



The BONNIE GREENSWARD

OUR 99TH SEASON

VOL 24-2

OUR HIGHEST HONOR – THE AWARD GOES TO

The PAGCS is excited to announce that the 2024 recipient of our highest honor, the Eberhard Steiniger Award. Get ready to honor longtime member and industry legend, Mr. Matt Shaffer!

There are many words attributed to Matt’s career and life in the industry of golf turf management, and one that stands out is “mentor.” As the 2023 Eb Steiniger recipient, Jerred Golden, said in his nomination letter: **his mentorship of freshly minted graduates to seasoned veterans has him the respect and gratitude of scores of turf professionals.**

Then there is the word “innovative.” As one mentee, Scott Bordner, said: **he grew grass boldly and wasn’t shy about it.**



Men of Merion: Matt Shaffer, Richie Valentine, Stan Zontek.

As a proud Penn State Alum., with deep PA roots, no one exemplifies the PAGCS more than Matt and his career—the word “thriftiness” comes up. PSU professor Dr. Mike wrote in his nomination letter:... **and economic scrutiny are no doubt attributed to his upbringing and farm background in Blair County, Pennsylvania.**

We think this sums it up: the Eb Steiniger Award: ... **is Matt to the T. [excerpted from Robert Smith’s nomination letter]**

Continued on page 6



Matt Shaffer returns to the PAGCS region and continues to mentor and education the future. Pictured here, he is the keynote speaker at an education session hosted by The Union League at Torresdale.



Matt Shaffer, the semi-retired version.

>> 2024 EVENTS

PHRIENDS & PHAMILY AT THE PHILLIES

August 28

4:05 start v. Houston

Tailgate details to come

MEMBER-GUEST

September 30

Lookaway Golf Club

Shotgun: TBD

GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP AND BUSINESS MEETING

October 28

Manufacturer’s Golf & Country Club

Shotgun: TBD

HOLIDAY SEASON KICKOFF - JOINT ICE HOCKEY EVENT WITH GCSANJ

December 14

Steel Ice Center, Bethlehem, PA

[Visit the website events tab for more!](#)

#HEADINGTO100

As we head to our centennial in 2025, the 100th committee has been hard at work. Please share your history: pagcs1925@gmail.com



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>> THE PM

A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear PAGCS Members,

I don't know about you, but the year seems to be flying by as we have already entered the summer stretch. The 2024 season has been weather extremes so far, first rainy, then a dry stretch and on to heat waves.

Season Event Recaps

Thanks to all who came out to represent the PAGCS at the **War at the Shore** in April and to our title sponsor Turf Equipment and Supply. Even though New Jersey took home the trophy, it was a great day of golf and camaraderie.

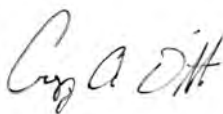
In May we headed to French Creek for our **Member-Member Trophy Tournament**. Check out page 16-17 for full coverage of both events. Don't miss the next issue for coverage of the Scholarship Outing and Benefit.

Board Initiatives

We have extended our partnership with **Inside Golf TV**, so if any members have fun or interesting projects/unique happenings, please reach out to Board Director Nick Lubold, who is coordinating scheduling. This is a great way to showcase your hard work and promote our Association.

Our scholarship application window is open and closes on **September 1**. We now offer both Legacy and Turf Student Scholarships. Be sure to take advantage of either/both and encourage your staff/Legacy to apply. Lastly, don't forget that your membership includes free resume and interview coaching from TBloom LLC. Be sure to keep your resumes updated as you never know when the perfect opportunity may pop up! Head to page 14 to meet the Legacy Scholarship Recipients. ♦

Respectfully,



President, Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents

[Greg D'Antonio is in his third season as president of the PAGCS. He is a PSU grad, George E. Ley Scholarship Recipient, and head of grounds for Concord Country Club.]



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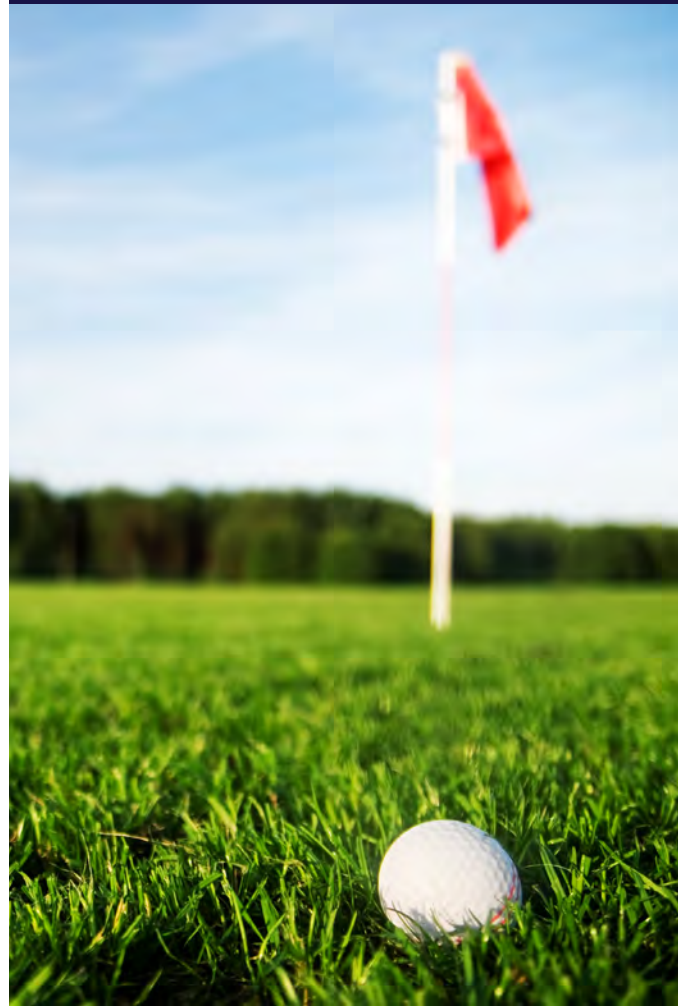
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WALNUT LANE AERATION GROUNDBREAKING

On April 18, a contingency of PAGCS representatives attended the groundbreaking ceremony at Walnut Lane Golf Club, home of FTOGP. While there, we got to see the grounds team in action with course aeration in process. Joe Alvarez, head of grounds, had this to say:

Thank you for attending the event along with other PAGCS members Brad Helcoski, Mike Janzer and our faithful greens chairman Bill Corcoran. As you know I couldn't be there because my crew and I were aerating greens that day, taking advantage of the course being closed because of the event. This day was just another example of teamwork by Kyle Spaulding, the Director of Golf, Bill Hyndman, the Executive Director for the First Tee of Philadelphia and my crew and me.

I just want to express our gratitude and appreciation for you and our association members who have contributed their time and energy towards making Walnut Lane GC what it is today.

The clubhouse construction isn't only made possible by our generous donors and The First Tee, but **it's been made possible by a whole team of Turfgrass Management industry professionals over the years, starting with our ground's crew staff, vendors, volunteers and the City of Philadelphia. This fact was overlooked by the 6ABC report but needs to be communicated.**

I can't begin to mention the names of all people from the PAGCS and the amount of donated time, resources, equipment and labor

over the years to bring us to this point of success and condition on the golf course, where we're not only able to improve the course and equipment but also build a new, much needed, clubhouse for the golfers and the students. We're proud to make this improvement to the property and the community as we have signed a long-term lease for 20 years with the City of Philadelphia.

Thank you for contributing to our success and everything you and your members have done and continue to do for us at the First Tee.

--Peace out, Joe Alvaré



Help Us Build Our Newest Outdoor Classroom!



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www.firstteephiladelphia.org



Proposed new Walnut Lane Youth Learning Center

FIRST TEE - GREATER PHILADELPHIA teaches over 45,000 local youth essential life skills while providing equal access to the lifelong game of golf. We impact the lives of all young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill life - enhancing values, and promote healthy choices through the game of golf.

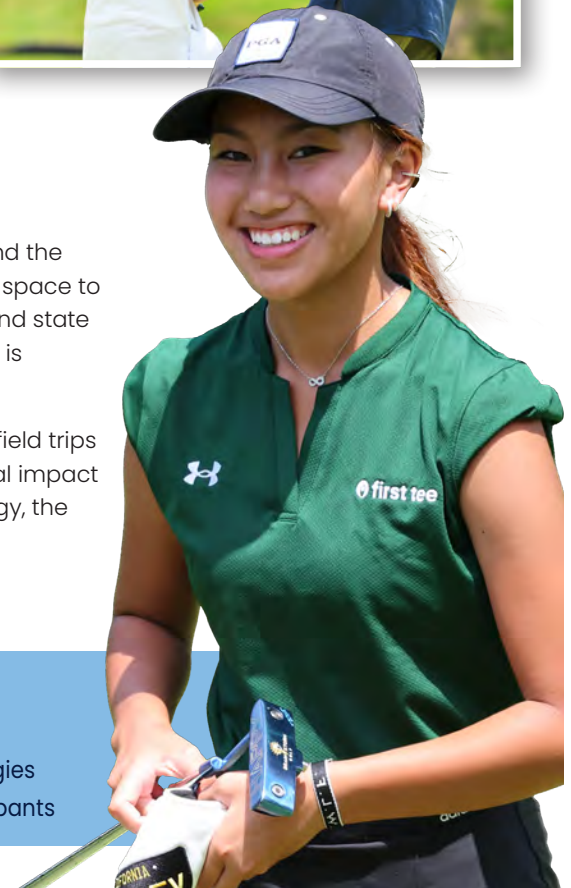
After successfully renovating John F. Byrne Golf Club in 2021, First Tee is embarking on our newest Outdoor Classroom at Walnut Lane Golf Club. Walnut Lane Golf Club will be Philadelphia's most Innovative Outdoor Classroom, becoming the heart of First Tee's educational and character development programs serving the children of Philadelphia, especially youth from underserved communities in high poverty zip codes.

Join Us As We Drive For The Future

We are asking your help to raise **\$2.5 million** to transform Walnut Lane Golf Club and the lives of our young people. Your gift will provide young people with a safe and clean space to learn, while enjoying healthy meals, engaging innovative educational curriculum, and state of the art technology. Bridging the gap between the classroom and the golf course is how we Build Game Changers, creating tomorrow's leaders.

The new Youth Learning Center will allow First Tee to host more school students on field trips and have more kids attend weekly classes, exponentially increasing our educational impact along with launching our first ever after-school support program. Utilizing technology, the classroom and simulator will make learning both fun and engaging.

Talk to us about naming right opportunities.



Capital Investments will include;

- Total building renovation • First Tee staff offices
- Launch of digital classroom inside the facility and related state of the art technologies
- Two golf simulators • Cafe with in house dining • Outdoor patio for program participants

EB STEINIGER AWARD HISTORY

All of the awardees listed here represent the
“best of the best” in the golf turf management industry.

Fred Byrod -1990
William H. White -1991
Joseph M. Duich -1992
Donald Waddington -1993
John C. Harper II -1994
Richard E. Valentine -1995
Charles H. Cadiz Jr., CGCS -1996
Stanley J. Zontek -1997
William Marberger -1998
John A. Segui, CGCS -1999
Frank I. Shuman -2000

Joseph H. Way -2001
Thomas L. Watschke -2004
Michael R. Smith, CGCS -2005
Edward Roynan -2006
Henry Wetzel – 2012
Frank T. Shuman – 2015
George E. Ley – 2019
James Stauring -- 2022
Jerred Golden – 2023
Matt Shaffer – 2024



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LESSONS FROM THE FIELD



In an effort to immerse students in golf course agronomy and real time maintenance, Dr. Linde, arranges field trips to visit superintendents at their courses throughout the academic year. One such example is a morning spent with PAGCS Board Member Joe Agnew, GCS at The Bucks Club.

The goal for this trip, along with one that took place a week later [more on that in

the next issue], was to compare agronomic practices across a public versus a private facility.

Some Key Areas of Exploration:

- Witnessing live the ins and outs of a GPS sprayer AND learning the savvy navigating and negotiations to acquire it within budget
- Highlighting the different agronomic practices, in particular aeration, mow heights, moisture levels, employed at a public facility, based on the end user—knowing your customer
- Identifying different grasses across mixed settings; learn the different playing surfaces and important golf course features
- Bonus: watching a crew contracted from Total Turf Golf Services'

Pennink Arrimour division build a retaining wall on the course

- Tour the maintenance facility to understand basic layout: equipment maintenance and repair, inventory of machinery and chemicals/ fertilizers, etc.

Check back next issue for more on this and the visit to a private facility.



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ASSISTANT'S CORNER: GETTING REEL ABOUT THE GRIND

by Nick Sujkowski, PAGCS Assistant Representative to the Board

On Wednesday, March 20th, we hosted another in the series of Assistant Education events, this time at Union League Torresdale. Goal: get a handle on reel theory and setup as well as grinding.

It was a fantastic event, jam packed with valuable information. It's not every day that Assistant Superintendents get time in the shop, so this event proved to be a great learning experience for us to understand more of what goes into producing a quality cut. It is such an important aspect to the overall success of a golf course operation so it's helpful to understand the ins and outs from an Equipment Manager's perspective.

We had a great turnout with 20 participants at the event representing 14 different area clubs. Thank you to those who attended, especially to Mike Elliot of the Union League for being a fantastic instructor and Andrew Dooley for being such a gracious host! Best of luck to everyone as we move into the heat of the season!



ASSISTANT'S CORNER

Got any cool projects or stories to share in 2024? We want to hear from you!
Contact Nick: nicksuj@gmail.com



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*Survey of 258 golf course superintendents conducted via TechTrends in Sept. 2021.
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MEET OUR 2023 LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Captured during the 2024 Scholarship Benefit Outing at Sandy Run: Scholarship Chairman Doug Rae, second from left, with a few of the 2023 Turf and Legacy recipients: Robert Meredith, George E. Ley; Gianna Livingston and Ragan Liebsch, Legacy

New to the Association Scholarship Program, the Legacy Awards help children and grandchildren of PAGCS members support their academic endeavors. This inaugural class of recipients represent a myriad of pursuits and members, with a total of \$6000 awarded.

Please consider donating to this member funded benefit. Note that the 2024 application process is open until September 1.

--PAIGE CORCORAN, DAUGHTER OF PAGCS MEMBER BILL CORCORAN

School: James Madison University
Expected Graduation: 2024
Field of Study: Health Sciences
Next Goal: Masters in Occupational Therapy

I treat my academics... the same way I plan to handle my future occupation—with my best effort.

Paige artfully balances her Health Science major along with minors in both Occupational Therapy and Exceptional Education. Her desire to impact as many diverse lives as possible has led her to the goal of a Masters in OT, a sincerely thought out decision which exemplifies her spirit of compassion, professionalism, and dedication. –Anonymous

--RAGAN LIEBSCH, DAUGHTER OF PAGCS MEMBER JOE LIEBSCH

School: University of Pittsburgh
Expected Graduation: 2027
Field of Study: Political Science/Economics
Next Goal: Law Degree and a career in Education Policy

... Political Science ... I see it, like golf, as a field of innovation, creativity, and care ... education policy ... desperately needs innovation.

“Ragan is easily one of the more energized, focused, driven, and intellectually curious students I have ever had the pleasure to teach... She is studious, focused, kind, and hard working... She has a tremendous work ethic and is down to earth and resilient in a way many other young students today are not.” –William E. Penderghest, Abington Senior High School

--GIANNA LIVINGSTON, DAUGHTER OF PAGCS MEMBER DAN LIVINGSTON

School: Temple University
Expected Graduation: 2026
Field of Study: Social Work/Criminal Justice
Next Goal: Law Degree to become a DA

While serving the Bucks County DA’s office ... I could not think of a better career for myself than working for the people of my community...

“The intersections of Gianna’s passions include social service, criminal justice reform, and law. In addition to her Social Work major, Gianna has declared minor in Criminal Justice. This is just one demonstration of Gianna’s dedication towards her goals of attending Law School. Additionally, she is passionate about assessing and meeting the needs of marginalized and vulnerable communities. She is hoping to one day use her BSW degree to aid and uplift those impacted by the U.S. Foster Care System and the Justice and Corrections System.” –Rebecca Dean, Temple University

--PAIGE SMETHURST, DAUGHTER OF PAGCS MEMBER MIKE SMETHURST

School: Penn State University
Expected Graduation: 2024
Field of Study: Kinesiology
Next Goal: Doctorate in Physical Therapy, focused on Acute care and Geriatrics

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

As a ... competitive Irish Dancer, I was in and out of PT... and here at Penn State have found a love for geriatrics.

“While getting to know Paige, it was clear that she is a determined individual who is actively seeking to improve her leadership abilities and be involved in her school. She shows maturity in her career pursuits and her communication skills that is well above her peers.”

–Caitlin Wilkinson, Penn Medicine Premier Orthopaedics

FOR COVERAGE OF THE 2023 TURF STUDENT AWARDS, PLEASE SEE THE LAST ISSUE OF THE BONNIE

2024 TURF AND LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN THROUGH 9/1/2024



[CLICK HERE FOR LEGACY](#)

[<https://pagcs.org/legacy-scholarship-program-information-and-application/>]

[CLICK HERE FOR TURF](#)

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WELCOME TO THE NEW PAGCS MEMBERS FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2024

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Lebanon Turf

Proposed: Nick Lubold

Seconded: Greg D'Antonio

Brian Guinta

Central Turf and Irrigation Supply

Proposed: Tyler Thein

Seconded: Howard Szcurek

Ryan Tressler

Waynesborough CC

Proposed: Ben Kovacs

Seconded: Greg D'Antonio

Aaron Simmons

Talamore CC

Proposed: John Roedell

Seconded: Nick Lubold

Joshua Burnside

Tigris Aquatic Services

Proposed: Greg D'Antonio

Seconded: Nick Lubold

Jared Pelletier

Springford Country Club

[reinstatement]

CJ Buck

Harrell's

Proposed: Joe Agnew

Seconded: Greg D'Antonio

Robert Wylie

Philadelphia CC

Proposed: Josh Saunders

Seconded: Scott Musser

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Proposed: Alan Fitzgerald

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Proposed: Alan Fitzgerald

Seconded: Pat Michener

Zachery Swank

Rehoboth Beach CC

Proposed: Greg Eisner

Seconded: Alan Fitzgerald

Nolan Schenke

Fieldstone GC

Proposed: Greg Eisner

Seconded: Pat Michener

MEMBER-MEMBER 2024

Location: French Creek Golf Club
Date: May 13
Host: Steve Cipillone

GROSS RESULTS

1st: Brian Kealy/Anthony Gianetti [70]
2nd: Mike Kachurak/Nick Tristani [71]
3rd: Jeff Rice/Rob Johnson [72]

NET RESULTS

1st: Nick Sujkowski/Kevin Monaco [62]
2nd: Doug Rider/Steve McDonald [64-match of cards]
3rd: Geoff Stricker/Gene Stricker [64]

CONTEST

CP Hole 3: Eric Junkins [8']
LD Hole 6: Anton Medvedev
CP Hole 10: Nick Sujkowski [4'9"]

SKINS

Birdie on #1: Chuck Brunner/Ryan Sharp
Birdie on #3: Anthony Giannetti/Brian Kealy

Check next issue for coverage of the 2024 Scholarship Outing



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Location: Galloway National
Date: April 23
Host: Scott McBane

The GCSANJ came out on top once again in 2024 with a sound victory.

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Rich Lane, superintendent at Hackensack CC, shot a hole in one on #8



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24-3-12 75% Meth-Ex SOP

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PAINT IT LIKE PICASSO

June 07, 2024

Elliott L. Dowling, regional director, East Region



A light syringe around the hole location in the morning can give you peace of mind on a hot summer day.

There was discussion during the U.S. Women's Open telecast about the maintenance team adding a little water to the greens around the hole location. This is a common practice at USGA championships and something that can be used for routine course setup too.

Our championship agronomy team commonly refers to this practice as "painting the cup," or providing a light syringe around the day's hole location. Our primary goal is to add a little more

water where we expect a lot of foot traffic. When the weather is dry like we had at Lancaster Country Club, preventing midday wilt and maintaining adequate putting green health is our utmost priority. Just a little additional water before play starts is often enough to stave off wilt until we can get back on the greens later that day.

Another reason this is done is to maintain playability around challenging hole locations. A little additional water can prevent a hole location from becoming too difficult. Keep in mind that this practice will not work on holes cut into a steep slope or on greens that are too firm, but if the slope is slight or the greens are on the firm side of average, a light syringe may be enough. Next time you're looking to buy yourself some time on a hot, dry day or want to provide a little security for a tricky hole location, give "painting the cup" a try.

NORTHEAST REGION AGRONOMISTS

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Brian Gietka, agronomist – bgietka@usga.org

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PARENTS: Steve Stephens, GCS, Paxon Hollow, and his wife Krista

NAMES: Renie and Peggy, after Steve and Krista's mothers

GOTCHA DATES: June 2023, at six weeks old

The grey kitten is named Renie after my mother and the black kitten is named Peggy after my mother-in-law. My sister-in-law is a veterinarian in South Jersey. She sent me this picture of these two kittens, part of a litter of six that were found in a farmhouse that was recently sold. Four of the kittens were adopted immediately and the fate of these two was up in the air so we took them in and couldn't be happier!



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AN AGRONOMIC ITCH AND THE SUPER-SCRATCH FOUNDATION

By Tony Regina, assistant communications director, Golf Association of Philadelphia

It is perhaps the worst kept secret in **The Bonnie Greensward**.

The Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents and the Super-Scratch Foundation support each other. The relationship is as positive as a Pat Croce speech.

GAP Magazine profiles the Super-Scratch Foundation, a non-profit organization founded in October 2020, in its Summer 2024 edition. The Super-Scratch Foundation provides scholarship funds to those pursuing agronomy as a profession. To date, the organization's issued more than \$50,000 in scholarships to students across six collegiate turfgrass programs.

"There's a chasm. Golf is booming. The amount of qualified people we have [in turfgrass management] has really dropped. There simply aren't enough qualified assistant superintendents," Tim Zurybida, who serves as a vice president for the Super-

Scratch Foundation, said. "We promote the agronomic side of the game and make it easier for young folks to get into what we do for a living."

"It's amazing what superintendents do. Not every kid knows about it," Andrew Mason, the foundation's president, added. "It seems like the path that's not always chosen. There's a real need to get more people into turfgrass management."

Mason, along with a group of Huntingdon Valley members and local superintendents, conceived the idea for the event. In 2020, Mason played alongside Brian Gillespie of St. Davids Golf Club in stroke-play qualifying for the BMW Philadelphia Amateur Championship at Lancaster Country Club. Gillespie mentioned how he intended to return to Lancaster that fall for the A.B. Thorn Memorial Pro-Am.

Pro-am, Mason thought. Lots of pro-ams out there. What about a super-am?



"That would be a cool idea for an event," Mason, 35, of Conshohocken, Pa., said. "The superintendents don't always know the better players at their club. They're not in front of them like the pro."

The Inaugural Super-Scratch Invitational, conducted in November 2020 at Huntingdon Valley, featured 12 teams and raised \$1,500, all directed to Delaware Valley University's turf management program. Superintendents directly allocated funds to an institutional beneficiary of their choosing based on leaderboard placement.

The PAGCS is among the event sponsors. GAP will join that roster in 2024.

"The game of golf is ultimately played on the ground, and therefore turfgrass is a key component to the enjoyment of the game," GAP Executive Director Mark Peterson said. "We are excited to partner with the Super-Scratch Foundation based on their long-term vision of advancing the playability of the game. Similar to the J. Wood Platt Caddie Scholarship Trust, investing in education of aspiring community and industry leaders complements GAP's efforts to improve golfers' engagement one round at a time."

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