

# FOREGROUND

VOL. 60 NO. 2 Published by Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association May 2023

***Mahopac Golf Club  
to host the HV Cup  
May 22, 2023***





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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 can't believe Memorial Day is 2 weeks away. This spring has been quite the roller coaster with temperature swings and moisture swings as well. We are still drying out a few areas that have been wet since the big rainy week we had yet throwing water around everywhere else. The turf doesn't know if it's time to wake up or go to sleep.

We had a great turnout at River Vale Country Club for our April meeting. Big thank you to Brian O'Malley for hosting. I'm certain everyone will agree it was a treat to play. Now, we turn our attention to the Hudson Valley Cup at Mahopac. I am sure Jon Ferruccio and the Mahopac team will have another great day for us. Only hoping the weather will be better and I can keep my putts on the green!

I heard Dan Wilber hosted a First Green event and it was a success. If anyone is interested in hosting one of these events for children, please reach out to Kevin Doyle from GCSAA or I am sure Dan will be happy to give pointers.

It's been a busy spring season thus far and I know everyone has been busy getting their golf course properties into full swing. I look forward to seeing everyone at Mahopac.

All the best,

Tim

## BIG TICKET GIVEAWAY....TRIP TO GIS 2024

### Criteria:

1. Must be active within the Association.
2. Must be a Class A, B, or CGCS member of the Hudson Valley and be in good standing.
3. Have not attended the GIS within the past 5 years.
4. Must submit a brief essay as to how the trip to GIS will benefit you and your facility.

Due by September 30, 2023

5. Must submit a written article outlining your experience at GIS for the Foreground Newsletter.

\*Winner will be chosen by the Board of Directors.

\*The chosen candidate will not be eligible for another 5 years.

### Package Includes:

- ♦ Full Conference Registration
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## Mahopac Golf Club to Host the HV Cup Fundraiser

*By: Kevin Collins*

On Monday May 22nd, Superintendent Jon Ferruccio and the Mahopac Golf Club will host the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Hudson Valley Cup tournament.

It's the HCGCSA's premiere fundraising event for scholarships and turfgrass research. This tournament was the brainchild of long time and now retired HVGCSA member Dan Madar and it's still going strong. Last October the Worthington Cup was held at Mahopac GC and the HVGCSA loved the experience. It wasn't too hard a choice to come back to this amazing facility.

### **Mahopac Golf Club:**

The origins of Mahopac Golf Club date back to 1893 when famed Scottish architect Thomas Bendelow designed a short 6-hole golf course on the east shore of Lake Mahopac. Five years later, the Mahopac Golf Club was born.

The course moved to the north shore of the lake in 1900 as a 9-hole, 2730-yard layout. In 1913, famed architect Devereux Emmet was brought in to expand the course to 18 holes.

Playing to a healthy 6523 yards, the course is characterized by its well bunkered greens and varied hole designs where a premium is placed on golf course management and shot-making abilities. You will use every club in your bag on this layout.

In 2004, architect Ken Dye was brought in to renovate certain aspects of the course. Bunkers were redone, new tees were built, and water features were rerouted.

In 2006, the club renovated their lakefront property and now boast a private beach as part of its offerings.



### **Jon Ferruccio:**

Jon grew up in Somers, NY. Jon's dad John worked in the turfgrass industry selling equipment. Jon remembers his intro to what became his future calling,

"When I was 16 years old and school was over for the year, I was really looking forward to the summer and fooling around and having fun," Jon recalled, "My dad's first stop every morning was Mahopac Golf Club. My summer plans went out the window when my dad informed me that I'd be working at Mahopac that summer on the crew."

After Mahopac, Jon worked at Putnam Golf Course for Rob Steinman. Future superintendents Steve Spontak and Doug George were also on that crew.

In 1994, Jon returned to Mahopac to work for Scott Ferguson. That lasted until 1997 when Jon made a fateful decision.

*Continued.....page 17*



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# First Green at Millbrook G & T

The Millbrook Golf and tennis Club hosted its second annual First Green field trip on May 11<sup>th</sup>. It was a picture-perfect day that saw 65 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from the Alden Place Elementary School take part in an outdoor STEM learning lab. Add in parents/chaperones, teachers, volunteers, and the entire (and when I say entire, I mean all the departments at our club) staff at MGT, and we had about 90 participants for the day making it a huge success.



The kids walked through five stations:

1. Equipment and a putting contest
2. Cool Tools and Measuring
3. Bees and Pollinators
4. Water Quality/Irrigation/Pond Life
5. Soils and Cup Cutting

The hands-on experience is second to none. Not only did we show the group what we're all about, but we also exposed them to a potential career path which

they may have not known before. It can also be a valuable showcase to the community of how we are better protectors of our properties than most would assume. If any of you are thinking of hosting a First Green trip at your property, please contact me and I'd be happy to walk you through it. It really is a rewarding experience for all that are involved. A huge thank you to our industry volunteers:

Kevin Doyle, Ryan Avery, Dave Lippman, Tony DeBonis, and Mike Weber for without them, we would not be able to host and/or educate the kids as well as we do.

Dan Wilber





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# GCSAA MEMBER RESOURCES & BENEFITS

By Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Field Staff

When I started this Field Staff position at the WNGCSA-FLAGCS education event in March of 2012, the mention of GCSAA often led to a phrase “all I get is a magazine.” My response generally was to ask if the magazine was really good, and to let them know that now they had a resource in me. I want to touch on my efforts to directly deliver GCSAA resources to you the members and do my best to highlight the many resources available to you and working for you daily. Because this is such a long list that includes member, local association, and national level benefits, this segment will include only member benefits. Future newsletters will cover additional opportunities!

All these resources and efforts are specifically designed to achieve the mission of your national association:

## GCSAA Mission

*GCSAA is dedicated to serving its members, advancing their profession and improving communities through the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf.*

So here now entering year twelve, I now have nearly 1500 contacts in my phone, made hundreds of site visits, attended countless chapter events, written dozens of newsletter articles, volunteered at 16 events, and have advocated for our great industry in many of my regional states and have attended National Golf Day in D.C for the third time this May. If I haven't been a resource to you yet, lets connect and fix that! Please reach out or see me at one of the many HVGCSA events I will attend.

## Resources for Members

\*In 38 states GCSAA members have access to health insurance. NY only allows for their own state-run insurance programs, and/or have certain state limitations, do not allow outside parties to offer options within the state so the GCSAA opportunity is not available to you

\*GCSAA provides free life insurance and AD&D (accidental death & dismemberment) as a part of your

membership. The coverage is provided by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MetLife) and administered by USI Affinity. Be sure you have designated a beneficiary (form [here](#) if needed). Eligibility and benefits can be found [here](#).

\*GCSAA has partnered with trusted companies (listed to the right) to offer exclusive savings on a variety of personal and professional products. If you haven't looked into these opportunities, you should! Specifics are located [here](#).

\*Jump start your career advancement and discuss your individual situation and goals with career services' Erin Wolfram, CPRW. Wolfram is a certified professional resume writer who specializes in the golf course maintenance industry. Services offered to GCSAA members are free to reduced fee including customized and successful resume services and career coaching resources to help you rise above the competition in the turf industry.



Continued...page 11

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## GCSAA MEMBER RESOURCES & BENEFITS....CONT'D

\*Free webinars.

\*Access to mountains of information, including Michigan State's TGIF library database, BMP resources, operation reports and surveys (including compensation and benefit surveys), member forums to learn from your peers, and more.

\*In 2006, in reaction to Hurricane Katrina, the association established the GCSAA Disaster Relief Fund to assist GCSAA members who suffered personal loss. The fund has continued to be a resource for members who face tragedy caused by natural disasters.

\*As a benefit of membership, GCSAA members enjoy complimentary admission to designated golf events. The tournament benefits linked [here](#) are to be used as a general guideline. If you'd like to enjoy the upcoming PGA Championship at Oak Hill or the Women's PGA Championship at Baltusrol, your GCSAA membership may allow that to happen!

So is GCSAA more than just a magazine....you tell me!

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

Kevin Doyle

GCSAA Field Staff

[kdoyle@gcsaa.org](mailto:kdoyle@gcsaa.org)

### PGA of America

Complimentary grounds admission is extended to all Class AA, A, A-Retired, Class B, Class B-Retired, C and C-Retired members, and accompanying spouse/partner or guest (limit one). To gain access into these Championships, GCSAA members must show their current gold membership card and a photo ID at the Admission Sales & Will Call office located at the main spectator entrance. GCSAA members must park in public parking and take the complimentary shuttle to the Admission Gate.



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# Hudson Valley News of Interest:

By: Kevin Collins



\*Haworth CC super Tim Garceau gazes longingly at HVGCSA legend Bob DeMarco teeing off at a recent tournament held at The Patterson Club. It was this exact moment that Tim realized two undeniable truths. Tim would never have Bob's textbook swing. And he would never have a head of hair that even approaches Bob's iconic mane.



\*On a recent visit to Florida, Southern Dutchess super Jeff Newell had the thrill of a lifetime visiting the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States at Mar-A-Lago.

President Trump

was delighted by Jeff's company and invited Jeff back for an event the following weekend. His exact words were, "what are you doing next Sunday, why don't you come over and mow my lawn."



\*Patriot Hills super Evan Weymouth used all his carpentry skills to build his beloved bulldog Brady a nice comfortable prison to hang out in. All this was necessitated by Mrs. Weymouth (Sally) who told Evan, "it's either me and the baby or

the dog, you have to make a choice."



Metro's Matt "The Big Sexy" Topazio was recently reprimanded by his company after it was discovered that he was spending the majority of his working hours cavorting with disreputable and incorrigible individuals at a Danbury, CT dive bar. Matt's indiscretions were discovered after Metro's management installed a hidden GPS device in his truck.



\*Congratulations to Leewood's Tim Walker and his beautiful bride Patti on their recent wedding. The ceremony was held at Pebble Beach Golf Links. Former FBI Director Robert Mueller was the officiant.

# Hudson Valley Cup



## Mahopac Golf & Beach Club

601 N Lake Blvd, Mahopac, NY

Monday, May 22, 2023

**Host: Jon Ferruccio, GCS**



9:30 AM Registration

9:45 AM Lunch

11:00 AM Golf: Shotgun 4-Person Best Ball

3:30 PM Open Bar, Buffet Dinner & Awards

Fee: \$190 per person (Golf, Lunch, Dinner & Open Bar)

\$60pp (Dinner & Open Bar)

Dress Code: Proper Golf Attire

## Thank you to our HV Cup Sponsors



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# LAST MEETING RECAP....RIVER VALE COUNTRY CLUB

What a great day that was had by all who made it out to the first event of the year on April 12<sup>th</sup> at River Vale Country Club.

It felt like a summer day, as temps reached into the mid 80's. As for the golf, it wasn't that hot for all but a few golfers. Brian and his staff had the course in immaculate shape. It is a great golf course which makes you utilize many different aspects of your game. Thanks also to the food and drink staff as they were very hospitable throughout the day.

## Results

### **Low Gross: 76**

Steve Whipple (very impressive), West Point GC

### **Low Net: 71**

Nick Alley, Grass Roots

### **Closet to Pin: Hole 14**

Blake Halderman, Brae Burn CC

### **Closet to Pin: Hole 16**

Yours truly ( I hit my quota for the year)

### **Long Drive**

Greg Coughlin, Hollow Brook GC & Andy Bulizak, EZ-GO

Thanks again to everyone that attended. What a great start to the events for the year. Hope to see everyone at the Cup on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at Mahopac GC.

Cheers,  
Matt





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## Mahopac Golf Club to Host HV Cup...cont'd

"I decided to go to the next level and pursue an education in turfgrass management. I enrolled at SUNY Cobleskill in 1997."

Jon's next experience was as an intern working for Lou Quick (Captain Lou) at Anglebrook. In 1999, fresh out of school, Jon was hired as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant at Knollwood CC working for Tim Moore. In short order, Jon moved up to 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant and worked at Knollwood until 2006.

Jon's professional journey went full circle when he returned to work at Mahopac GC for the 2007 season as 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant. In 2010, Jon was promoted to superintendent.

Mahopac GC, like many clubs in the area after the economic meltdown of 2008, was hurting for members and there were some lean years. That was until the Covid-19 pandemic. "Covid-19 rescued this club," Jon stated, "We're a lot healthier now and up to 235 members."

On a personal note, Jon has two lovely daughters, Jaylin (18) and Jordan (16).

So, there it is. We hope to see lots of HVGCSA members at this event. The food will be as great as the golf, maybe even better.

*Kevin Collins*

## MEMBER NEWS

### Welcome New Member

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS CORNER

**April showers bring May flowers, but what if there are no showers?**

We can all agree that the past few weeks, apart from one 3-day stretch of overwhelming rain, has brought about fearful memories of the summer season a year ago. April and early May have been unseasonably warm and dry which can be overwhelming as we all try to complete projects and prepare for the dreaded 100 day stretch. But let's look on the bright side!

While the current weather trends are probably leading to longer than normal hours while watering as if it were mid-summer and fearful thoughts of what is to come this summer, this weather pattern can actually be extremely beneficial to our overall success throughout the summer season. A dry and windy spring can have a positive impact on overall turf health regarding root development. When the soil is dry, grass roots are forced to grow deeper in search of water. This deeper root growth leads to a stronger and more extensive root system, which can improve the overall health and resilience of the turf. Additionally, the wind can help to dry out the surface of the turf, which can reduce the risk of fungal diseases that thrive in moist conditions.

One of the key benefits of a dry spring is that it encourages deep root growth. When the soil is moist, grass roots tend to grow horizontally near the surface where water is most abundant. However, when the soil is dry, grass roots are forced to grow deeper in search of water. This deeper root growth can lead to a stronger and more extensive root system that is better able to withstand stress from heat, drought, and disease. The result is a healthier and more resilient turf that requires less water and maintenance.

While a dry and windy spring can be beneficial for

overall turf health, it is important to note that there are also potential risks. If the soil becomes too dry, it can lead to stress on the turf and even damage or death of grass plants. Additionally, wind can cause physical damage to the turf if it is too strong or persistent. Therefore, it is important for golf course managers to monitor soil moisture levels and adjust irrigation as needed to ensure that the turf remains healthy.

Remember, even though none of us want to be dragging hose all day everyday this early in the season; this hopefully can lead to better resilience and less overall stress throughout the summer season. So let's all take advantage of the cool, dry nights, promote deep rooting, and buckle up for the 100 days of summer!

**Matt Kerens**  
**Paramount CC**







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# New York Golf BMP...here we go, again

by Ken Benoit, CGCS

*Executive Director, New York Golf Course Foundation*

Golf, among other issues, has a public image problem. Okay, you have probably heard that statement for so long now that it has become an eye roller. Fair enough. You might be exhausted listening to the same people blowing the same horn year after year. I get it. Dr Rossi has, for years, continuously drawn a connection between BMPs and scientific research proving you can have healthy turfgrass, protect water resources, and save money, all at the same time. And for the past several years, a group of your peers has been continuously imploring superintendents to formally adopt BMPs at their facility and set realistic goals for their implementation. These people keep proclaiming it will lead to benefits such as operational cost savings, improved turfgrass/playing conditions, improved relationships with local, state and federal lawmakers and your neighbors, improved relationships with university researchers, and a better understanding of how your club and our industry impacts water resources. I get why you might be exhausted. The messengers are probably exhausted too. We're all exhausted. What is puzzling is why this message has not connected with some superintendents. After all, when considering all the reasons listed above, the importance and benefits of adopting and implementing BMPs at the facility level cannot be argued. Adopting and implementing BMPs will not only be beneficial to you, your club, and the game of golf in the immediate future, it will have a lasting impact on golf's long-range future. By adopting BMPs you'll help put golf in a position to navigate the deep waters of social evolution. You should also consider that what you leave behind is all that will remain, so the decisions you make now will impact the many generations of superintendents who will follow. How often does a professional in any industry get the opportunity to leave a collective legacy? Superintendents have the rare opportunity to leave a long-lasting legacy in a profession with a rich and noble

history.

Focusing on the political side of the BMP initiative, environmental matters are no longer the exclusive concern of one side of the aisle in Albany and Washington DC. As society becomes more sophisticated about their understanding of how various factors impact the environment, all lawmakers are forced to steer toward more conservative environmental legislation. The line between blue and red is becoming a little more blurred. Lawmakers have, are and will decide the future of golf. The means by which superintendents can communicate to lawmakers that they are connected and engaged with their environmental responsibilities, are BMPs. And the best way for you to help facilitate that message is via the GCSAA on-line BMP tool. For the past few years, the New York Golf Course Foundation has been imploring superintendents around the state to use the tool to formally adopt BMPs at their facility. Motivating superintendents to go to the tool and spend a couple hours to help our industry leaders when talking to lawmakers in Albany and Washington DC, was the primary goal when NYGCF decided to offer "BMP How To" workshops in all five GCSAA chapter regions. During the workshops, guys spent a few hours being shown how to

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# Upcoming Meetings

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Mahopac Golf Club**  
Hudson Valley Cup

**June 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Town of Wallkill Golf Club**  
June Meeting  
(Met Team Qualifier)

**July 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Philip Rotella Memorial GC**  
Nine & Dine

**August 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Wiltwyck CC**  
NYSTA Challenge

**Sept 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Quaker Hill CC**  
September Meeting

**October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Leewood Golf Club**  
Worthington Cup

## New York Golf BMP....cont'd

navigate the tool and, in the process, learned just how easy it is to edit and publish your golf facility BMP document. The BMP workshops were well received in all five regions. In fact, the most common responses we heard were "I had no idea completing this document was so easy," and "Can we do more of these workshops?"

As part of the 2022/23 Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund grant, the NYGCF also assisted five superintendents, one from each GCSAA chapter, complete their own facility BMP document. Dan Wilber, superintendent at Millbrook Golf and Tennis Club, was chosen for the HVGCSA region. Dan recognizes the value of completing his facility BMP document and setting realistic goals for achieving a higher degree of water resource protection and improved turf health. When asked about why adopting BMPs at Millbrook Golf and Tennis Club is important, Dan said "Beyond just being the right thing to do as a steward of the club's property and the local community, it is the right thing to do for golf's future. Superintendents have the responsibility to not only protect water resources in their community but to protect the industry in which we earn a living. BMPs provide the opportunity for superintendents to fulfill both objectives and the GCSAA on-line tool makes it very easy." As we move forward with this initiative, more and more superintendents in the HVGCSA region have followed Dan's lead by formally adopting BMPs via the GCSAA on-line tool.

Because many of your peers around New York and across the country have already started this process, the question of "Have you adopted BMPs via the GCSAA BMP tool," has become "Why haven't you adopted BMPs using the GCSAA BMP tool?" If you have any questions about how to get started with your facility BMP document, you should reach out to either the NYGCF or GCSAA.

*by Ken Benoit, CGCS*

## 2023 Scholarships Applications

**DEADLINE: JULY 1, 2023**

Click [HERE](#) for applications