



TURFGRASS MATTERS

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2005

Volume 76, Number 4

Stewards of the Chesapeake Golf Tournament

Sparrows Point Golf Club, Baltimore, MD

August 1, 2005

Richard Sweeney, CGCS, Golf Chairman

First, I would like to thank everyone who attended the annual Stewards of the Chesapeake Tournament and Superintendent John Denholm and staff of Sparrows Point. Everyone enjoyed a great golf course and had a good time for a good cause.

Here are the results of the tournament:

Low Net Score 115 - Scott Reeside, Ed Gasper
Joe Herkalo, Jeff Tscudi

2nd place net 116 - Mike Hutchinson, Jim Black
Paul McMahan, Tom Clark

3rd place net 117 - Tim Davison, Kevin Smith
Ron Nichols, Ken McFadden

Long Drive - Ken McFadden

Closest to the Pin Holes: #2 Rick Kent
#5 Brandan O'Rourke
#4 Joe Herkalo

We hope you got a chance to join us at the MAAGCS Championship at Cross Creek Golf Club in October.

September's outing took a different angle this year with the recent events in the Gulf Coast and hurricane relief. We decided to donate a portion of proceeds from September's outing to the help our brother superintendents who lost so much. It may not have been much to give, but the thought is definitely behind it knowing that we are all thinking of them, and hope they get life back to normal soon.

Please join us this fall season for a day of comerodery and golf. If you don't play, make time to make it for lunch or dinner.

We had a great response with sponsorships as well for the event and we would like to thank all the sponsors that contributed so generously to the Chesapeake Tournament:

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President's Message

Drew Scully, CGCS

The best line I heard was that it wasn't September 22nd when the Board of Directors met last month, but rather August 53rd. Few can remember this type of year, the cool May, dry June, ...I won't rehash what we all know. We have managed to have some successful golf events through this year. Special thanks to Sparrows Point Country Club and John Denholm for a very successful Stewards of the Chesapeake tournament. Thanks also to all the participants, at one time we had almost filled the field, but Mother Nature prevailed, still it was a great day had by all and we raised a lot of money for the fund. Hurricane Katrina put life back into the proper perspective for us, dead turf is really pretty insignificant, of course that doesn't always transfer to the "decision makers" in our business. September was a fun day in conjunction with the GWGCSA, I have to credit President Jeff Van Fleet for taking the lead on that event and thanks to Nathaniel Guldseth for providing a great day of golf at Worthington Manor, you should be proud of how you came through the summer. All proceeds went to hurricane relief efforts in the affected regions. Quent Baria took on this cause personally and thanks for all of his efforts. We have one great golf event left the Annual Championship at Cross Creek hosted by Brett Post, granted it falls during a busy time for allied associations, vendors, and their tournaments, but I think we all deserve to take a few extra days and reconnect with our peers, I know everyone has their hours in for the year already. This message should be called the President's Thank You column, but the reality is that the only way these volunteer organizations survive and thrive is from a wide variety of people working for a common goal, it has been a tough year but it couldn't have been done without a little extra effort even when most of us were out of energy.



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Turfgrass Matters

Brett Post - Editor

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GCSAA comes to D.C.

Drew Scully, CGCS

The GCSAA Board of Director came to Washington D.C. in August for their quarterly meeting. The MAAGCS, ESGCSA, and VGCSA were all invited to attend part of the meeting to discuss our chapter concerns as well as some issues under consideration by the GCSAA. Theresa Baria and I attended on behalf of the MAAGCS and it was a very enlightening experience for me as I have had limited exposure to the GCSAA Board of Directors. The majority of the GCSAA senior staff was in attendance as well and they are a very professional group of men and women who truly seem to be committed to the superintendent profession. We discussed among the group several items including: meeting attendance, membership, assistant superintendent involvement, fundraising, and relationship with the GCSAA. Most issues facing the MAAGCS are universal throughout the country and I hope to follow up on several of the items we discussed with the Board of Directors as we begin to plan for 2006. There were two issue that the GCSAA Board brought up for discussion. The first was the next step in the PDI implementation which involves the "branding" of the superintendent. This means initially recognizing the members based on their classification for press releases, news stories, and cross industry promotion. The second was a little more troubling as it was initiated by the PGA of America basically developing the platform that a PGA professional is the most "qualified" person to manage a golf facility. This statement alone is worth an article for the next newsletter. Anyway, the GCSAA is considering promoting the Superintendent professional directly to the decision makers, owners, operators, etc.

This is evidenced by the GCSAA collaborating with and teaming up with the NGCOA and the CMAA going forward with combined conference and show. There are a lot of good reasons for this alliance, the GCSAA needs to do a better job explaining it to the membership. The GCSAA is still promoting the "team" approach to golf facility management, but it is beginning to explore options to give superintendents who want to move into greater management roles avenues to do so in the future. The results of the August Board meeting are available on the GCSAA web site and I'd be happy to elaborate on any issue going forward. I will revisit some of these remarks in the last newsletter of the year.



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NEWS

Scott Wagner competes in BASF People vs. Pro's tournament

Scott Wagner, superintendent at Leisure World of Maryland (Silver Spring, MD), competed in the BASF People vs. Pro Golf Tournament held September 9-12 at Barton Creek Resort and Spa in Austin, TX. Wagner, who competed in the 18-49 year old division, finished the 36 holes with a combined net of 157 placing 7th overall in the tournament and placed fifth best amongst the superintendents. He won the Mid-Atlantic GCSA qualifying tournament held at Waverly Wood G. C. on April 5, 2005.

Finch Services, Inc. Contracts with Growing Solutions, Inc.

Finch Services, Inc. recently hired Growing Solutions, Inc. (GSI) to serve as a sales agent for Finch's John Deere Golf & Turf One Source products in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, northern Virginia and eastern Pennsylvania. The One Source is a full-service platform providing a variety of products and services for golf course superintendents, owners, builders, architects and management companies. For additional information, please visit www.finchinc.com or www.growingsolutionsinc.com. Growing Solutions sale representatives are Mark Merrick, cell 410-365-9946 and Fred Heinlen, cell 410-935-8021.



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GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting Summary by Tom Ritter, CGCS

The 2005 Chapter Delegates meeting was held September 30th-October 2nd in Kansas City. The meeting, now in its 14th year, is designed as a means for GCSAA to communicate to each of the 104 affiliated chapters current programs, initiatives and policies of importance to its members. In return, it provides an opportunity for chapters to express viewpoints; ideas and concerns they may have that are relevant to the profession, the industry and the game to GCSAA. Delegates were also able to meet with GCSAA board candidates to better understand their platforms and opinions on a variety of topics.

GCSAA President Tim O'Neill, CGCS began the meeting with a State of the Association report. Topics included member compensation (exceeded target), career success, chapter effectiveness, positioning Superintendents in the industry and increasing effectiveness of GCSAA education. Targets for improvements in these areas are set high and I feel confident that GCSAA has a very detailed, well thought out plan in place to deal with each of these issues.

Marketing GCSAA Class A and certified members: The next step in implementing PDI (Professional Development Initiative) will be to execute a marketing plan for the various membership classes. GCSAA will seek to position members differently from non-members, Class A members apart from Superintendent Members, and certified in a manner distinct from non-certifieds. The goal of such a marketing campaign is to communicate the value to the marketplace, which will result in a stronger position (financially, organizationally, professionally) for GCSAA members.

Member dues pricing structure: GCSAA dues increases have typically in recent years increased by 20% every 4 years. The proposed concept is to implement a regular increase that is tied to the consumer price index. Past feedback has supported such a model because it is easier to budget for members/facilities and could stem membership drops attributed to large periodic increases. A vote on this is scheduled to occur at the 2007 GCSAA annual meeting for implementation in 2008. I'll add a personal opinion here. First a couple of facts: 1) Membership retention does decrease following the \$50 dues increase every 4 years and 2) 97% of employers pay the dues for their Superintendents. In this era of maintenance budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and higher, it is beyond me how a \$50 increase spread out over 4 years would cause a GM to tell his Super that the club would no longer pay his association dues. That is equivalent to \$1.04/month. At my club, I'm sure we throw out more stale bread every day than that. In the long run, both structures wind up only a few dollars apart 20 years down the road. I would support the new concept because ultimately it is a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other and if it eases the mind of a few owners/GM's and increases retention rates then I am all for it.

Membership growth and retention: A new plan was unveiled by staff that aims to reverse a trend of declining membership over the past 3 years. After reaching a high of 22,000-plus members in 2002, membership today stands at approximately 20,500. Increasing the GCSAA's membership ranks is important for numerous reasons. Primarily, added dues revenue allows the association to provide more programs and services to members. As important, a growing membership gives GCSAA a stronger position in the marketplace and thus able to advocate on behalf of its members more effectively. Communication with employers of non-GCSAA members is one of the new strategies being used.

Promoting diversity: GCSAA's diversity task group shared how organizations that do not embrace a diversity of people and ideas will not grow and will lose stature in the marketplace. Efforts to become more inclusive would be long term. The first step is to realize the importance of the issue and evaluate where the organization stands today.

Future of the profession: Delegates engaged in small group discussions about trends impacting the game of golf, golf facilities and golf course management profession over the next 15 years. The delegates' feedback, along with input from six GCSAA committees and/or task groups will help the board challenge its vision for the future.

Additional presentations were made to bring the delegates up to date on the chapter affiliation agreement, environmental programs, and an environmental baseline data collection program to commence in 2006.

GCSAA has 2 candidates running for the secretary/treasurer position and 5 candidates running for 2 director positions. It appears to me that all are well qualified and eager to serve. It's too soon for me to have an opinion on which candidates I think MAAGCS should support, but I am certain that there will be a lot more communication between delegates and candidates between now and the election at the GIS in February. I will learn more about the candidates in the coming months and be able to make an informed decision before the annual election.

The meeting was very well organized, intense (6:30am-9:30 pm on Saturday), and was a great opportunity for me to see first hand what a great staff GCSAA has assembled and the excellent group of Superintendents that are currently serving on the board. I want to let MAAGCS members know that I came away feeling very proud of our national association. They are very "in touch" with the many issues we deal with and are constantly striving to improve the careers/lives of its members.

BASF Honors Golf Course Superintendents at BASF 'People vs. The Pros' Golf Tournament at Barton Creek
Maryland superintendent Scott Wagner competes in tournament

BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals recognized the critical role of golf course superintendents at the BASF People vs. the Pros golf tournament, held September 9 - 12 at Barton Creek Resort and Spa in Austin, Texas.

Twenty BASF-sponsored superintendents joined nearly 200 competitors vying to play against PGA professionals Justin Leonard or Ben Crenshaw for the opportunity to win \$100,000. The top two scoring superintendents not playing against the pros competed against one another in the second annual BASF Superintendent's Cup.

Scott Wagner, superintendent at Leisure World of Maryland (Silver Spring, MD), won the Mid-Atlantic GCSA qualifying tournament held at Waverly Wood G. C. on April 5, 2005. Wagner, who competed in the 18-49 year old division, finished the 36 holes with a combined net of 157 placing 7th overall in the People vs. the Pros tournament and placed fifth best amongst the superintendents.

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News & Notes

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Class B
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Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers to Jefre Tshudi
(White Plains GC) on the death of his father.

Congratulations

To Bo Jumbercotta (Crofton CC) and his wife
Wendy on the birth of their daughter.

Bullets from the Boardroom

-The Stewards of the Chesapeake tournament that was held on August 1st at Sparrows Point Country Club was very successful. Despite the extreme heat and humidity that resulted in some last minute cancellations, 80 competitors participated and the net income for MAAGCS was approximately \$7000.00

-MAAGCS President Drew Scully and Executive Secretary Theresa Baria represented the chapter at the GCSAA Board of Directors meeting that was held on August 6th in Washington, D.C. The Mid-Atlantic received several positive comments from GCSAA regarding the services our chapter provides for it's members.