machine that was on the fritz. Even with that hiccup, we had a 63-percent return rate (39 out of 62), which was pretty good in mid-season.

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

## Our "Super" Survey Participants

Joseph Alonzi, CGCS  
*Westchester Country Club*

Robert Alonzi, CGCS  
*Fenway Golf Club*

Robert Alonzi Jr.  
*St. Andrew's Golf Club*

Kenneth Benoit Jr.  
*Glen Arbor Golf Club*

Peter Bly  
*Brooklawn Country Club*

Sean Cain  
*Sunningdale Country Club*

James Calladio, CGCS  
*Milbrook Club*

John Carlone, CGCS  
*The Meadow Brook Club*

Matthew Ceplo, CGCS  
*Rockland Country Club*

Glen Dube, CGCS  
*Oak Hills Park Golf Course*

Mark Fuller, CGCS  
*Connecticut Golf Club*

Tim Garceau  
*The Tuxedo Club*

William Gaydosh  
*Round Hill Club*

Tony Girardi, CGCS  
*Rockrimmon Country Club*

Blake Halderman, CGCS  
*Trump National Golf Club*

William Heintz  
*Centennial Golf Club*

Jonathan Jennings, CGCS  
*Chicago Golf Club*

Lester Kennedy Jr., CGCS  
*Blind Brook Club*

David Kerr, CGCS  
*Ridgewood Country Club*

Neil Laufenberg  
*Innis Arden Golf Club*

Michael Maffei, CGCS  
*Back O' Beyond*

David Mahoney  
*Siwanoy Country Club*

Charles Martineau  
*Whipponwill Club*

James Medeiros, CGCS  
*Wannamoissett Country Club*

Timothy Moore  
*Knollwood Country Club*

Philip Neaton  
*Black Hall Club*

Scott Niven, CGCS  
*The Stanwich Club*

John O'Keefe, CGCS  
*Preakness Hills Country Club*

Timothy O'Neill, CGCS  
*Country Club of Darien*

Lawrence Pakkala, CGCS  
*Woodway Country Club*

Bill Perlee  
*The Apawamis Club*

Glenn Perry, CGCS  
*Rolling Hills Country Club*

Louis Quick, CGCS  
*Anglebrook Golf Club*

Peter Rappoccio, CGCS  
*Silver Spring Country Club*

Michael Reeb, CGCS  
*Country Club of New Canaan*

Patrick Sisk, CGCS  
*Milwaukee Country Club*

Gregg Stanley, CGCS  
*The Bridge*

Don Szymkowicz, CGCS  
*Engineers Country Club*

Jeff Wentworth, CGCS  
*Pelham Country Club*

## Dual Event Is Double the Fun

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS  
Bedford Golf & Tennis Club

August 23 turned out to be a picture-perfect day for the Poa Annual Tournament/Met Championship. Held at Connecticut Golf Club, our host Mark Fuller and his crew had the golf course in impeccable shape (and I thought *my* bunkers were difficult to maintain!), and the post-golf food and libations were a great final touch to an extraordinary day.

Little did we know just how meaningful this fine day of golf would be to Met members since the past two association golf events—our last of the season, in fact—were canceled due to bad weather and schedule conflicts. Hats off to Mark and his manager for providing such a great venue for the Poa Annual Tournament.

### Golf Highlights

Terry Crimmons from the Pine Orchard Golf & Yacht Club shot a 78 for first low gross, while Mark Millett beat out Matt Ceplo on a match of cards for second low gross and winner of the Met Championship.

Rick Palmerton from the Country Club at Lake MacGregor shot a net 67 to take the low net prize, and Tom Weinert from Plant Food shot a net 69 for the second low net prize.

Pete Waterous from Westchester Hills shot a net 72 to become the net winner in the Met Championship. Scott Ferguson, Tony Grasso, and Blake Halderman tied for second with a net 75.

Hopefully, next year, the weather will cooperate with the Met meeting calendar, since we already have a great lineup of courses for 2005. Anyone interested in booking their club for 2006 should contact me at 914-234-3779 or Tom Leahy at 914-941-8281.

## MetGCSA Annual Two-Ball Tourney Has Grand Finale

by Blake Halderman, CGCS  
Trump National Golf Club

I'm sure everyone remembers the Winter Olympics qualifier when skater Tonya Harding took out Nancy Kerigan's knee to achieve success. Now it seems, history may have repeated itself in our very own competition. I said in the last *Tee to Green* that the #5 seeds wouldn't go down without a fight, but frankly, I didn't think that comment would be taken so literally.

Both #5 seeds played against singles from the #1 seeded teams in semi-final play. First, Tim Garceau was injured playing hockey with Earl Millet two nights before the match against Dube/Halderman, and then Gary Arlio mysteriously missed his tee time against Reeb/Wojick. Can you say HIT MAN?!

As a result, the final scores ended up in a little bit of a landslide as Reeb/Wojick won 9 and 8 against Bob DeMarco, and Dube/Halderman defeated Ernie Steinhofner 4 and 3. But Ernie didn't go down without a fight (unlike his opponents, he opted *not* to hire a hit man); he played well early in the match, holding Dube/Halderman down 1 after seven holes. Unfortunately for Ernie, Sleepy Hollow's fairways really start to tighten on the 8th hole.

In other semi-final play, Cain/Denny took on Ceplo/Swiatlowski for the final spot in the First Flight Championship. Cain drained a long putt on the 5th hole to keep

from going 4 down. By the 12th hole, they fought back to all square and closed the match at 3 and 1. The Second Flight final spot went to Severino/Johnston as they defeated Girardi/Moran 1 up in a dog fight.

### Last but not Least

The final match of the First Flight was contested at GlenArbor Golf Club with Cain/Denny duking it out against Dube/Halderman. Although there were no major heroics, Dube/Halderman managed to ham-and-egg their way around the course to defeat Cain/Denny 2 and 1.

The Second Flight finals paired Reeb/Wojick against the ever-so-dangerous Severino/Johnston team at Trump National Golf Club. The high slope rating got the best of the Reeb/Wojick team as they fell to Severino/Johnston 4 and 3.

I would like to thank everyone, again, for a successful Two-Ball Championship year. This event is all about getting out on the course with fellow colleagues to network, discuss current issues, and, most importantly, have a great time. And most everyone did just that: Out of 30 matches, there was only one that was decided by a coin toss.

We look forward to seeing you next year at the 2005 Two-Ball Qualifier, taking place April 25 at Trump National Golf Club.

### The Semi-Finals

#### First Flight

#5 Dube/Halderman defeated  
#1 Garceau/Steinhofner 4 and 3

#6 Cain/Denny defeated  
#15 Ceplo/Swiatlowski 3 and 1

#### Second Flight

#5 Reeb/Wojick defeated  
#1 Arlio/DeMarco 9 and 8

#14 Johnston/Severino defeated  
#2 Girardi/Moran 1 up

### The Finals

#### First Flight

#5 Dube/Halderman defeated  
#6 Cain/Denny 2 and 1

#### Second Flight

#14 Johnston/Severino defeated  
#5 Reeb/Wojick 4 and 3

# Looking Into the Future



## Where GCSAA Is Headed in 2005—and Beyond

by Tim O'Neill, CGCS

As 2004—and my role as GCSAA vice president—comes to a close, I look forward to the year ahead as president of GCSAA. This past year, I've had a full schedule—much of my time devoted to representing GCSAA at various major tournaments as well as at a number of committee and industry meetings and events. Aside from getting to visit some great golf courses like Augusta, Whistling Straits, Shinnecock, and Oakland Hills, I had the opportunity to interact with—and gain new insights from—other industry representatives.

From my perspective, 2005 will be one of the most exciting...but challenging...years in the long and successful history of our organization. As I prepare for my role as president, I thought I would share some of the challenges we will be addressing—

and the new paths we're taking to ensure the continued success of GCSAA and the programs and services we offer to our members.

### Strategically Thinking

First, GCSAA finances. Throughout my time on the board, I've learned that finances will always be a challenge for GCSAA. With diminishing revenues and harder-to-come-by sponsorships, GCSAA must—as any successful operation must—carefully scrutinize how it conducts business. By continually evaluating our services and benefits, GCSAA will always be positioned to support our members with the programs and services they need.

Another lesson learned that I'd like to share is the importance of strategic thinking. A

dynamic organization like ours cannot continue to grow unless we're willing to face the future—and all its challenges and opportunities—by continually challenging our own assumptions and inviting fresh perspectives and approaches.

Our own history underscores the importance of strategic thinking. Our association has a long history of evolution and advancements. Who would have thought—back in 1926, when 60 “green keepers” formed the National Association of Green Keepers of America—that GCSAA would someday evolve into the dynamic, worldwide organization it is today, providing services and resources to more than 21,000 members in 65 countries around the world.

Thankfully, the association has had many effective leaders who have made many tough—and worthwhile—decisions. Certification, chapter affiliation, PDI, and business partnerships are all examples of strategic thinking.

Recently, the board has incorporated a higher level of strategic discussions into each of our regular board meetings. These new discussions—which include our executive management, industry experts, and other decision makers in golf—are a shift from operational issues to more strategic discussions in an attempt to establish, for GCSAA staff, the vision the board—and the entire membership—holds for our association.

Also along the lines of strategic thinking, at last year's Chapter Delegate's Meeting, after a year of work with the board and executive management, a prioritized list of “strategic indicator targets” was introduced.

These important measuring gauges were created as a way to better align our resources with our organizational goals and accurately measure the long-term success of the organization in such areas as revenues, member growth and retention, career success of members, facility representation, chapter effectiveness, and partnerships, among others.

While these measurements will help us determine the effectiveness of the organization in the areas that matter most to members, they will also provide the accountability needed to ensure we are meeting our organizational goals.

## New Goal Brings New Focus

Since March, the association leadership has added a new goal to its list: to provide resources that benefit not just the superintendent, but the overall club or golf facility. The premise: Superintendents' success hinges on the overall success of their club—or facility. One thought to promote club success was to provide club owners or employers with a new category of GCSAA membership. Called a Facility Membership, it would be designed to provide benefits and programs that help build the success of the overall facility.

Among the proposed program topics: maximizing financial goals, fostering loyal customers, managing a high-level team, operating under legislation and regulation, ensuring the ongoing growth and vitality of the game, and managing risk. Various committees are expected to review this new concept for potential implementation some time in 2005.

## The Right Thing for the Industry and the Environment

GCSAA's other key involvement now, and in the future, is with the Environmental Institute for Golf.

In recent years, golf has been enjoying a more positive image in the environmental community. The institute will ensure that the momentum and strides made by GCSAA and other organizations, such as the USGA, will not be lost.

As planned, environmental task groups—which include superintendents, environmentalists, educators, and regulators, as well as numerous industry representatives—have been working long and hard to develop a user-friendly, web-based resource covering nearly any type of golf course-related environmental concern or project you can think of. This is designed to help superintendents ensure their courses remain environmentally friendly.

This environmental focus marks a new chapter in the history of GCSAA. It assumes that GCSAA accepts a high level of environmental accountability for the entire golf industry. Although that can be a daunting responsibility, it is not only the appropriate thing for GCSAA to do; it's the right thing to do.

## Ongoing Development

I am equally pleased with the continued progress and implementation of the PDI. This initiative ushered in a new era for member superintendents. Most important, PDI demonstrates our association's preparation

# Slate of Candidates for the 2005 GCSAA Board of Directors

The 2004 Nominating Committee, chaired by past president Michael Wallace, CGCS, ratified the following official slate of candidates for the 2005 GCSAA Board of Directors. The voting members of GCSAA will elect three officers and three directors during the 2005 Annual Meeting on Friday, February 11, in Orlando, FL.

**For president:** Timothy T. O'Neill, CGCS, at the Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT.

**For vice president:** Sean A. Hoolehan, CGCS, at Wildhorse Resort and Casino in Pendleton, OR.

**For secretary/treasurer:** David S. Downing II, CGCS, director of golf operations at The Pearl Golf Links and Ocean Isle Beach Golf Course in Sunset Beach, NC.

**For secretary/treasurer:** Ricky D. Heine, CGCS, general manager at The Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, TX.

**For director:** Gregg A. Blew, CGCS, at the Wellshire Golf Club in Denver, CO.

**For director:** James R. Fitzroy, CGCS,

director/superintendent at the Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Course in North Quincy, MA.

**For director:** Mark D. Kuhns, CGCS, director of grounds at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, NJ.

**For director:** Robert M. Randquist, CGCS, director of golf course and grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, FL.

Jon D. Maddern, CGCS, immediate past president, and Robert J. Maibusch, CGCS, MG, director, are both retiring from the board of directors. Mark J. Woodward, CGCS, will serve on the board for one year as immediate past president. Gary K. Carls, CGCS, has one year remaining on his two-year term as a director.

for—and commitment to—providing our members with the knowledge and skills we'll all need as our profession enters a new phase of growth. Much of that growth, for example, will be fueled by the tremendous educational opportunities made available through the Internet.

This year, GCSAA has successfully launched numerous web-cast training sessions for our members. These interactive and user-friendly "seminars" provide meaningful education that is both affordable and easily accessible to our members.



## The Power of Partnership

To help us continue our educational mission, we've agreed to join forces with other golf industry organizations in sponsoring our conference and show. Accommodating the new additions, meant, as most of you

know by now, changing the conference's name to the Golf Industry Show (GIS). Our first joint event is scheduled for 2005 in Orlando and will include the National Golf Course Owners Association, the Golf Course Builders Association of America, and the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

The other big news on this front is that, in 2007, we will add yet another group to the Golf Industry Show: the Club Manager's Association.

The strategy behind these alliances is to present an industry show that represents the full spectrum of golf—up to the playing of the game. This new format will also expand offerings to members and, at the same time, solidify the financial viability of this important event—an event that ultimately funds many of our member programs and services.

The conference will be careful to retain each organization's identity and traditions. For instance, GCSAA members will still have a golf tournament and the same educational events and sessions they've always enjoyed. The trade show will be slightly larger in 2005 and then 20 percent larger when the club managers join the conference.

In the spirit of enhancing the trade show, the floor will be segmented into areas called

solution centers. Each center will focus on a particular aspect of each profession. For instance, there will be:

- *Equipment and Maintenance Solutions:* This center will highlight building design and layout as well as tips on working effectively with equipment technicians.
- *Agronomic Solutions:* Presented by the Environmental Institute of Golf, this center will offer practical solutions and BMPs related to IPM and Wildlife and Habitat Management.
- *Water Solutions:* In this center, you will find information on products and services related to water—directly from the irrigation industry.

In addition, there will be several areas where you can actually “test drive” the product, including:

- *An electric vehicle test center,* offering electric vehicles available for test drive
- *A driving range,* complete with 14 hitting stations and a large putting green where you can explore the latest in ball and club technology
- *An actual green,* will be built in partnership with the Builders Association and the Architects during the trade show

Additional highlights on the trade show floor include networking parks, merchandise and bookstores, a media center, a silent auction, and career development resources.

Also new—and-improved is the format for the traditional banquet. Renamed the President’s Celebration, this special event will be less formal and will offer more networking opportunities in a festive setting. Food, entertainment, and dancing are also included, as well as a brief program honoring the outgoing president while welcoming the new president and the 2005 board.

Speaking of welcoming the new board, please be sure to attend the Annual Meeting on Friday, February 11, from 2–4 p.m., for the board elections. (See box on page 11 for a preview of the slate of candidates.) I will look forward to seeing you all there—and to having your show of support.

*Tim O’Neill, our GCSAA vice president, is superintendent at the Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT.*

## Upcoming Events

# Met Events to Remember

### Met Area Team Championship

Monday, November 15  
French Creek GC, Elverson, PA  
Host: Doug Rae

### MetGCSA Christmas Party

Saturday, December 4  
The Canyon Club, Armonk, NY  
Host: Paul Gonzalez, CGCS

## Educational Events

### NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition

Tuesday – Thursday, November 16 – 18  
Rochester Riverside Convention Center  
Rochester, NY

NYSTA, in partnership with Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the New York Golf Course Owners Association, welcomes you to participate in its 29th Turf and Grounds Exposition.

This year, you will find more opportunities than ever before to expand your knowledge, find solutions to your turf and grounds maintenance problems, and gain new insights from concepts and theories tested by others in a series of educational sessions and an expansive trade show.

For further information, call NYSTA at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229.

### Seminar

#### Golf Course Renovation: A Superintendent’s Survival Guide

Thursday, November 18  
Pelham CC, Pelham Manor, NY  
Host: Jeff Wentworth, CGCS

Intended for superintendents, assistant superintendents, and club officials, this program will feature golf course architect Bobby Weed’s thoughts on navigating the various challenges of a golf course renovation project. He will cover such important topics as the politics of approvals, securing

bids, project management, and managing member expectations.

Another special part of the program is a panel discussion with superintendents who have completed renovation or construction projects of their own. On the panel: Dave Mahoney of Siwanoy Country Club in Bronxville, NY; Ed Walsh, CGCS, of Shelter Harbor Golf Club, which is currently under construction in Rhode Island; and Rodney Hine, superintendent of the Boston Golf Club; Rodney has served in various capacities in the golf course design and construction industry.

This seminar allows you to earn GCSAA recertification points. The cost for the day is \$75. Contact Ineke Pierpoint, 914-347-3437, or Jeff Wentworth, 914-738-3970, for further information.

### NJTA Expo 2004

Tuesday – Thursday, December 7 – 9  
Trump Taj Mahal Casino/Resort  
Atlantic City, NJ

Join fellow turfgrass professionals at this year’s NJTA educational conference and trade show sponsored by the New Jersey Turfgrass Association in conjunction with Rutgers Cooperative Extension and Cook College-Rutgers University.

For further information, call 856-853-5973 or 732-821-7134.

## Member News

### New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

**Byran Diggle**, Class AF, Turf Products Corp., Enfield, CT.

**Kenneth Frank**, Class C, The Meadow Brook Club, Jericho, NY.

**Dennis Granahan**, Class C, Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY.

**Ian Larson**, Class C, Willow Ridge Country Club, Harrison, NY.

**Brett Richards**, Class C, Sleepy Hollow Country Club, Scarborough, NY.

**Zachary Schnip**, Class C, Oak Hills Park Golf Course, Norwalk, CT.

## The Tournament That Almost Happened and The Host Who Almost Hosted

by Bill Perlee

Meeting host Bill Gaydosh and his crew worked up-to-the-minute preparing for the Met's 2004 Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament, which was scheduled for a rare and privileged visit to The Round Hill Club in Greenwich, CT, on October 19. Unfortunately, the persistent rains that began the night before robbed Met members of the opportunity to play this time-tested gem. Despite the fact that members won't be setting foot on Round Hill soil anytime soon—the event couldn't be rescheduled—we're still honoring our host for his efforts in preparing for this tourney that almost happened. Here's a look at Bill—and the Round Hill you almost saw.

### The Artist Behind the Superintendent

Bill Gaydosh, has been the dignified, driving force at Round Hill for the past 11 years—and a member of the MetGCSA since 1963.

Bill's career began in 1958 at Fairview Country Club at its original site in Elmsford, NY, which is now an industrial park. "My father was friends with the late Ted Jozwick, the superintendent at the time," explains Bill, "and he lined me up as a grass cutter when I was in high school.

"I had no intention of building a career in this field," he continues. "It was just a summer job."

Bill pursued an art degree from NYC Community College, but not long after graduating, he found himself back on the golf course. "I hadn't realized before just how much I enjoyed working outside and with nature."

The next year, Bill decided to make his career move formal, and he attended the Rutgers turf program.

Though superintendentdom seems like a great departure from his intended career path, according to Bill it's not such a stretch. "Grooming and enhancing a course requires some degree of design sense," says Bill. And after looking at the course

conditioning and improvements he's initiated in his tenure, few could deny that Bill's got what it takes.

### Number Four on the List

Bill is only the fourth superintendent of the historic club, following the late Craig Wistrand in 1994. The first, Emilio "Molly" Strazza, was a talented artist himself, having had a hand in carving the stone lions that still grace the entrance to the New York Public Library. One of Molly Strazza's paintings hangs on the wall behind Bill's desk along with several fine examples of Bill's photography.

The Round Hill Club is Bill's fifth stop. Formally beginning his career as assistant superintendent at Fairview, Bill moved, next to New Jersey. He spent about 10 years each at Fairmont Country Club, Edgewood Country Club, and then finally Hackensack Country Club, before circling back to Greenwich and his current post.

Sitting on 211 acres of prime Greenwich backcountry terrain, The Round Hill Club features small greens, ridges through landing areas, and slopes for fairways that were sculpted by Walter Travis in 1926. The yardage could be considered short by today's standards at less than 6,700 yards, but don't tell that to the players of the recent U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship.

### The Big Change

In his more than 45 years in the turfgrass management industry, Bill's seen a good deal of change—the most significant, in his mind, being the amount of money available for superintendents to do their jobs. "We used to have to scrape and beg for any money at all for supplies or equipment," he remembers. "Now, we deal with million-dollar budgets."

And Bill's put his impressive funds to good use on numerous enhancements to his operation, not the least of which is a state-of-the-art maintenance facility, which boasts plenty of open space, vaulted ceil-



Bill Gaydosh

ings, material storage bins, and ample space for support staff.

In addition to erecting a new maintenance facility, Bill has spearheaded a bunker renovation program, the installation of a new irrigation system and pumphouse, extensive drainage improvements, clubhouse landscaping, a new driving range, natural area enhancements, and, yes, he also went through all the steps required in qualifying the course as a certified Audubon International cooperative sanctuary. If all that's not enough, Bill's just launched into year one of a two-year tee expansion project.

### Family History

Despite all he has going on at the job, Bill does have a life outside of work. He has four daughters—Jill, Erin, Tara, and Meredith—and he and his wife of 12 years, Carol, live on club grounds in Greenwich.

He's also proud to point out that he has a nephew in the business—a Met member many of us know well: Paul Gonzalez. Currently superintendent at The Canyon Club, Paul worked with his Uncle Bill at Edgewood and Hackensack—an experience both Bill and Paul remember fondly.

Says Bill of his nephew's years in training with him, "He's very smart and caught on quickly."

Away from the property, Bill occasionally spends a rare summer day boating out on the Sound. In the winter, you'll catch him in Vermont, where his joy of the off-season is downhill skiing at Stratton.

*Bill Perlee, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY.*