



The Dom Grotti Award: A Tribute to Mentoring

One of the highlights of this June's MAGCS meeting at Phillips Park Golf Course will be the presentation of the seventeenth annual Dom Grotti Award. Two-person teams, each consisting of a superintendent and assistant superintendent, vie for the award. The team with the combined lowest gross score wins the award. Last year, Ron Dohman and Mike Alsford took the prize with a score of 159.

The inaugural Dom Grotti Award event took place during the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's annual golf day at host Evanston Golf Club in September of 1986. Below is a September 1986 letter from Peter Leuzinger to Dennis Wilson that provides some insight as to the history and origin of this award.

*Mr. Dennis Wilson, CGCS
Sunset Ridge Country Club
2100 Sunset Ridge Road
Northbrook, IL 60062*

Dear Dennis:

Thank you so much for sparking the imagination of the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation by introducing the Dom Grotti Award. Our annual ITF golf day is the perfect format to support turf research and enjoy something in common with Dom Grotti: the love for the game of golf and care for our golf courses.

Your club's gracious trophy presentation at this year's site, Evanston Golf Club, was the highlight of the day for me and my friends. The traveling trophy is a splendid treasure for anyone to win. Carl Hoppman and Terry Dillner, from Evanston Golf Club, are this year's lucky winners. I'm sure they share my thank you to Sunset Ridge Country Club and congratulations to you for following through on this year's inaugural presentation of the Dom Grotti Trophy.

*Sincerely,
Peter V. Leuzinger, CGCS
ITF Golf Day Chairman*

The Dom Grotti Award is named after Domenic Grotti. Domenic started his career at Sunset Ridge Country Club in 1933 as the assistant superintendent, earning 45 cents per hour. He became superintendent in 1940 and retired in 1978. He consulted for Dennis Wilson from 1978 to the fall of 1981. Domenic passed away in 1985.

Dennis Wilson, assistant under Domenic, was one of the first assistants to attend MAGCS meetings. Some of the superintendents would give Domenic a hard time over letting an assistant attend meetings. Dennis remembers Domenic's words, "If Dennis comes back from a meeting with one good idea THAT WORKS, then it was worth it."


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- We have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do, is play on the one thing we have complete control over and that is our attitude. Let us be convinced that life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it. Remember, we are in charge of our own attitudes.
- “If you get to thinking you’re a person of some influence, try ordering someone else’s dog around.”
- If just one person a day says to me, “You’ve made my day,” that makes MY day. 

The Dom Grotti Award . . . (continued from page 5)

The Domenic-Dennis relationship was unique to them, yet familiar to many of us who can relate it to our own mentoring experiences. It is to honor these important relationships that the Dom Grotti Award was developed. Superintendents and assistants can get away from their courses for some competition and camaraderie with their peers.

Although the competition is no longer held in conjunction with the ITF, it lives on as a highly anticipated annual event. Going forward, this event will be held during June MAGCS meetings, at a time when both assistants and superintendents can get away for a competitive round. Also, the traveling trophy has ceased to travel, taking up permanent resi-

dence at the Midwest Golf House in Lemont. The winners’ names will be added to the display trophy each year, and each winner will receive a plaque to take home. 

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