



# Tom Canete

*CEO of Canete Snow Management, Wayne, N.J.*



**Who's your mentor?** I've learned a lot through consultants. I'm currently working with Bill Pate. He owns Integrity Management. He really got us on track and doing things a little different. Another consultant I used mainly for snow is John Allin. He snow plowed the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002.

**How did this snow removal season shape up to others for your company?** We had a record year. We ended up signing MetLife Stadium, which hosted the Super Bowl. That was huge. I'm contracted to have on standby anywhere from 200 to 500 people to shovel out the stadium.

**Leading up to the game, you mentioned in an interview with LM that people tried to persuade you from taking that contract because it would affect normal business operations. Were they right?**

No. I only hired one person from my core company. Everybody else was new. I had from May until November/December to get all my ducks in a row. I hired a project manager to help. He took a big brunt of it. (Allin) actually was one of the people who told me don't take the account. He has a radio show I've been on about MetLife (listen at [buff.ly/1mUVos8](http://buff.ly/1mUVos8)). "The hero," he calls me because I pulled it off.

**How do you balance such a large commitment to snow removal amid running a landscape business (Canete Landscape & Garden Center)?**

This year, I spent a lot of time during our landscape season working on our snow company. I try to dedicate four hours a week. At the worst scenario, it's two. We don't just think about it as "the winter thing we do." It may work for some, but it causes problems for us because there are a lot of things to improve. Another thing is to always be open to other people's suggestions. You don't need to have this big ego. People that work for you, you really should listen to what they say. They're the ones working in the business while you're back overseeing things. This year, while snow was fresh in everybody's minds before we started landscaping, I had a meeting with all my people involved with snow. We ended up spending four hours on this meeting. We talked about problems this year and how to correct them. We came up with a big list of things I'm going to work on throughout the year to make sure, come November, we're ready to roll.

**With the rigid winter, did you have to deploy any new business or operational tactics?** We started having a second shift of office people for big storms. We did the same thing with drivers. These guys can push for 24 hours but when you start getting past that, they want to go home. Another problem we had was with sidewalk crews. We started getting more involved with sidewalk machines, Ventrats. We bought one and were able to take a four-man crew down to one guy.

## OFF THE CLOCK

### WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF SNOW REMOVAL?

Seeing all the equipment working. I'm an equipment junkie.

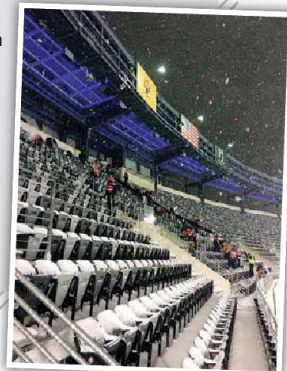
**DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES?** I'm a bodybuilder. I used to compete, not anymore, but I'm still at the gym two hours a day.

**HAVE YOU ALWAYS LIVED IN NEW JERSEY?** Born and raised here.

**DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE MOVIE?** I like the "Rocky" movies and "Gladiator."

**ARE YOU AFFILIATED WITH ANY ORGANIZATIONS?** I do a lot of speaking for the Snow & Ice Management Association (SIMA) and for the Accredited Snow Contractors Association (ASCA). I'm president of the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association (NJLCA).

MetLife Stadium



For more on Canete's Super Bowl undertaking, visit [buff.ly/RPhzDn](http://buff.ly/RPhzDn).