

RHODE ISLAND

SURF 'n' TURF

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION



Getting To Know Matt Emond By Michelle Maltais



This year's stress buster day was hosted by Superintendent Matt Emond of The Reservation GC. Perfect weather, along with a seaside picturesque setting, made for an ideal backdrop to play golf with colleagues. The event culminated with a lobster clam boil. It was the quintessential ending to a fun filled day.

A Massachusetts native, Matt grew up in Swansea with his older brother Tim, and his parents, Gerry and Gayle. "I remember growing up always following my dad on the golf course", Matt said, "My dad was a regular at Wampanoag and I would tag along and carry around a 6 iron and take every shot with that club." All that time spent golfing is a testament to his 9 handicap. He's definitely a superstar on the links, but his stardom doesn't end there. Matt attended Bishop Stang High School in Dartmouth MA, where he lettered in three sports, football, track, and baseball. A sports enthusiast, Matt considers himself an aficionado of all the Boston teams especially the Patriots and Red Sox.

After High School, Matt's father Gerry (who has been employed on the grounds crew at Fall River CC for the past 24 years) secured a summer job on the golf course for his son. "Working on the golf course that summer I knew it was something I loved and decided to major in turf management

at UMass Amherst". Following graduation, Matt secured a position at Swansea CC as an assistant. He would eventually move on to become the Superintendent at Louisquisset GC, and then as an assistant at Fall River CC. Matt refers to those years as a great learning experience. He accepted the Superintendent's position at Reservation GC in March of 2017. He enjoys the job immensely and appreciates having members who take the time to compliment him on course conditions.

A recent newlywed, Matt lives in Wareham with his wife Kim, their two sons Ben and Donovan, Cat-Phantom and Dog-Gronk (he's a Patriot's fan, of course the dog is named after Gronkowski). The family enjoys camping and spending time outdoors especially around the fire pit.

Some of his favorite trips have been to St. Thomas and the surrounding Caribbean. He recently traveled to France with his wife and said the only thing that could possibly top that trip would be one to St. Andrews. "It's on my bucket-list along with Pebble Beach". When I asked him about his first car he laughed out loud and said it was as big as a boat. A 1986 dark blue Pontiac Bonneville. Matt's idea of the perfect meal would be tacos with a margarita on the rocks and salted rim.

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President's Message

Dear Members,

Well that was quite the summer. I hope everyone is enjoying some of this not cool but cooler weather.

I would like to thank Brooks Pickering from Thorny Lea, Matt Emond from Reservation and Simon Harootian from Meadow Brook for hosting meetings and golf. Each event was a wonderful day of golf and camaraderie. Simon did not let the rain interrupt the championship.

If you find some time as the weather cools down to attend some meetings please do so. The association needs your support to exist into the future. I know we keep saying this but you will get a lot out of talking to your peers and seeing all the wonderful golf courses around Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. Also if anyone has an interest in joining the Board of Directors in the future please contact me or someone currently on the board. We need more superintendents to get involved.

And finally, I am looking forward to the fall schedule starting with the Scholarship and Research Tournament being hosted by Patrick Meehan at Warwick Country Club on October 1st. Also the meetings at Newport Country Club and Louisquisset Golf Club are great ways to end the season.

Thank you
Chris Coen
RIGCSA President



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RIGCSA Meeting - June 12th - Pawtucket Country Club



RIGCSA Meeting - August 12th - Reservation Country Club





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In the golf course maintenance industry, we often look back to see how far we have come. Completed projects, course upgrades, and changes in techniques that may have made marked improvements on the property are often learning experiences and successes to be proud of. With my role as field staff, I don't

have far back to look having finished my sixth year this spring, looking back can recharge my interest in an old topic.

Newsletters in the spring of 2014 highlighted the question: "Are you hiding from positive feedback?" This was a look at contact information for the golf course superintendent available through the facility website. If a colleague was going to visit your course, could they find your information? If someone wanted to pay you a compliment, is your information readily available? Those questions were posed in the original content as well.

I did utilize a non-scientific study, randomly selecting superintendent's names from chapter directories, researching facility websites and found some eye-opening results. Now, four and a half years later, has anything changed?

Quick recap of the 2014 results:

I looked up five members randomly from three chapters (Rhode Island, Cape Cod, New England), and went to their facility's website. I looked for a mention of the superintendent and direct contact information. I found that the superintendent was mentioned by name on seven of 15 websites. I also found three of the 15 had direct contact information for the superintendent. Surprising? In addition, four websites had direct contact information for multiple staff members, but not the superintendent!

For 2018, I selected five members randomly utilizing three chapter directories (GCSA of New England, Connecticut AGCS, and New Hampshire GCSA) and scoured the facility website for information similar to the prior study. Was the superintendent mentioned at all, was there direct contact information, and were other staff members information available on the site. The results, broken down this time by chapter, were shocking.

Four of the five GCSANE samples had no mention or contact information for the superintendent at all! Of the four with no contact, two had contact information for multiple staff members. One facility had contact information for all staff, including the superintendent.

The CAGCS results were even worse. One of the five superintendents had their name listed on the staff directory, but no contact information. The rest of the staff contacts were listed. That was the only information regarding the superintendent found anywhere

among the five samples. As it happens, two facilities utilized the same management company and the websites were nearly identical. They didn't recognize any staff member at all.

One facility researched in the NHGCSA samples had staff bios and contact information for all key staff, superintendent and assistant included. Of the four remaining websites, not one mentioned or had contact information for the superintendent. All four had contact information for other staff members.

GCSAA continues to promote the profession at the national level by partnering with allied associations, social media, and strategic television buys. It's a daunting task, but like politics, promoting the profession needs to start at the local level. Your chapter continues to work hard to advocate on your behalf. Ensuring the golf course superintendent is recognized as a key contributor to the success of your facility in any way possible assists in that promotional effort. Is the golf course superintendent listed in the contacts on your facility website?

My "Open" Experience

It's a catchy title and I think it tells a lot about volunteering at large-scale golf events. Since my very first volunteering experience at the U.S. Junior Amateur at the Golf Club of New England in 2012, I have come to learn that your experience is exactly what you make of it. I have also learned that every event offers different opportunities. The 118th United States Open at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club was my twelfth-time volunteering, fifth major. I'd like to tell you a little about my Open and how the people involved really shaped my experience.

Volunteer orientation was scheduled for 5pm on Sunday June 10th, almost exactly one week before the 118th US Open champion would be crowned. Our host, Mr. Jon Jennings, addressed the group and noted that out of 600 volunteer applicants, we nearly 200 were selected. He was extremely gracious in thanking everyone for taking the time away from family and out of their busy lives to assist in preparing the golf course for our nations championship. This was a standard Jennings set, and referenced every time he spoke to the volunteers. It was clear that he sincerely meant it.

He referred to the volunteer handbook several times, a spiral bound wealth of information including photos of senior staff, uniforms by day, food menu, and a list of volunteers including the clubs they represented.

Jennings praised at length the work of assistant superintendent Lindsay Brownson who, with office manager Anna Alvarez, coordinated the application process, travel, housing, uniforms, food, and probably a million other items for the 200 volunteers. Brownson's efforts were outstanding and, despite any issues that may have arisen, appeared seamless.

The work on the golf course operated like a well-oiled machine. Thanks to the patience of the regular Shinnecock Hills staff, 200 newcomers figured out our duties, the course layout, and gained the understanding of our roles. Just like the players, it takes a couple practice rounds. My tasks were mowing fairways 10-18 in the morning, and filling fairway divots in the afternoon. Both great opportunities to develop as a team and watch the process unfold around us (@HoosicGrounds all mowing is like riding a bike, you never forget how to do it). Thanks to Diamond sponsor Toro, there was more than 15 trailer loads of red equipment working hard with the volunteers. Platinum sponsor BASF provided food and other amenities to get 200 folks through a grueling summer week too. Quite an impressive gift by them and our thanks will always go out to every sponsor for assisting!

But again, as with every other volunteer opportunity before this, it was indeed the people who made the event special. From every corner of the US, Canada, Ireland, and elsewhere across the globe, turf professionals gathering to prepare one singular reason builds a bond that we will all share for a lifetime. Old friends and volunteers from previous events were on hand. An assistant-in-training from my days at the US Amateur, chatting with a bunker buddy volunteer from the 2013 Women's Open helped remember old times. I was even fortunate to fill divots with the superintendent and his daughter from Sebonack where that Women's Open was held. I made a new friend from Canada who went to school with Will Stearns of Southers Marsh, hung out and worked with my new mates from Ireland, and caught up with a member and the grounds staff at Citi field, home of the NY Mets.

Connecting with GCSANE members and others from across my region helped make a challenging process extremely fulfilling. We have many opportunities in our immediate area to get involved with two recent US Senior Opens, a US Amateur, the CVS Charity Classic and a regular PGA playoff tour stop in our neighborhood. I urge you

to take the opportunity, at least one time, to commit yourself to one of these events if only one time. These events are as special as all the people who make them happen. I think they even played some golf there too?

GCSAA Resources and Deadlines you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already

GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards



Presented by GCSAA and Golf Digest in partnership with Syngenta, the Environmental Leaders

in Golf Awards recognize golf course superintendents and golf courses around the world for their commitment to environmental stewardship.

Introducing the new ELGAs

The ELGAs have been updated to recognize more superintendents in more focused areas of environmental sustainability. The

new ELGAs are based on the environmental best management practices that GCSAA recommends all courses utilize.

New for 2018, there are now four ELGAs available:

- Natural Resource Conservation Award
- Healthy Land Stewardship Award
- Communications and Outreach Award
- Innovative Conservation Award

There will be one winner and two runners-up recognized for each award. GCSAA members may apply to one, two, three or all four awards in a single year. However, an individual can only win one award per year. Applications will open Aug. 1-Sept. 30, 2018. All applicants will be notified by December whether or not they have been selected as a winner. Winners will be recognized at the Golf Industry Show.

EXCEL Leadership Program Funded by Nufarm

The Excel Leadership Program offers leadership training for personal, career, and community/industry stewardship for assistant superintendents; the future leaders in the golf course management industry.

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The program

The EXCEL Leadership Program features two, two-day education and training sessions and a trip to the annual Golf Industry Show for assistant golf course superintendents. The education and travel for 2018 includes:

- Golf Industry Show, Feb. 3-8 in San Diego, Calif.
- Spring Meeting, TBD, at GCSAA headquarters, Lawrence, Kan.
- Fall Meeting, TBD, at Nufarm, Chicago

Eligibility

To be considered, a GCSAA Class C member must complete the application and respond to two pre-selected essay questions. Up to 12 assistant superintendents will be selected for this opportunity to develop their leadership skills over a three-year period.

Applicants must be:

- Currently employed as an assistant golf course superintendent within the United States (including Alaska and Hawaii) or Canada.
- A Class C member of GCSAA
- Able to participate for three full years
- Not be working for current members of the GCSAA Board of Directors or EIFG Board of Trustees, children of GCSAA or Nufarm staff, or current employees of those organizations.

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Kevin Doyle
GCSAA Field Staff
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Lightning Protection for Golf Courses

By Matt Faherty, Winterberry Irrigation

With the latest storms that pased through our state, I thought that future consideration should be addressed as to if your course has adequate “Surge Protection”.

Acting as an antenna on which surges of electricity travel with little resistance, an irrigation system’s wiring-not unlike office or home-equipment wiring-is susceptible to lightning-based surges. The costly repairs and loss of productivity associated with surge damage to an office’s computer network also applies to golf courses when lightning strikes. Most losses with the irrigation systems are with electrical controllers, satellites, valves and sprinklers, but well-pumps - affecting turf quality by interrupting finely tuned watering schedules. Though it is unusual for lightning to knock out an entire system, even small repairs are a setback for courses competing to attract a finite number of players. This may mean that superintendents are unable to irrigate part or, sometimes, all of their courses during critically dry periods. For this reason, several lightning countermeasures are available to protect your irrigation systems and your courses competitive edge.

The better the system is grounded, the better chance equipment will last longer. Superintendents should have ground rods checked every year, cleaning and tightening the clamps and to perform a

Megger test on the ground rods. This ground insulation, or Megger test, calculates the resistance of the insulation, a measure of its condition.

It is important that both the controller and the surge arrestors are grounded to ground rods or plates with less than 10 ohms resistance however, a range of 11 to 30 ohms still means there is good grounding protection. When the resistance of the soil is above 30 ohms, this indicates poor grounding. You’ll need to take improvement steps. At minimum, the grounding circuit for controllers will include a copper clad steel ground rod, or copper ground plate.

Copper ground rods should be driven into the ground at a location 8 to 10 feet from the equipment or wires connected to it, at right angles to the two-wire path.. Install all grounding circuit components in straight lines. When it is necessary to make bends, do not make sharp turns.

Copper grounding plate assemblies intended for grounding applications should be attached to (using an approved welding process) to a 25-foot continuous length (no splices allowed unless using exothermic welding process) of 6 AWG solid bare copper wire.

If ledge rock or rocky conditions prevent driving rods, lay the rods or No. 8 wire in a straight trench. A copper plate to be buried in an irrigated area near the controller location. Install the copper plate in a trench three to four feet deep. Backfill with good top soil and two 50 lb. bags of Ground Enhancement Material (GEM) on top and bottom.

Have the resistance checked annually. The most effective time to test resistance is during a dry spell prior to the lightning season. The lightning season is when we need the best possible surge protection and grounding system.

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RIGCSA Member News

Welcome New Members:

Tim Hanrahan, Affiliate, WinField

David Masterson, Superintendent, Ledgemont CC

Michael Poch, Superintendent, Foxborough CC

Congratulations to **Vinnie Iacono** and **Dana** who got married on September 2nd.

Our condolences are extended to **Arthur Tella** and family on the passing of Arthur's mother, **Helen Tella**, who passed away on July 31st. Arthur is the superintendent at Cranston Country Club.

We are looking for a host for the 2019 Scholarship & Research Tournament. If you are interested in hosting this yearly event, please contact **Richard Lombardi** (401) 486-4900.

Congratulations to **Kirk A. Whiting, CGCS** on his retirement from Sakonnet Golf Club. Below is a photo with the RIGCSA members in attendance at the party given to Kirk by Sakonnet Golf Club.



On Saturday, September 8th, RIGCSA members **Mike Varkonyi** (Superintendent at Louisquisset Golf Club) and Brian Giblin (Sales Representative for Bayer) joined **Tony DeJesus** on the Big Blue Bug radio show on 630 WPRO-AM. They discussed proper pesticide usage and storage for home owners. They also answered questions from callers.



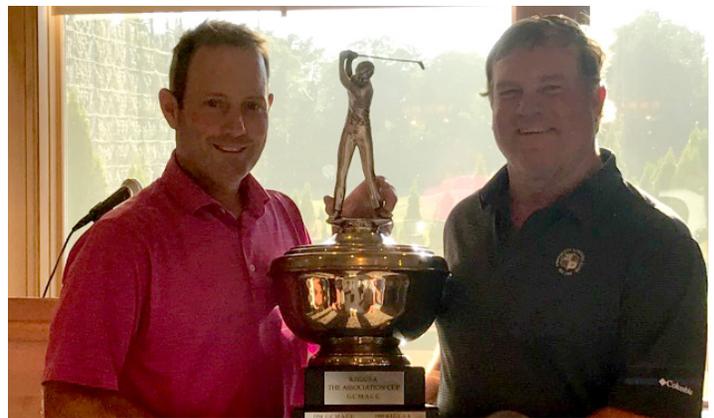
Tournament Results

Rho-Cod Cup Tournament
July 9, 2018–Thorny Lea Golf Club
RIGCSA wins cup back

1st Gross – Patrick Meehan & Garrett Whitney – 70
2nd Gross – Kurt Calderwood & Ed Gianni – 72

1st Net – Keith Tortorella & Richard Lombardi – 60
2nd Net – Alden Tallman & Stu Tallman – 62
3rd Net – Ed Downing & Ernie Ketchum–63

Pictured below: GCSACC Treasurer Ed Gianni, CGCS with RIGCSA President Chris Coen



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