



Metropolitan Golf Writers Association NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2014

MGWA Spotlight

WESTHAMPTON CC

Course architect Gil Hanse, whose company oversaw the recent renovations at Westhampton CC, was unable to join us in person for our MGWA gathering on Sept. 15. Rather, he was on a business trip in Brazil, where he has designed the course being built for the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. However, he sent the following note which was distributed at our Westhampton meeting, talking about the course renovations there and his associate architect George Bahto, an MGWA member who passed away earlier this year.

First off, my apologies for not being able to be with you today. We are building a little golf course down here in Rio de Janeiro and it is taking a lot of my time.

Welcome to Westhampton Country Club. I hope that you enjoy the recently restored Seth Raynor golf course. The work that you will see today is our attempt to restore the work of Seth Raynor to its original condition, with allowances for the proper placement of fairway hazards to counter the technological advances made since he designed the golf course. Westhampton is one of the earliest Seth Raynor designs and it shows Raynor as he gained confidence working without his mentor, Charles Blair Macdonald, at his side. Some of his most unique and daring holes can be found at Westhampton, including the punchbowl par 3 third hole and the daring arrangements of hazards on the recently restored 9th hole. All of the favorite template holes are in evidence with the Redan 7th, Short 11th and Biarritz 17th hole being the most recognizable.

The part of the course that we found so refreshing was its charming character and endless variety on a site that lacks any dramatic elevation change. Raynor used the strength and scale of the manufactured features to provide the interest not only from a strategic sense but

SEND IN YOUR NEWS AND NOTES

All members of the MGWA who may have items for our newsletter are urged to e-mail them to **Chuck Stogel** (chstogel@aol.com).

MGWA BOARD MEETS, PONDERES HONOREES

The Met Golf Writers Board of Directors met on Sept. 23 at Golf Central, Elmsford, NY, with potential honorees for our 64th National Awards Dinner in 2015 a prime topic of discussion. No winners have been determined at this time while the Board continues to work on its selections along with an exact date for the dinner and other details. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Oct. 28, at which time it is expected to decide on the amount of charitable disbursements this year for our MGWA beneficiaries. Figures from the 2014 awards dinner held in June at the Westchester Marriott --- headlined by **Fred Couples** and **Nancy Lopez** --- indicate that, with 596 attendees, the event was the most financially successful we have had in several years. Our raffle and silent auction revenues this year were particularly bountiful.

Both the MGWA Nominating Committee and MGWA Marketing Committee are scheduled to meet on Oct. 21 at Golf Central, in advance of the Board meeting the following week. Anyone who wishes to volunteer to serve on the Board, or propose a member for the Board, should e-mail any suggestions, along with a brief bio backgrounder, to **Chuck Stogel** (chstogel@aol.com). Suggestions without backgrounders will not be considered. Our Nominating Committee consists of the current president and participating past presidents. The MGWA Bylaws stipulate that our Board be comprised of no fewer than nine and no more than 19 people. Our Board currently has 17 members; there is no requirement to fill any vacancies unless the Board wishes to.

FERRY POINT SELLOUT CLOSES SEASON

A bonus golf gathering, scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 14, has drawn a full field of 18 MGWA foursomes who will have an exclusive opportunity to preview the Trump Golf Links at Ferry Point in the Bronx, NY. Designed by **Jack Nicklaus**, owned by the City of New York and managed by the Trump Organization, Ferry Point is currently in the process of constructing a temporary clubhouse and other buildings with an anticipated opening in spring 2015. The course, with five sets of tees ranging from 5,278 to 7,407 yards, was finished last year and is fully playable, offering some spectacular views of the adjacent Whitestone Bridge and distant Manhattan skyline. The opportunity to play Ferry Point was offered just recently and wraps up the 2014 MGWA golfing schedule (see below for Tamarack and Westhampton recaps). Our Activities Committee is currently working on the 2015 golf schedule, with no dates or venues announced yet.

CROWELL HOSTING GOLF CHANNEL SHOW

We received a note from **Wendy Crowell**, wife of MGWA member and GlenArbor head pro **Brian Crowell**, which are we passing along via this Newsletter:

"Hello Friends and Family. Just a quick note to inform you of some exciting news. Brian will be hosting a new instruction-based show on Golf Channel called Lesson Tee Live! The first show (aired) Wednesday, Oct. 8 at 8pm. Viewer input is going to be important for the show's



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(Continued)

also from a landscape standpoint. But at the top of the list of attributes of Westhampton is the fact that it is a FUN golf course, so please enjoy the old/new version of this wonderful course.

You will notice that in the paragraph about Raynor I referred to the work as our work and we accomplished this or that. As with all projects, this was a team effort and I must thank the Board of Directors of the Club, and especially Nick Sotell, the green chairman, and Jay Glover, the golf course superintendent; they were great to work with. However, the biggest part of the team is no longer with us --- and the Westhampton project was the last time we were able to work together doing what we love to do --- and that is George Bahto.

I truly hope that many of you got to meet and know George. He was a delight to be with, a fine gentleman, but most of all he was passionate. His energy and intelligence fueled restorations that we worked on together including Essex County, The Creek and Sleepy Hollow. His knowledge of Raynor and Macdonald architecture was encyclopedic and his research provided us with the direction that we followed on all of these projects. But beyond providing the blueprints and aerial photos, he infused every project with a sense of joy, excitement and purpose. Having worked in the dry cleaning business for decades, he came to golf course architecture as a second career and he relished every moment he spent in the field. His enthusiasm was infectious and I know it made every project he worked on better than if we had done it without him, and he made me a better golf course architect from knowing and working with him. He is a partner in the restoration that you will (or have) play(ed) in every respect, and I miss him dearly.

The last time I saw George he was gravely ill and drifting in and out of consciousness, but as I said my goodbyes, he squeezed my hand and he said, "What a guy". Indeed, what a guy he was, and I hope that through his work at places like Westhampton and his contributions to golf course architecture in the Met area, he will always be remembered fondly in the golfing world.

Sincerely,
Gil Hanse

CROWELL HOSTING GOLF CHANNEL SHOW

success, so please get involved and give your feedback (especially if it's positive)! If you could utilize social media (during or shortly after the show), that would be ideal." Feedback for the show is accessible via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Comments and golf swings for review may be e-mailed to lessonteelive@golfchannel.com.

PEOPLE, PLACES, ETC

MGWA member **Pat Hannigan** of the New York Post finished 38th with 87-82---169 in the Westchester Golf Assn Mid-Amateur Championship held Sept 30-Oct 1 at Rockrimmon CC, Stamford, CT . . . Baltusrol GC, Springfield, NJ, recently was accorded National Historic Landmark status, a designation conferred by the U.S. Department of Interior's National Park Service Landmarks Program. Baltusrol's Lower and Upper courses, completed in 1922, are considered standout **A.W. Tillinghast** designs reflective of the Golden Age of golf architecture. The only other clubs whose courses have achieved landmark status are Merion, Oakmont and Pinehurst. Baltusrol president **Joseph Tato**, in a statement, credited club historians and MGWA members **Rick Wolfe** and **Bob Trebus** for their persistent efforts in securing the landmark designation . . . There must be something about being a golf pro at GlenArbor GC, Bedford Hills, NY, that lends itself to working in the media world too: **Debbie Doniger**, GA director of instruction, has launched a monthly show on SiriusXM PGA Tour Radio in conjunction with LPGA Tour star **Natalie Gulbis**, called The Golfer Girls. The show (XM Channel 93, Sirius Channel 208) will focus on, but not be limited to, the world of women's golf . . . **Angela Aulenti** of Sterling Farms and E. Gaynor Brennan in Stamford, CT, has been named by the LPGA as recipient of the 2014 **Nancy Lopez** Golf Achievement Award. A Met PGA pro, Aulenti also is president of the LPGA's Teaching and Club Professionals division Northeast section . . . **Billy Casper** Golf, based in Vienna, Va., promoted **Marnie Boyer** to vp-marketing. BCG is owner/operator of more than 150 golf courses, country clubs and resorts in 28 states, including several in the Met area . . . Area clubs seeking new head golf professionals include: Brooklawn CC, Fairfield, CT; Green Brook CC, No. Caldwell, NJ; Mill River Club, Oyster Bay, NY; Silver Spring CC, Ridgefield, CT . . . RECOVERING: Former MGWA president **Ron Sirak** had heart valve surgery in September and is on the mend. Contact info: PO Box 913, So. Wellfleet, MA 02663, ronsirak@gmail.com . . . OBIT: **Howard Lashen**, 89, father of MGWA member and reigning Quill & Tee club champ **Woody Lashen**, passed away Sept. 14. Our condolences to the Lashen family.

BERGER KINGS CROWNED AT TAMARACK

Tamarack CC, Greenwich, CT, proved a supremely gracious host with a wonderfully challenging course for 45-plus attendees on Aug. 25. The annual MGWA Team Shootout was our featured competition for the occasion. Club president **Jeff Young** and outspoken course architect **Brian Silva** addressed the group, along with a presentation by BirdieBox representative **Larry Crawford**.

"This is a very family-friendly club. We see families as part of our vision as a club, and it's something that we are very proud of," said Young.

Silva, who recently oversaw renovations to the 1929 course designed by **Charles "Steamshovel" Banks**, related, "Tamarack really has uncovered a sleeping golf course, with plenty of tree removal, widened fairways and renovated bunkers. But the biggest impact has been the restoration of the greens, where over 40,000 square feet of putting surface overall has been restored. You have to give the club credit for the extent of the work they authorized. Lots of clubs would have just put some new sand in the bunkers and repaired a few ball washers. The restoration of the greens has really made the course outstanding." Silva asserted that "Tamarack has its own Amen Corner, with the punch bowl 11th, a world class Biarritz at 12 and the double tiered, well bunkered 13th."



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BERGER KINGS CROWNED AT TAMARACK

A field of 10 foursomes was entered in the MGWA Team Shootout, won by the Berger Kings for the fourth time in five years, including three straight (2010-11-12). This year's team, consisting of **Dan Berger, Joe Ruggiero, CJ Papa** and **Jon Olson**, posted a 17-under-par 125 in the format which called for two net best balls of four using 50% handicaps. The Cabletowners foursome of **Steve Paulus, Adam Balkin, Anthony Scordia** and **Woody Lashen** was second at 127. Other scores: Eddie & the Cruisers, The Sports Alliance, 129; Banks' Golf Babes, 130; Choking Dawgs, 131; Neuman's Own, Photo Flashers, SNY Post-Its, 132; 1 Player Times 3, 135.

QUILL & TEE WRAPS UP AT WESTHAMPTON

Another recently renovated classic course by another classic designer was the highlight of our Sept. 15 visit to Westhampton CC in Westhampton Beach, NY, where our group of nearly 40 attendees heard from club greens chair **Nick Sotell**, head pro **Bobby Jenkins** and course superintendent **Jay Glover**. The trio provided a very interesting historical presentation --- complete with an aerial video --- about the club, which opened in 1890, and the Seth Raynor-designed course, which will celebrate its centennial season in 2016. The entire group engaged in a very hearty Q&A session, during which it was stated that Westhampton is believed to be Raynor's first solo design, sans either **CB Macdonald** or **Charles Banks**.

"It took a few years in discussion and approval, but our greens committee decided to restore the course, to bring it back to what once was a great design," explained Sotell. "We put together a Master Plan, with the support of the club, and we were very fortunate to get (architect) **Gil Hanse**, along with **George Bahto**. The project is ongoing, and the greens --- which are genius --- are not done yet." Hundreds of trees have been removed that, Sotell related, "were planted everywhere during the 'safety and beautification era' of the 1960s and 1970s. Between fairways, right behind the Redan green, plantings that altered the strategy that Raynor envisioned and considerably changed the look of the course."

In addition to the historical club and course presentation, a special memorial tribute was paid to Bahto, who passed away this past March.

Two competitions for our Quill & Tee Golf club, which is the MGWA's club without real estate, were contested at Westhampton: the Q&T President's Cup and the Q&T Member-Guest. **Bill Baum** won the President's Cup event on a match of cards at net 71 with **Joe Ruggiero**. **Michael Ceriello** placed third on a match of cards at net 73 with **Yale Stogel**. The runaway Q&T Member-Guest winners were **Chris Lane** and **David Knight** with a net better ball 60. Ceriello and **Michael Koziarz** placed second on a match of cards at net 65 with **Jim Krajicek** and **Frank Scally**.

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*Team Shootout Champs --- Berger Kings
(l to r): Joe Ruggiero, CJ Papa, Jon Olson, Dan Berger*



*Westhampton Trio
(l to r): Course sup't Jay Glover, golf pro Bobby Jenkins,
greens chair Nick Sotell*