

FOREGROUND

VOL. 57 NO. 3 Published by Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association August 2020

Chris Strehl, GCS

to host

August Meeting

8/17/2020



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Association Motto

To promote interest and good will in the Association, encourage good relations between members and the clubs they represent.... And to keep up with the current developments in turf and related work.....

Bill Smart

HVGCSA Mission Statement

The Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association exists to inform, educate and serve members within the Hudson Valley and surrounding areas.



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President's Message



I would like to start off by thanking Vince Barnaba and the staff at The Powelton Club for pulling off a successful Hudson Valley Cup. They stepped up to the challenge amongst the obstacles of the weather and COVID. The golf course was in amazing shape and was a pleasure to play. We had a great turn out and I appreciate the support from our members and sponsors. Congratulations to Brian Bontemps' team on winning the cup as well as all the other winners.

I would also like to thank Ben Babbage and the staff at Storm King for once again orchestrating a great Nine and Dine social event. The course was in great shape and was a lot of fun. Notably our members and sponsors gave us a great turn out.

For those of you who did not hear that our friend & fellow member Glen Dube from Centennial GC suffered a stroke recently, and from my understanding he is presently in rehab and is expected to make a full recovery. Glen is a great guy and we wish him the best!



Be aware of Red "Gotcha" Hewitt! I need to warn everyone about playing a match for money against Red. In a recent round of golf, he challenged me to a friendly match for \$100 and he took my money. The round started with Red saying, "BUT, since you're so much better than me you have to give me two Gotchas". I asked him what that was? "Don't worry," Red replied, "I'll use one of my 'Gotchas' on the first tee. I figured giving up two 'Gotchas' wasn't a big deal, especially if he was giving one up on the first tee. What is the 'Gotcha' you ask? So, as I took my club back on the first tee and started my down swing, what happened next I can't say, you know being president I have to watch my p's & q's. Red then yelled 'Gotcha!' Needless to say he didn't have to use his second one. I hope everyone had a little chuckle with that one. I thought you could do with a laugh especially in the midst of the year from hell.

Our next meeting is at the Links on Monday, August 17th. I hope to see you then.

Chris Kemble

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Hudson Valley News of Interest:

By: Kevin Collins



It looks as if the “Battle of the Hives” is shaping up. There’s been a lot of yack going back and forth between two of the **Hudson Valley’s preeminent bee keepers, Chris Strehl and Grover Lee Alexander**, regarding the quality of the honey produced at each course. “Grover couldn’t make good honey if you drew him a map”, Chris remarked, “Grover’s honey tastes like sh#t”. When I conveyed to Grover what Chris said, he shot back, “That’s rich coming from a guy who’s bees haven’t made it through the winter once. Young bees make crap honey. He thinks my honey tastes like sh#t? Well, I think his honey tastes like crap”! Well, there you have it. I think it’s time for a honey “Throw-down”.

Murphy, Haworth CC’s course dog, had a little setback in his recovery from the Lely spreader accident at the course. Superintendent Tim Garceau was bringing Murphy to the course to see the crew to cheer him up and he fell out the window of Tim’s car on the NYS Thruway. Murphy is okay. He’s wearing a body cast and is expected to recover. Tim has him resting comfortably on an inversion table at his Warwick home.



Garrison GC’s Jeff Newell made his acting debut last Friday night at the club as Claudius in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. A local critic from the Garrison Times reported that Jeff’s performance was a little shaky and that he forgot many of his lines and slurred his words. When this was brought to Jeff’s attention he ruefully admitted that he was a little nervous and had a few drinks prior to the production. During the 2nd act he addressed Hamlet as “Shamlet”. The production is back this coming Friday and Jeff has been demoted to playing Ophelia’s man servant. He has no lines.

Bayer’s Dave Sylvester was stripped of his “Top Chef” honor at the recent “Old Saybrook Seafood Festival” when it was discovered that he used canned clams in his Baked Clams in Lobster Sauce recipe. Canned clams are known in the cooking competition world as “faux clams” and are a big no-no. Dave had no comment.



This is a humungous shout out to **Centennial GC’s Glen Dube**.
Get well soon, my young brother!!!





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BOARD OF DIRECTORS CORNER

2020: What the...!??



If there was ever a season, I could not wait for to end, it is this year. Normally as we get into August, we can start to see the light at the end of the tunnel - Penn State football is 4 weeks

away. However the 2020 golf season has been unlike any other we have experienced - the winter that never really happened, the COVID-19 pandemic, the post-COVID staffing challenges, the wild weather rollercoaster, the overplayed golf courses, the tired/worn out staff, and lastly - because 2020 won't go out with a whimper - the recent damage and destruction from Tropical Storm Isaias. God only knows what is next...I am not so sure I really want to find out. Can't we just close out 2020 and welcome 2021 with wide open arms??

None of us who attended the Golf Industry Show in Orlando in January could ever have anticipated what was about to become the new normal. Despite all the news reports about COVID spreading across the globe it did not really hit home for me until Westchester County, where I live and work, became the epicenter of COVID in March. Suddenly we were wearing masks and bartering toilet paper for Clorox wipes. As COVID continued to spread across the Hudson Valley, I kept hearing stories of clubs with employees and members being stricken with the virus.

However, while the virus was spreading rapidly, golf became a necessity for people who had binge watched everything possible on Netflix and were sick of Zoom meetings. Golf became a savior of

sorts for people who needed some sense of normalcy in their life which had been completely turned upside down.

In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, courses like mine initiated stringent cleaning and disinfecting practices and enforced social distancing of employees. Staff were assigned carts, blowers, mowers, and hand tools that stayed in their carts, and we created staggered schedules to keep staff distanced from each other. And the golfers - they came to the courses in droves. Players wore masks, carried their own bags, and walked the courses sometimes multiple times per day. Tees on short par fours and par threes were decimated with divots and I was not even upset about it! Members and guests were simply happy to have an outlet for activity and we were proud to be able to provide them with that in these uncertain times. (Although by August it seemed that a sliver of normalcy had returned as I started to hear grumblings about the rough being too long or the greens too fast).

Operationally we are still short staffed, but superintendents are set up to succeed in times like these as we are efficient and organized managers. For example, at my course, we moved up spring aerification in case we got shutdown. Interestingly enough, even with a smaller staff this season, I think we were farther ahead in terms of maintenance heading into the summer because every one of my staff pitched in and did what had to be done. The crew was phenomenal and were all thankful to still be working. We even got all our lateral valve boxes cleared off for the first time!

Mother nature did not help the cause either. Here in the Hudson Valley we had a mild winter,

Continued....page 17

HVGCSA August Meeting



The Links at Union Vale

August 17, 2020

Host : Chris Strehl, GCS

\$120

Price Includes:

18-Holes, Cart
Lunch/Dinner

Registration: 11:00

Lunch: 11:00 - 11:45

Golf Shotgun: 12:00

Dinner: 5:00



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The Links @ Unionvale

Our meeting site on the 17th was once a farm owned by the late Karl Ehmer, the “King of Quality Meats”. With the farm being acquired by the Irish Golf Association (IGA) in the mid-nineties, this Stephen Kay “links” style design began construction in 1998 under the watchful eye of the Burton F. Clark Company. The course opened for play in June of 2000. It's not an easy layout to score on, playing some 6,900 yards from the championship tees. One hundred and three bunkers dot the course with beautiful native areas framing the distinctive rolling fairways. There is not a lot of primary rough and the wind blows all the time. There are some very challenging holes to conquer. The 15th is a 460 yard par 4 with out-of-bounds left and #14 is a monster par 5 measuring 603 yards in length. It's going to be a fun round!!

Superintendent Chris Strehl

Chris began his career as an intern at Ridgewood CC after graduating with a four year degree in Plant Science from SUNY Cobleskill. When he finished his indoctrination at the Ed Walsh Military Academy and Charm School, Chris left for a stint at Orange County CC to work with another Walsh alumnus, Tim Garceau.

In 1998 Chris was hired by the IGA to grow in the “Links”. 2020 marks Chris's 22nd year at the golf course. Despite the challenges of the current golf economy and a tight budget, Chris manages to keep the “Links” in great shape. Notwithstanding having a small crew to care for this huge property, Chris carries on with a fearsome determination. That's just the way Chris rolls, he keeps plugging away and moving forward. No excuses!!

The best thing that ever happened in Chris' life is his soulmate Debbie. Debbie and Chris tied the knot in 2004. Together they have built quite a life. The Strehl clan includes Jack, Anna, and Joseph.

Kevin Collins (2016)

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Hudson Valley Cup Recap.....



Brian Bontemps & Dan Coughlin
accepting the award for their team

It was wonderful to get the season started at The Powelton Club for our 2020 HV Cup Tournament. With all the has been going on with the COVID and it's restrictions we weren't sure if it was going to happen. To say the least, it's a bit nerve racking to run an event under the circumstances. The day went great with everyone doing their best to social distance but still have fun. To make the day more interesting we did get a storm that blew in around dinner time. But all in all it was a great day and we are thankful that everyone made it home safely.

I can't say enough good things about The Powelton Club staff. Especially, Chris Diesing, Club Manager, & Charlie Poole, Club Pro for doing a GREAT job under difficult con-

ditions. To top it off The Powelton Club President, Michael Waters and the Golf Chairman, Vincent Cestaro donated \$400 to our open bar.

Course: Many thanks to Vince Barnaba for doing a spectacular job in preparing the course for our event. Everyone commented on it's great condition and how much they enjoyed playing it.

Congratulations to our 2020 HV Cup winners: **Brian Bontemps**, Noble Turf, **Mike Aube**, Osiris GC, **Dan Coughlin**, Trump Nat'l GC Westchester & **David Clarke**, Silo Ridge Club.

Winners:

1st - Brian Bontemps, Mike Aube, Dan Coughlin & David Clarke (Net 51) **match of cards

2nd - Josh Kopera, Jason Werbalowsky, Rob Bressler & Rob Capecelatro (Net 51)

3rd - Jeff Newell, Chris Dyroff, Scott Estey & Tim Donnery (Net 52)

Closest to Pin: Hole # 16 - Brett Belden (4'7") | Hole # 3 - Brian Bontemps (3'11")

Longest Drive: Alex Tanea (Team Beekman)

Congratulations to all the raffle winners....there's too many to list. This year we didn't have time to order our HVGCSA logo gift that we always give to all participants, instead we used the money we budgeted to purchased prizes at the pro shop and raffle them off.

A special thanks to our HV Cup Platinum sponsors - **Grass Roots** - **Harrell's** - **Metro Turf Specialists** - **Site One** - **Westchester Turf Supply**, our beverage cart sponsor **Plant Food** and all our Tee Sponsors. Their continued support is what makes our association strong.

I also got to say thanks to our Par 3 gal, my niece **Emer O'Dowd** that offered to help out at the last minute. She said it fun watching golfers hit their balls all over the place, some in the bunkers, some ricocheting off the trees, some made it over the road behind the green, and there was a few that made it on the green. We made a couple of bucks on that hole that will go to our 2020 scholarships recipients.

Susan O'Dowd

Hudson Valley Cup at The Powelton Club







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NINE & DINE @ STORM KING RECAP

We could not have asked for a more beautiful location to hold our Nine & Dine event. What a gem Storm King Golf Club is! A quaint 9-hole course with a lovely welcoming clubhouse nestled in the scenic part of the Hudson Valley area. Ben Babbage and his assistant had the course in excellent condition.

48 Members & guests were treated to a fun round of golf, great food and hanging out with friends on the patio. Thanks to Ben Babbage and the Storm King staff for going above and beyond to make our event a memorable one.

Since this was a social event and not a “serious” round of golf, the most of us were just out there banging the ball around the course for fun, but we did have a few participants that played well. Congrats to Blake Halderman for his eagle on hole#2. We only gave out prizes for low gross winners.

Low Gross Winners: Tied*

Blake Halderman & Kevin Ludwig (37)

Honorable Mention:

Dave Lippman (38)

Scott Estey (39)

Ian Bray (39)

Raffle Winners: Rob Capecelatro & Ryan Avery

Many thanks to our meeting sponsors for their continued support.

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Thank You!

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that donated a round

We raised \$1581.00 for the association

Chris Strehl, The Links at Union Vale
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Chris Kemble, McCann Memorial GC
Steve Spontak, Beekman Golf Course
Tim Walker, Leewood Golf Club
Dan Wilber, Millbrook Golf & Tennis Club
Jon Ferruccio, Mahopac Golf Club
Mike McCall, Putnam Golf Course

Upcoming Events

August Meeting

The Links at Union Vale
August 17, 2020

September Meeting

Mansion Ridge Golf Club
September 28, 2020

NINE & DINE @ STORM KING



2020: What the...!!??...cont'd

followed by a June drought, and an early summer filled with prolonged heat and humidity, sporadic downpours, and more heat and humidity. Then to top it off – we got a visit from Tropical Storm Isaias which left many trees down, flooding, and prolonged power outages. Hats off to everyone who cleaned up golf courses and managed post-storm heat without electricity to run irrigation systems. As I said before, superintendents figure out how to get it done! After 5 days without power, I felt pure joy when I got a text message from ConEd saying my power at home had been restored! However, the joy was somewhat short-lived as another heat wave set-in and I have diagnosed basal rot anthracnose and Pythium root rot on a few greens. What the #@*\$ is next??

So, what is next? We have four more weeks until Labor Day...wow! It feels like this season will never pass. For our club, September is a busy golf month. We have a member-member tournament on Labor Day weekend, followed by three weeks of Club Championships, our annual Bambino Cup, and the Eastchester Town's Cup. With aerification scheduled for later in October and the potential to continue our in-house bunker renovation to pick back up in November, where are the snowflakes and frost delays??

To all the members of the Hudson Valley, hats off for a great job and all the best to wrapping this wild season up healthy and successful! I am not sure what 2021 will bring, but whatever it is, we will be ready.

*Tim Walker, CGCS
Leewood Golf Club*

Welcome New Members

Class B

Matt Kerens

Paramount Country Club

Class B

Brian O'Malley

River Vale Country Club

Get Well Wishes

Our prayers go out to
Glen Dube, Centennial GC
for a speedy recovery.
We miss you!!

Welcome Back!!

John Garger, Jr.

Was at Putnam GC
now at Winding Hills GC



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RESCHEDULED ROUNDS 4 RESEARCH AUCTION SELLS OUT OF ALL ROUNDS

by Aug 04, 2020 | Kate Hiebert

National program has raised more than \$1.7 million since 2012

Lawrence, Kan. (Aug. 4, 2020) -- The 2020 Rounds 4 Research fundraising program to support turfgrass studies, administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG), sold out of all 997 rounds of donated golf and yielded nearly \$265,000 in its July online auction, marking the first time all rounds were sold since the program launched in 2012. The EIFG is the philanthropic organization of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

The auction was originally scheduled for April 27-May 3 but was postponed to July 20-26 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. And while the number of rounds donated and the amount of total funds raised were also affected by the pandemic, the results of the re-scheduled auction show the game and program remain popular.

Click [HERE](#) for full story



Golf Industry Show shifts to virtual format for 2021

Watch this video message from GCSAA President John R. Fulling Jr., CGCS, as he announces the change to the 2021 GIS. In addition to the education, trade show and special events that will take place on the virtual platform the first week of February, attendees will also have the option to view or review all the content for an extended period after the show concludes. Registration opens Oct. 13. Visit the GCSAA website for more details.

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