The Low Gross winner of the Commercial Division was Steve O’Neill, a member of the North Florida PGA. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Stewart and Steve Kuhn were announced as 1996 recipients of the President’s Award for Lifetime Service.

On Monday morning Joel Jackson, CGCS and his staff had everything ready for an 8:00 shotgun start for approximately 120 superintendents, sponsors and guests. Using the Stableford scoring system (with 1 point for a bogey, 2 points for par, 3 points for a birdie and 4 points for an eagle) play seemed to move at a better pace.

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pace this year. In less than five hours, it was time for a check of scorecards. Chapter team competition was as close as ever, with Seven Rivers winning a match of cards over Central Florida and Treasure Coast one shot back. Members of the winning team were Vic Conigliaro, Stuart Bozeman, Dennis Kuestes and Bob Roessing.

In individual competition, Vic Conigliaro shot a fine 72 to qualify for the state team, along with Mark Hopkins who qualified earlier this year. Finishing second was Mark Henderson in a match of cards over Larry Livingston, CGCS. In the net division Dennis Kuestes was first, Jay Gratton second and Stuart Bozeman third. In the commercial division Steve O'Neill was low gross winner with Steve Sorrel second and Mike Cook third. In the net division the winner was Kent Busser, followed by Chip Lewison and Harry Becker.

Congratulations to Harry Becker for his first career hole-in-one on the 3rd hole and winning closest to the pin prize on that hole. Other CTP winners were #6 Roy Wilshire, #12 Dave Oliver, #15 Keith Longshore, and long drive #8 Mark Hopkins.

A special thanks to Walt Disney World, Bonnet Creek Club, Joel Jackson, CGCS and his staff, Larry and Vilma Kamphaus and the Crowfoot Committee, and all our Gold and Diamond Sponsors for another successful event.

Another successful South Florida Expo was celebrated as Bob Klitz, CGCS(right), South Florida External VP presented a $15,000 check to incoming FGCSA President Dale Kuehner, CGCS. These Expo funds annually are the cornerstone for supporting the operation of the Otto Schmeisser Research Green in Ft. Lauderdale.
Photo by Joel Jackson.

Anchored by Low Gross Superintendent winner Vic Conigliaro's par 72 and Net Division finishes of first and third by Bob Roessing and Stuart Bozeman, the Seven Rivers Chapter captured the Crowfoot Open Team Championship.(left to right) Vic Conigliaro, Dennis Kastes, Bob Roessing and Stuart Bozeman. Photo by Joel Jackson.
From the 1996 Crowfoot Committee

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All In

The infamous 12th hole at Colony West. 452 yards. Par 4. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.
When incoming FGCSA President Dale Kuehner, CGCS listed "From birth to 1988 - Seven Springs Country Club" as his first job experience on my interview questionnaire, I knew this wasn’t going to be a typical story!

Forty-five years ago Dale’s grandfather, Edward Rack, built Seven Springs Country Club in Elizabeth, Pa., a town 40 miles southwest of Pittsburgh. Rack was an excellent amateur golfer in his day and he competed against another western Pennsylvanian of that time, a fellow named Arnold Palmer. Palmer followed in Rack’s footsteps some years later and built a few courses of his own.
From the very beginning, the entire Rack family was involved in staffing and operating the club.

"As a kid, I did everything from kitchen cleanup to being a range rat picking up and cleaning balls to manning the 'weenie hut' on the par 3 course on rainy days to sell a random greens fee or hot dog to a hard core golfer!" Dale says.

Dale loved the outdoors and he came into his element as a teenager when he was old enough to operate the equipment. When pressed for any unusual anecdotes of growing up on a golf course, Dale did share one story from his teens.

"One Saturday, my cousin and I were mowing greens in the dark getting ready for a shotgun tournament. He developed a hydraulic leak and striped an entire green. As soon as we discovered it, we raced back to the shop and got some detergent and we saturated the stripes and then we began scrubbing and watering it in. By dawn's early light there was a huge foam ball oozing down the approach and fairway. It was quite a sight!"

Dale's aptitude and interest in grooming the Seven Springs course began whetting his appetite for more information.

Merle Smith, a Toro sales rep for the E. H. Griffith Company in Pittsburgh was the source of most of the advice and information the family used to manage the turf. In those days, the E. H. Griffith distributorship sold everything from equipment to fertilizers and chemicals. Dale would ask all the "what," "how," and "why" questions he could think of.

When Smith wasn't around, Dale would seek answers from a neighboring superintendent, Tom Fox. It was these two gentlemen who steered Dale to Penn

One Saturday, my cousin and I were mowing greens in the dark... He developed a hydraulic leak and striped an entire green ... we saturated the stripes (with detergent) and began scrubbing and watering it in. By dawn's early light there was a huge foam ball oozing down the approach and fairway!
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Hole #6. 403 yards of water down the right side. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

State to formalize all this education and to broaden his knowledge of the business.

Dale began as an agronomy major, but changes in the family fortunes would alter these plans temporarily.

As the family grew and the course was successful, Rack saw the need to expand. He was an equity member at the Colony West Country Club in Tamarac and it was going through some difficult times.

After concluding successful negotiations with the membership, Rack purchased the course and his family split up the duties of running both courses. Dale’s mother, brother, sister and uncle operate Seven Springs in Pennsylvania, and Dale (superintendent) along with another uncle (GM) and cousin (head pro) operate Colony West.

Colony West has its own place in history.

The Championship Course, designed by Bruce Devlin and Robert Von Hagge, was built in the late 1960s and was slated to be the site of the first Jackie Gleason Classic. It was also going to be the first 18-hole televised golf tournament and miles of cable were being laid during construction.

But financial problems arose and partners Ken Behring (current owner of the Seattle Seahawks) and Gleason parted ways, selling the property to Leadership Housing, which built condominiums around the course. Later, dissatisfied members from Inverrary bought the golf course and started a private club which led eventually to the Rack purchase.

The Championship Course has been rated by Golf Digest as the 16th toughest layout in the state.

Eager to complete his formal education, Dale returned to Penn State during the first winters in Florida and completed the Turf Management Short Course, graduating in 1988.

It was a real concern for Dale to prove himself worthy and qualified to fill the role as superintendent. He did not want the job strictly because of family ties.

During that time he received a lot of advice and guidance concerning the turf business from Dr. Joe Duich. Dale credits Dr. Duich for giving him a perspective that allowed him to channel his youthful enthusiasm and independence into a more patient approach to the family business.

After graduation and marriage to wife Cindy, Dale found his grandfather more willing to accept his ideas and suggestions and that gave Dale a feeling of finally coming into his own.

Dr. Duich also told Dale to look up a couple of Penn State alumni in South Florida—Tom Burrows and Ray Hansen. They encouraged Dale to join an FGCSA chapter and get involved. Their friendship and mentoring opened up a world of problem-solving information, practical help, loaner equipment and — best of all
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Dale Kuehner, CGCS


Family: Wife - Cindy


Employment History: From birth to 1988 worked at family owned and operated Seven Springs Golf Club. 1988 to present, Superintendent Colony West C. C.

How did you get into the business? My family has owned and operated two golf courses. Seven Springs G. C. in Pennsylvania and the Colony West C. C. in Florida.

People in or out of the industry who have influenced your life and career: Mr. Merle Smith, Toro sales rep for E. H. Griffith, Co. in Pittsburgh. Superintendent Tom Fox who convinced me to attend Penn State. Dr. Joe Duich, the Penn State legend who gave me lots of sound advice about the business. Former superintendents, Penn State grads and FGCSA presidents Tom Burrows and Ray Hansen who were models of professionalism and association involvement.

Goals/Accomplishments: Returning to Penn State as a speaker for the Annual Turf Conference. Topic: Quality Public Golf North and South. Serving the FGCSA in the various chairs of the board.

Advice to prospective and new superintendents: It's easy to get burned out in this business. It's even worse to rust out. I'm always trying to learn something. A different slant on problems and possible solutions. I stay in touch with my peers. I find them the greatest source of help from information to sharing equipment. Continuing education helps me get out of any ruts I've fallen into. Monthly meetings, conference seminars and peer networking educate, energize and motivate me to renew and improve my performance.

Professional affiliations: South Florida GCSA all offices, FGCSA all offices, GCSAA Voting Delegate for Florida.


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