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Tee To Green



*Hudson National
Golf Club*

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President's Message

Plenty of Time for Pleasure in the Midst of a Tough Season



It has certainly been an interesting season so far. The weather in July has been extreme to say the least. Excessive bouts of rain, heat, and humidity definitely have everyone hoping for a change in the weather pattern so we could all catch our breath.

The return of the always-popular Summer Social at Orienta Beach Club couldn't have come at a better time for everyone to take a break and relax. It was nice to see and catch up with old friends and fellow members. As always, the Summer Social was a great success. Many thanks to our Social & Welfare Committee Chair Brett Chapin and his entire committee for doing such a great job with this event.

The Scholarship & Parent/Child Tournament, hosted by Superintendent Dave Moffett on August 3 at Mosholu Golf Course, was a great success. The event began at 3 p.m. and offered Met parents and their children the opportunity to come out and take part in a family-friendly nine-hole shotgun scramble. A dinner reception followed the golf where we recognized our 2021 Scholarship Award recipients. Watch for the rundown on our talented recipients next issue! If you missed this year's event, you'll want to give it a go next year. It's a great time to enjoy the game with your family members.

Superintendent Brett Scales and Hudson National Golf Club are hosts of this year's Invitational Tournament on August 10. What could be better than joining your PGA pro and club officials for a round of competitive golf at one of the Met's premiere venues. A special thank you to Brett and Hudson National Golf Club for offering to host the Invitational in 2021 after last year's scheduled event was canceled.

Another great kick-back-and-enjoy-yourself event we have planned is the Summer Picnic at Bedford Memorial Park on August 18. Spend some precious time with your children, nieces, or nephews for a FUN afternoon of games and summertime festivities. A notice for this event will be out soon.



Rob Alonzi
MetGCSA President

Biking for Golf Facility BMPs

All play and no work isn't what Ken Benoit is all about. As executive director of the New York Golf Course Foundation, he has kept busy promoting the ongoing development of Best Management Practices for golf courses and, more recently, individual golf facilities. (See our feature article for details!)

Ken will be departing on another bike tour this year, traveling across the State of New York to help raise awareness of the importance of developing and documenting individualized Golf Facility BMPs. I wish Ken well on his journey and thank him for his commitment to Golf and the Environment.

There are a number of great opportunities to take a break from the course to get together with colleagues, friends, and family, and I hope to see you all there. Aerification season is just around the corner which means we all just made it through another season. In the meantime, keep up the good fight.

Rob Alonzi
President



Feature

The Scoop on Golf Facility BMPs

What the New York Golf Course Foundation Is Doing to Help You Put Them Into Practice

by Ken Benoit, CGCS

A view from one of several pollinator-friendly gardens at Woodway Country Club.



After a decade of developing and implementing Golf BMPs in New York, you most likely know they are broad research-based, voluntary guidelines designed to produce high-quality turf conditions while protecting and preserving water resources. But are you aware of Golf Facility BMPs (GFBMP), how they are different from Golf BMPs, and why they are important?

Here's the lowdown.

Different Yet the Same

Golf BMPs and GFBMPs use the same science but with the main difference being GFBMPs are tailored to address needs unique to each course. For example, an important BMP concept would have you protect open water by creating buffer zones. If your course does not have any water features, however, there is no need to create a buffer zone so your GFBMP would not include those details. Or, conversely, you may have local laws or requirements that differ from federal or state legislation and, therefore, are not included in the state BMP document. This may include town codes/laws requiring your course to implement water testing, reduce or restrict the use of specific chemicals or fertilizers, create buffer zones around open water features, among many other possible requirements. If your course operates with any of these or other unique set of circumstances, you will want to include them in your Golf Facility BMP document.

And of course, as summer winds down and courses begin many of the perennial recuperation processes or work to rectify newly identified issues exacerbated by this year's excessive amounts of rainfall, it's the perfect time to put Facility BMPs into practice by documenting these processes related to your golf course, just as virtually all successful businesses do in every industry.

The Importance of Facility BMPs

Facility BMP adoption will be the most important undertaking of the entire BMP initiative. Creating a formalized GFBMP document will send a positive message to your community by declaring your commit-

ment to protecting resources, including the golf course and its customers. What's more, you will increase your chances of becoming a valued expert in the eyes of your community.

Before getting started on creating a site-specific document, you need to ensure you have a deep understanding of how the decisions you make impact your turfgrass quality and the environment. The standard BMPs will help you accomplish this. The Golf BMPs, after all, are science-based, and the recommendations that make up the document are derived from the most up-to-date university research.

By implementing the turfgrass management recommendations within the document, you are giving yourself the best opportunity to produce healthy and dynamic turfgrass conditions while protecting and preserving water resources, wildlife, pollinators and the like. What's more, these healthy turf conditions often translate into cost savings. It only makes sense that by creating a healthier turfgrass plant that requires less water, fertilizer, and fewer pesticide applications, you will save money!

If none of this information hits home, consider how BMPs offer an important vehicle for golf, your chosen profession, to become a more sustainable business. Though the game is here to stay, as environmental pressure continues to build, golf needs to evolve in concert with these enlightened environmental attitudes, and it is up to the golf course superintendent to be proactive in adopting practices that will inevitably effect long-lasting change in the industry.

Getting Started in Creating Your Golf Facility BMP Document

Just like anything else that first step is the hardest. I recommend starting on Facility BMPs that are relevant to what you are working on. For example, coming out of this summer, drainage and possibly air movement, whether natural or artificial, are two GFBMPs that might be tackled first.

Our state Golf BMP document will be handy in helping you create your own Golf Facility BMP document. It's available

through the GCSAA BMP Planning Tool (<https://www.gcsaa.org/environment/bmp-planning-guide>) and offers instructional videos and other resources.

In addition, thanks to the 2020/21 \$41,100 Environmental Stewardship Fund (TESF) grant, the New York Golf Course Foundation is currently working on creating resources designed specifically to help New York superintendents navigate through the documentation process.

Here's a look at some of the initiatives the NYGCF is championing to help superintendents develop their own Golf Facility BMP document.

1. 'How to Create a Facility BMP Plan' Video Series.

Prioritizing, documenting, and implementing BMPs is an important step for superintendents to demonstrate their commitment to natural resource protection at their facilities. Although the facility BMP template is available to the state's superintendents through the GCSAA's online tool, additional efforts need to be undertaken to encourage and assist superintendents in utilizing this resource. Therefore, this series of videos will provide superintendents with guidance in creating their own Golf Facility BMPs.

2. Instructional Publications.

Publication 1: Using Predictive Models to Reduce Pesticide Use

Due to concerns by regulatory agencies and the general public over health issues related to pesticide use, golf course superintendents in New York continue to operate under extreme scrutiny. These various concerns have driven the development of sophisticated weather-based disease warning systems. Predictive modeling systems allow for more accurately timed fungicide applications, which result in better disease control while using fewer fungicides. This publication will focus on educating superintendents on how to use a predictive model for determining pesticide applications for controlling dollar spot, a season-long turf pest.



Publication 2: Bentgrass Conversion in Fairways

Fairways account for the most acreage of finely maintained turfgrass on golf courses, which require significantly more pesticide inputs than any other area on golf courses. In New York, many golf courses have a mixture of various turfgrass varieties on their fairways. Bentgrass, however, has proven to require fewer pesticide inputs than other common fairway turfgrasses, such as *Poa annua*. In this publication, we will demonstrate to superintendents the benefits of converting fairways to bentgrass and the steps needed to achieve this conversion.

3. 'Creating a Nutrient Management Plan' Video Tutorial.

Nutrient management plans can help prevent nutrient enrichment (i.e., nitrogen and phosphorus) of the state's water resources. Increased legislative and regulatory attention to fertilizer sources of nutrients may, in the future, result in requirements for superintendents to develop site-specific nutrient management plans. Therefore, we will produce a video that provides detailed guidance for superintendents to develop nutrient management plans. Equally important, this video will help superintendents plan fertilizer selections and application strategies to optimize plant responses, nutrient use efficiency, and economics.

This tutorial will be a four- to five-minute professionally produced video published on the NYGCF BMP YouTube channel, which is already home to a video case study on a wash pad demonstration funded by TESF, an ABW video, and a Cornell-funded pollinator video case study.

4. Strategic Communications via Twitter, Blogs, and More.

We plan to publish a minimum of six new video log (vlog) posts on the website and BMP YouTube channel, in cooperation with Cornell University. In addition, we will include new written blog posts demonstrating superintendent implementations of BMPs as topics are identified throughout the year.

We will use the Twitter feed (@NYS_GolfBMP) to communicate the availability of these new blog and vlog posts, along with tweets to direct readers to existing content, using Twitter scheduling software. We are hoping the Twitter feed will help to generate interest and attract visits to the website.

5. Publication Reprints.

In addition to the social media-related efforts, we will reprint 500 copies of the following previously TESF grant-funded publications:

- Nutrient Management publication
- ABW publication
- Pollinator BMP publication
- Fact sheet series: Five fact sheets

These fact sheets and publications, including those mentioned earlier, will be assembled in the folders and made available to the five New York GCSAA affiliated chapters, Cornell University, and NYSTA as needed to disseminate this information and promote the New York State BMP efforts.

Golf Facility BMPs Put Into Practice

Facility BMP adoption is essentially utilizing any of the existing New York State BMPs found on the New York Golf Course Foundation website. Specific examples of these BMPs currently being used by

NYGCF Executive Director Ken Benoit's BMP bike tour takes him from the shores of Connecticut to Oregon's Bandon Golf Resort . . . and then the beach below.

MetGCSA members can be found in the case study portion of the website. For instance, you can see how Bedford Golf & Tennis Club Superintendent Bob Nielsen uses a water quality monitoring program to maintain a close relationship with the town government.

Matt Celso, superintendent at Rockland Country Club, and Lucas Knutson, superintendent at Rockville Links Club, each provide dedicated pollinator habitat around their respective courses. The details of each program differ but the positive effect of each program on the environment and the resulting positive relationships with community government and local citizens are similar.

At Bethpage State Park, superintendent Andrew Wilson takes a sustainable approach to controlling Annual Bluegrass Weevils.

There are many more case study examples on the website and hundreds more undocumented BMPs in action throughout the Met area and around the state. By formally adopting the BMP document at your facility, we can begin to change the narrative from what golf is doing "to" the environment to what golf is doing "for" the environment.

Other Useful BMP Initiatives in the Works

With TESF funds, the NYGCF is continuing work with the Golf BMPs and is undertaking several exciting efforts. Here's a look at what else is in the works.

Effort #1: New York Connect to Protect Tour Video.

I will conduct a "mini" bicycle tour through New York State, utilizing the Empire State Trail to travel from Westchester County through Albany enroute to Buffalo. The return route will pass through the Finger Lakes via Ithaca, before ending the tour back in Westchester County. During the tour, much like my cross-country tour last year, I will visit courses along the way, creating 5- to 10-minute videos, highlighting some great BMPs that many of our New York courses are doing to raise awareness

NYGCF Executive Director Ken Benoit samples a stream at a Met area club.

and promote Facility Golf BMPs. We will incorporate the content into our communications, such as the importance of facility adoption of Golf BMPs and provide useful examples of Golf BMPs currently in use at golf courses across the state.

Effort #2: Continue Communication and Outreach Programs.

It remains a priority to continue communication and outreach programs to promote the value of BMPs and related educational tools available to golf course superintendents in New York. There are currently five GCSAA regional chapters across the state. We plan to make a concerted effort to initiate direct, in-person contact with these chapters by attending an association meeting of their choice, preferably one with maximum member attendance. This will allow us the opportunity to address superintendents both individually and as an undivided group, focusing our communications efforts not only on the importance of adopting Golf BMPs, but also on the



important role NYSTA and the TESH grant have had in the ongoing development of the Golf BMPs.

Effort #3: Develop a Honeybee Evaluation Program

The Pollinator BMP has been a critical addition to the Golf BMPs. We are currently looking to broaden our Pollinator BMP initiative by exploring the impact golf has on honeybees.

It is important to note that this will not be a scientific study, but simply an exploration of the relationship between golf and pollinators, with the possibility of creating

momentum for future scientific pollinator initiatives to be conducted at golf courses within New York State.

Effort #4: Produce a 'How to Develop a Water Quality Testing Program' Video.

As our society continues to place greater emphasis on water quality, it is increasingly likely that golf courses will be required to adhere to established water quality standards. It only makes sense, then, that superintendents understand the water quality testing process and be able to speak intelligently about it.

To aid in this effort, we will produce a "How to Develop a Water Quality Testing Program" video that will provide detailed guidance for superintendents. The tutorial will be a four- to five-minute professionally produced video, published on the NYGCF BMP YouTube channel, already home to TESH-funded educational videos and case studies.

Other Potential Developments

A BMP Credit Program? In addition to the TESH projects listed, the foundation has been in discussion with Scott Menrath, the director of the Bureau of Pesticide Management, NYSDEC, about creating a program in which superintendents can receive credits for formally adopting certain aspects of the New York BMPs. What started out as a desire to create a meaningful relationship has turned into a partnership between the NYDEC and New York golf course superintendents, something we could not have imagined pre-BMP. We will keep you up-to-date on our progress!



Bedford Golf & Tennis Superintendent Bob Neilsen tackles several BMPs with the club's new pesticide storage/mixing/loading and equipment wash pad building.

The New York Golf Course Foundation: Where It Began, Where It's Going

Joining Forces with the Pollinator Pathway organization? A Northeast-based Pollinator Pathway group interested in creating a more hospitable environment for pollinators, contacted the NYGCF to ask if the foundation would be interested in exchanging educational information. Its leaders were particularly impressed with the Pollinator BMP work New York superintendents completed and wanted to learn more about our industry's ability to increase safe pollinator habitat. What's more, this group has also invited the foundation to contribute informational content to their newsletter and will be touring a local golf course this year with the intention of learning more about what golf courses are doing to help protect the natural environment.

Having State BMPs is great, but unless there is evidence that golf facilities are adopting them, there is no credibility to outsiders and critics. Custom-tailoring—and putting into practice—BMPs at your own facility will be the credibility-builder you need to fend off judgements by environmental stakeholders. And the hard work is done. By utilizing GCSAA's BMP Planning Tool and the cooperative efforts of the NYGCF, this should be an easy undertaking for most facilities in our great state.

Final Note: When I was riding my bike across the U.S. this past August/September and visiting golf courses of all kinds, I was amazed to see the environmental initiatives taking fold. Some small and unique and some monumental, but the one thing they shared was a passionate golf course superintendent who was a steward of the entire property, ensuring great golfing conditions in balance with nature. All we are trying to achieve now is to document these noble efforts through Golf Facility BMPs.

For the past decade, the superintendent-run New York Golf Course Foundation (NYGCF) has been diligently working to bridge the divide between golfers and legislators, regulators, environmental groups, and active citizenry by assisting golf course superintendents in their role as environmentally conscious land managers. The NYGCF is the sustainable 501c3 nonprofit that has evolved from the New York State Best Management Practices project.

The success of the BMP efforts is a direct result of the partnership of superintendent leaders in the state and Cornell University. This project has codified standards and actively demonstrates the implementation of BMPs for the protection of natural resources on golf courses. These efforts are designed to continue expanding the reach and increasing the value of environmental stewardship to all stakeholders, regulators, and policy makers.

Looking to the Future

Beginning with an initial planning meeting, the New York State Golf Course BMP efforts set out first to create a framework and process for developing science-based best management practices to protect water quality in the state. Publishing the BMPs in February of 2014, however, was only the first step in a process that requires sustained effort to increase awareness and implementation of these BMPs.

Over time it became apparent that expanding the BMPs to meet emerging needs, such as protecting pollinators, would be required as needs were identified. To achieve these goals, the New York State BMP project developed a five-year strategic plan in 2016 that has provided a framework and direction for decision-making, in addition to communicating the vision and purpose of the project for the past five years.



Due for a review and update, the new strategic plan will provide a roadmap for the next five years of the BMP program. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the first strategic plan, update the strategic priorities as needed, and consider the future efforts needed to continue increasing awareness of the BMPs, as well as educational opportunities. We will also look at expanding the BMP program to encompass a variety of environmental services that can be provided by golf courses.

In achieving this strategic vision, golf course superintendents will increasingly be recognized as stewards of the state's natural resources. In addition, by increasing the visibility of the project, superintendents are increasing the potential to be consulted by regulators and lawmakers at the state and local level in advance of any discussion of future regulation of the industry.

For further information on the BMPs, check out the New York State BMP website at <http://nysgolfbmp.cals.cornell.edu/>.

Ken Benoit is executive director of the New York Golf Course Foundation and founder/president of Eco Turf Consulting.

Chapter News

Social Event of the Season

Despite the threatening weather forecast, a good number of MetGCSA members and affiliates were eager to get together again at our Summer Social, the first social event in two years thanks to COVID restrictions.

Though the raindrops kept many Summer Social goers off the beach and inside the club, we were still able to enjoy the early evening views of the Sound and lovely clubhouse building at the Orienta Beach Club in Mamaroneck, NY, a now-annual venue for this MetGCSA social event.

As the sun set, the lobster bake buffet began, highlighted by whole lobsters, corn, and a selection of gourmet accompaniments, followed by an assortment of tasty after-dinner treats.

After the meal, members gathered around a welcoming bar area and back porch, a number sharing war stories of this challenging season. Wherever they chose to convene, members enjoyed this opportunity to catch up with friends they may not have had a chance to see during the pandemic.

If you didn't attend this wonderful event, I urge you to join us next year. Whether you're in sales or turf management, this event gives all of us a chance to catch up, enjoy a few laughs, and mentally prepare for the long weeks ahead. Truly a must-attend event on our calendar!



Jesse Bulaga, Chad Mathieu, and Kait & Dave Peterson



Evan Weymouth & Sally Difresco



Ryan & Melissa Avery



Kelly Sartori & Jason Anderson and Kerry & George Corgan



Rob Alonzi & Claudia Rabideau



Patty & Tim Walker and Chris & Renee Kemble

Scene of the Summer Social's Lobster Fest

Congratulations to Tim O'Neill on His Retirement From Country Club of Darien

Past MetGCSA President and Sherwood A. Moore Award Recipient Takes His Many Industry Contributions Into Retirement

Congratulations to Tim O'Neill, CGCS, on his recent retirement from Country Club of Darien, where in his 40-year tenure as golf course superintendent, he saw the club through a transformation from a single-owner club to a premier member-based facility.

A MetGCSA member for 42 years, Tim served on the board of directors for 12 years, culminating his term as association president from 1992-93. Wholly committed to advancing our profession, Tim, while still active in the Met, assumed a leadership role in the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation, working with the group since its inception in 1990 and progressing through the board's ranks to president in 1999.

So thoroughly committed to advancing the profession, Tim took his aspirations to yet another level: the national, joining the GCSAA Board of Directors in 2001 and assuming the post of GCSAA president in 2005, where he championed numerous initiatives focused on strengthening and advancing both GCSAA and our profession.

Outside his extracurricular commitments, Tim continued to promote the image and professionalism of the golf course superintendent through his performance at Country Club of Darien. From 2007 to 2010, Tim was involved in a \$4.5 million golf course renovation project to rebuild and reinvigorate the then 51-year-old golf course. And Tim's hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed.

While the club praised his efforts, the newly renovated course began to attract major tournaments—the Ike Tournament and the Westchester Open among them. During that period, the MetGCSA also recognized Tim's professional commitment with its coveted Sherwood A. Moore Award, an honor reserved for those who have “advanced the image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent.”

“Looking back at my career,” says Tim, “I am thankful to my club and my family—



Tim O'Neill surrounded by his family and loyal golden retriever, Chase. From left to right: Justin and partner Dustin, Tim and wife Jennifer, and Kristen.

my wife, Jennifer of 33 years, and my children, Justin and Kristen—for supporting my choice to participate in numerous industry activities. In addition to playing a role in the advancement of our profession over the years, I believe the many experiences I've had have helped me become a better communicator and manager—skills that will benefit me personally and professionally in whatever endeavor I choose next.

And what does Tim have in mind in retirement? “Well,” he says, “I like to think I'm old enough to retire but young enough to do something else. Right now, I have in mind doing something at the church where I've volunteered for years—perhaps managing the buildings and grounds on a permanent basis.”

Enjoy your well-deserved retirement, Tim! We wish you all the best.



Dick Gonyea Remembered

We would like to offer our deepest sympathy to the family of **Richard “Dick” Gonyea** on his passing on July 4. He was 78 years old.

Dick spent more than 33 years as the golf course superintendent at the Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY, where he is remembered by many for riding the grounds in the early morning hours in his golf cart keeping a vigilant eye on the turf. He was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Stockbridge School of Agriculture with an associate's degree in Turf Management and was a member of the MetGCSA since 1972 where he served as secretary and second vice president. He was also a member of the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America. Prior to his position in Rye, he was employed by the Plandome Country Club in Long Island, NY. He also served in the U.S. Army.

Dick will be missed by the many who had the fortunate opportunity to know and work with him.

Donations in Dick's memory can be sent to Rye City Lions Club, the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association, or The American Cancer Society.

Also extending our deepest sympathy and condolences to:

- Silver Spring Country Club Superintendent **Bill Cygan** and family on the passing of Bill's mother, Sharon Ann Cygan, 65, on June 24. Donations in her memory may be made to Levine and Dickson Hospice House at Southminster, 8919 Park Road, Suite 1000, Charlotte, NC 28210.

- Bedford Golf & Tennis Club Superintendent **Bob Nielsen** and family on the passing of Bob's mother, Cathleen Nielsen, 83, on July 4. A warm and friendly person, Cathy will be dearly missed by her family and friends. A service to celebrate Cathy's life will be held in the near future in Bedford Village.

Superintendent/Guest Winning Results

by Steve Wickstrom

The MetGCSA returned to Siwanoy Country Club for the first time since April 2017, when Superintendent Steven McGlone hosted the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier. At that point, event goers enjoyed a course renovation that Golf Course Architect Mike DeVries and Steven had completed the year before. During the 2021 MetGCSA Superintendent/Guest event, participants were treated not just to a finely groomed, competitive course, but also a luxurious clubhouse renovation. No rest for the weary, golf course upgrades and improvements have been ongoing since Steven came on board in 2009.

At this year's event, contestants competed in a Yellow Ball Tournament, which is a Best Ball event, as well as the traditional Superintendent/Guest, which is a Gross & Net competition.

Mike DeVries was on hand to witness area superintendents and their guests enjoy the new-and-improved course. He happily answered questions about the restorations at Siwanoy, as well as his current projects around the world, including a new property on Seven Mile Beach in Tasmania, Australia.

Tournament Highlights

Brae Burn's Blake Halderman and partner Jon Rachlin were the stars of the show. They won First Place Low Gross with a score of 72. The team of Blake, Jon, and Mosholu's Dave Moffett and Chris Riley won the Yellow Ball Tourney with a score of 76. Blake completed the trifecta by winning the 50/50 drawing. The Rye Golf Club team of Chip Lafferty and Jim Buonaiuto took Second Place Gross with a score of 64.

Other winners of the day were Quaker Ridge's Tom Ashfield and Burning Tree member John Gallagher with a Low Net score of 74 by a draw of cards. GlenArbor's Joe Gikis hit a nice shot to 9 feet for a Closest to the Pin. The second Closest to the Pin was Burning Tree's Mike Hibbert, who

Brae Burn's Jon Rachlin & Superintendent Blake Halderman champion the day as First Place Low Gross winners.



Host Superintendent Steven McGlone of Siwanoy Country Club (second from left) strikes a pose with his Superintendent/Guest foursome: Architect Mike DeVries of DeVries Designs; Brian Freeswick, General Manager of Trump National GC Hudson Valley; and Siwanoy Sr. Assistant Joshua Haugh.

shot a dart inside 3 feet. The Longest Drive was a bomb by Ed Grant from K&J Tree Service.

Thank you to Steven McGlone and a Clubhouse/Pro Shop staff that was as professional and welcoming as any we have encountered at our MetGCSA events. Please

be sure to join us on August 10 at Hudson National for the MetGCSA Invitational Tournament.

Steve Wickstrom, Tournament Committee co-chair, is superintendent at Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, CT.

Brett Scales to Host MetGCSA Invitational at Hudson National

by Kevin Collins

Though Covid put the kibosh on last year's MetGCSA Invitational Tournament at Hudson National, the club and Superintendent Brett Scales were not deterred from giving the tournament a go again this year! Come hell or high water, on August 10, MetGCSA members will convene at the club for their annual Invitational Tournament. Foursomes will be composed of the superintendent, head professional, and two club officials from Met member clubs. Teams will compete for the lowest best-ball net score. And what a course to compete on! From the back tees (7,122 yards) the course has a rating of 74.8 and a slope of 145.

About the Course You'll Play

Located in Croton-on-Hudson, NY, the land that Hudson National now claims as its own has a storied and iconic history. First, the site is the second highest elevation in Westchester County with breathtaking views of the Hudson River. The Kitchawank Indians were occupants on the land when English explorer Henry Hudson first sailed up the river that would bear his name. During the Revolutionary War, George Washington and his troops set up camp on the property to take advantage of its commanding views to monitor the British Fleet making its way up the Hudson River from New York City.

Building Hudson National was no walk in the park. Though once the site of a nine-hole course, Hessian Hills, in the early 1900s, when Golf Course Architect Tom Fazio first laid eyes on the property, he deemed it "unworkable." Before even routing the golf holes, crews had to blast 130,000 cubic feet of rock. They got it done.

Fazio's vision was to blend the course seamlessly into the land. There are four sets of tees to accommodate players of all skill levels. The aesthetic that frames many of the holes includes beautiful native areas, deep bunkers, massive rock outcroppings, and diverse landscapes.

Fazio utilized the ruins of the Hessian Hills' clubhouse as a signature feature of the property, routing the 4th hole alongside this historical reminder of days gone by. The clubhouse mysteriously burned down in 1930 leaving only the stone structure stand-

ing. Hessian Hills' nine-hole course ceased to exist after the fire.

Hudson National has hosted many notable tournaments since it opened in June of 1996. These include The Carey Cup (1996), The Met PGA Championship (2000), The Met Amateur (2001, 2019), and The Met Open, which the club hosted in 2004 and is slated to host again this year.

Brett's Early Years

Brett grew up in the upstate New York town of Canandaigua, a stone's throw from Rochester, NY. "I developed an early interest in golf and loved playing. When I was 12, I got a job cleaning the carts at Winged Pheasant Golf Links, a 27-hole facility in Shortsville, NY. That progressed to working in the Pro Shop, and at 16, I manned the clubhouse bar," Brett recalls with a smile.

At 17, Brett joined the grounds staff and garnered valuable experience working with the crew that built the third nine of the course. By the time he finished high school, Brett had no doubts about his future career. In 2000, he enrolled in the turf program at SUNY Cobleskill. "I looked hard at both SUNY Delhi and Cobleskill," Brett remembers. "At that time Delhi had only a two-year program, which made my decision that much easier.

In 2002 and 2003 Brett interned at Oak Hill, working for then Superintendent Paul Latshaw. "The highlight for me was the 2003 PGA Championship," says Brett. "Mark Daniels (now at Wannamoisett Club) was generous in teaching me the ins and outs of working at a championship club. Sean Foley (now at Round Hill Club) taught me all the fine points of hand watering among other things. After the PGA Championship, a lot of the staff left. Paul went to Muirfield Village Golf Club, and Sean went to Winged Foot," Brett recalls.

The Journey Begins

After graduating from Cobleskill, Brett went to work for the new Oak Hill superintendent, Jeff Corcoran. "My first job at the club following graduation was as the irrigation technician; a year later, in 2005, I was promoted to assistant superintendent."



Brett Scales

In October 2005, Mark Daniels was hired as the superintendent at Wannamoisett Country Club, a top 100 club, located in East Providence, RI, and I went with him as his first assistant. I loved Providence, and it was a good move for me to focus on my career. I stayed on as Mark's first assistant for five years."

In 2010, the superintendent's position at Navasink Country Club in Middletown, NJ, became available, and Brett landed the job. "When I first got to Navesink, the course was in need of a lot of repair. Many projects followed, including new sand traps and a maintenance facility. I spent eight years at Navasink and loved it. It is a great place, and I was treated very well," Brett recalls fondly.

In 2018, Hudson National came calling. The job wasn't advertised; a search committee contacted Brett for an interview. "A few hours after the final interview," says Brett, "I had just returned to my home in NJ and realized I had missed a call from Hudson. I had an inkling they were going to offer me the position, but I could hardly believe it," he adds with a smile.

The campus at Hudson National encompasses approximately 300 acres with close to 80 acres of native areas. Upcoming projects include a new irrigation system, bunker renovations, and work on the cart paths. Some of this has been delayed by the dreaded Covid-19.

Family Man

Brett lives on the property with his young family, which includes daughters Madelyn, 6, and Katherine, 4, and son Conner who's 2. Combining work with family time, he loves taking the kids on rides in his golf cart to tour the course. They, of course, love it too.

Brett is looking forward to showing off the course and spending time with his peers on August 10. We hope you've made plans to join him. This is an event you don't want to miss!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is NE/Mid-Atlantic Territory Manager for Ocean Organics.

Kevin Seibel to Host Annual Triple Header Event

by Kevin Collins

Superintendent Kevin Seibel will host this year's trio of events when Met Championship, Met Team Qualifier, and Poa Annual tournament contestants convene at Century Country Club on September 14. In addition to being an enjoyable competition, the Poa Tournament is a longtime fundraising event to provide organizations (like NYSTA) with needed monies for turfgrass research.

The Playing Field From Start to Present

Century Country Club is in its 123rd year of existence. Founded in 1898, it was originally located in the Throgs Neck section of the Bronx adjacent to Long Island Sound. Architect Tom Bendelow designed a nine-hole course that played alongside the water. In 1904, the members purchased a 100-acre site in Greenburgh, NY, where they built an 18-hole course designed by Herbert Strong, along with several tennis courts and riding stables.

Having grown tired of the hilly Herbert Strong layout, the members decided to move once again in 1922, purchasing 175 acres of land on Anderson Hill Road. They hired H.S. Colt and Charles Allison to build a new course, which opened in 1924. (By the way, that Greenburgh site didn't go away. It's the current home of Metropolis Country Club!)

Finally pleased with their location and layout, members merely had the course "tweaked" by iconic golf course architects A.W. Tillinghast, Robert Trent Jones Sr., and Gil Hanse to name several—until bringing Kevin on board in 2003 to implement a John Harvey master plan for the golf course, which included everything from the installation of new crushed-stone cart paths and irrigation system to bunker and tee renovations and the installation of a short-game practice area.

Always with an eye toward improvement, the club hired renowned architect Keith Foster in 2013 to oversee another massive renovation. In both 2016 and 2017, the club closed nine holes after Labor Day through to Thanksgiving to complete the work. This included extensive tree removal, greens

expansions, recontoured fairways and rebuilding and adding new bunkers. The course was transformed.

Century has turned out some prominent golfers during its history. Ben Hogan worked at the club as an assistant professional from 1938 until 1941. Member Dick Siderowf won the 1973 and 1976 British Amateur and was a member of three Walker Cup teams. Siderowf also captured five Met Amateurs and won the Met Player of the Year Award in 1976. Current Assistant Golf Professional Frank Bensel has continued that tradition being a frequent winner on the MGA tour.

The Road to Century

Kevin grew up in Magnolia, NJ, which is about 10 minutes from downtown Philadelphia. That might explain why, before golf, his passion was with all the Philly sports teams, particularly the Eagles—a team he followed at Veterans Stadium, holding season tickets, until the Vet was demolished, a particularly sad day for Kevin.

Kevin attended Pope Paul VI High School in Haddonfield, NJ. Being a big sports guy, he played varsity baseball for the school and in the local summer leagues. Kevin's first job on a golf course began at age 16 at Woodcrest Country Club in Cherry Hill, NJ. The superintendent then was none other than former Merion Golf Club head honcho Matt Shaffer. Kevin would work on the crew all day, then round up the golf carts and finally the flag sticks to prevent the neighborhood kids from making away with them in the wee hours of the morning.

Kevin recalls one night when he went to collect the flags but had to turn back because of a bad electrical storm. "I told Matt it was too dangerous to be out on the course," says Kevin, "so next thing I knew, he jumped in his cart and headed out himself. Of course, he came back with all the sticks, pissed off, soaking wet, and mumbling under his breath that I was a complete wimp (or something like that)." Even 33 years later,



Kevin Seibel

Matt still enjoys telling that story any time Kevin's name comes up.

After high school, Kevin attended Rutgers, graduating from the two-year turf program while working for Rick Christian at Pine Valley. It was good training. "At Pine Valley, we had to maintain perfect conditions in a tough climate all the time. There was no room for error," Kevin remembers.

Kevin's next stop was Merion Golf Club working for Paul Latshaw. After two years, Paul left for Oak Hill, and Greg Armstrong assumed Paul's position as superintendent. Kevin's responsibility at that time was as the superintendent on the West Course. Greg left after the 2001 season and, lo and behold, Matt Shaffer was hired as superintendent in 2002.

It was that year, Kevin readily admits, that gave him the training and preparation he needed for the future. "Matt moved me over to the East Course (Championship Course)," remembers Kevin, "and I became his right-hand man. I had to implement all of Matt's programs, which were very different from what I had become accustomed to at Merion."

We were trying to get the course in U.S. Open-type shape: hard, fast, dry, and lean. We pushed the turf to the edge to maintain those conditions, and while I worried that we may have been taking it too far, the turf did survive and the membership loved it. It was a trying year—the only time in my life that I dreamt about work. But looking back, it was the best thing that ever happened to me. It completed my education."

A year later, Kevin was hired at Century as the club's superintendent. More than pleased with the move to Century, Kevin was eager to recognize the people who have been integral to his—and the club's—success: "My general manager, Burt Ward, has been very supportive and great to work with. The crew has also been tremendous. And there with me every step of the way

Upcoming Events

Not-to-Be Missed Events

through all the renovation work were my former assistants Andy Hannah, Tom Reyes, and Marc Muniz.

Seibel Behind-the-Scenes

Kevin met the love of his life, Cary, in 1996, through Cary's brother Scott, who was Kevin's partner-in-crime at Eagles home games. After a three-year romance, Cary and Kevin married in 2000 and went on to have three great kids: Alex, 25; Ben, 20; and Lily, 14.

It's always interesting at the Seibel house. At one time, Kevin and Cary's attention was consumed with running the kids around, transporting them to school and sporting events. Kevin spent a number of years coaching Ben's football and baseball teams and Lily's softball teams. But those days are over, for the moment: Kevin apparently has retired from coaching.

Now, in addition to the children, high on their to-do list is managing their pets. The Seibel household pet count is two dogs and three cats. The newest addition is Molly, a border collie, who's been with the family for only two months. Ice is a dog that Cary and Kevin adopted eight years ago. "That dog sheds entirely too much," Kevin laments.

The three cats are characters too. I asked Kevin what their names are. "I only like one of the cats so it wouldn't be fair to name them," Kevin laughs. With Cary having volunteered for a pet adoption agency, she clearly has a sweet spot for furry creatures. And I have no doubt that there will be more pets joining the fray.

Kevin handles it well: He says nothing—which is definitely the correct strategy. But the pained expression on his face tells all!

I guarantee, though, that he'll be all smiles with a good turnout for our Poa Annual, Met Championship, and Met Team Qualifier. Hope to see you all in September!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is NE/Mid-Atlantic Territory Manager for Ocean Organics.

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, August 10
Hudson National Golf Club
Croton-on-Hudson, NY
Host: Brett Scales

Summer Picnic

Wednesday, August 18
Bedford Village Memorial Park
Bedford, NY

The Poa Annual/Met Championship/Met Team Qualifier

Tuesday, September 14
Century Country Club
Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel

Nine & Dine

Thursday, October 7
Mount Kisco Country Club
Mount Kisco, NY
Host: Andrew Agnew

Met Team Championship

Tuesday, October 12
Saratoga National Golf Club
Saratoga Springs, NY
Host: Joe Lucas

MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar

Thursday, November 11
The Patterson Club
Fairfield, CT
Host: Jason Meersman

MetGCSA/HVGCSA Tailgate Party Army/UMass Football Game

Saturday, November 20
Watch for details!

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 12, 2022
Westchester Country Club
Rye, NY
Host: David Dudones

Nor'easter Ski Day

Thursday, February 24, 2022
Killington Ski Resort
Killington, VT

Industry Events

25th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, August 16
Fiddler's Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ

Plan now to join fellow industry professionals for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, networking, and fun. Your participation helps fund research grants, student scholarships, equipment, and special projects for the Turfgrass Research, Teaching, and Extension programs at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences/Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

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

2021 GREEN EXPO Turf & Landscape Conference

Tuesday – Thursday, December 7 – 9
Borgata Hotel & Casino
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