

The CSGA functions as an extension of the USGA and provides stewardship for amateur golf in Connecticut. Founded in 1899, it is the country's oldest state golf association and conducts more than 70 championships, qualifiers and One Day tournaments throughout the year, in addition to serving more than 50,000 members and 181 member clubs. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the CSGA supports a variety of golf organizations within Connecticut, including the Connecticut Women's Golf Association, the Southern New England Women's Golf Association, the LPGA Amateur Golf Association, the First Tee of Connecticut, the Connecticut Section PGA, the Connecticut Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Widdy Neale Scholarship Fund.

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# CSGA

CONNECTICUT STATE GOLF ASSOCIATION







# 2020 ANNUAL

A review of the 2020 season and the championships  
conducted by the Connecticut State Golf Association





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# DEAR FELLOW GOLFERS



Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

What a year 2020 has been for golf in Connecticut.

Record rounds played at courses throughout the State, highly competitive championships at every event, more courses rated than ever before, and strong leadership by the CSGA team allowed for the Connecticut golfer to play while other states were shut down.

Congratulations to all our tournament winners and honorees, including Volunteer of the Year Mike Flis and Distinguished Club of the Year Madison Country Club. Thanks to our staff and sponsors, who made 2020 the remarkable year it was in the face of uncertainty.

Enjoy, and “hit it straight.”

Jim Healey, Jr.  
President, Connecticut State Golf Association



Despite a pandemic and a hurricane, CSGA golf thrived during the 2020 season.

## CONNECTICUT STATE GOLF ASSOCIATION

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# A NEW APPRECIATION

## A MESSAGE FROM CSGA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MIKE MORAGHAN

**W**e knew in January that there would be added challenges for the CSGA in 2020:

- Changes to GHIN and the launching of the World Handicap System would require a time-consuming effort to educate golfers, golf professionals, and handicap chairpersons throughout Connecticut.

- We had a bigger than normal slate of courses to rate, a need to attract more volunteer raters, and the urgency of getting them educated and skilled in handling the complexities of the course rating system.

- We were adding a championship, the Borck Junior, to an already full schedule of tournaments. And across all of our activities, we were committed to increasing our member engagement.

So while gearing up for the Connecticut Golf Show, scheduled for the third weekend in March, we were busier than usual in January and February. And then suddenly, the entire world changed. People from Wuhan to Milan to Seattle to New York City were getting horribly ill, and dying.

As we learned about the novel coronavirus we made a conscious decision to lobby the State of Connecticut to keep golf courses, under certain restrictions, open, despite other businesses being closed down.

It was, and is still our belief that golf can be played safely during a pandemic that is spread primarily through close human contact. Golf is one of few activities that by its very nature demonstrates and actually requires social distancing.

At the same time we were urging the cancellation of the Golf Show. Nine thousand people indoors, packed elbow-to-elbow in the Connecticut Convention Center made no sense at all, a petri dish for infection, or what

would later come to be known as a potential “super spreader.”

But outdoors in the open air, spread out across vast landscapes, golf could be played safely.

We have lobbied the State on previous occasions, twice in recent years defeating proposals that would have added roughly \$15 million in taxes paid by golfers, and on more than one occasion helping to steer legislation that is both good for golf and good for the environment. Michael Dugan of Capitol Consulting, who we have kept on retainer for more than a decade, and who by his diligent and honest nature has earned the trust of elected officials and regulators throughout Connecticut, leads our efforts.

But advocating for golf in the midst of a pandemic was something entirely different. Not just livelihoods, but actual lives were at stake.

Dugan’s contacts at the Department of Economic Development (DECD) were receptive to explanations as to why golf could be played safely. State Legislators who understand or play golf were helpful, as were individuals in the Governor’s office who also had played rounds during which they never came within 10 feet of someone else.

Encourage walking...stay at least six feet apart...single rider carts...eliminate common touch points like rakes and flagsticks...put on a mask whenever you get close to someone...these were some of our early recommendations for keeping Connecticut safe while keeping courses open.

Though some decision-makers in our State Government had little experience with golf, they were quick to recognize that a golf course is nothing at all like a meat packing plant, and that allowing play in fact was a positive during such



**Mike Moraghan (left) and Michael Dugan at the Legislative Office Building in 2018.**

a crisis.

So throughout much of the springtime, while golf courses in surrounding states were closed, courses in Connecticut remained open for play.

Competitive golf presented different challenges. The USGA cancelled pretty much everything on their schedule, while the rest of us tried to figure out how we could adapt to a new reality that required significant changes in everything from players’ interactions with a starter on the first tee, to official scoring after the round.

It was never business as usual, as everything in 2020 became a juggling act. But by all accounts, it was a “great” year for golf, not just in Connecticut, but throughout the country. Rounds were up by double digits everywhere, and golf was repeatedly listed among the safest of activities.

So for all the goals we set at the beginning of the year, the CSGA and its members accomplished one thing we couldn’t have dreamed of. We saw people re-discover a wonderful game, enjoy it with their families, bring their non-golfing friends to it, and appreciate the joys of our sport, even in the midst of a health crisis.

May we never lose the renewed appreciation we have now for golf, and more importantly, may 2021 see the end of this terrible pandemic for everyone.

# THE OPEN

## Max's Home Run

It's easy to say that Max Theodorakis had the home course advantage, but consider the field, the fact of his first major professional tournament, and the pressure to perform in front of fellow Ridgewood C.C. members. No gimmes there. Taking the lead early in the final round, Theodorakis withstood Pete Ballo's second nine charge and won going away.







Saptak Talwar (near left) set the pace early, opening with 67 and following it with 71. Danbury's own Carey Bina (above) was two back entering the final round, but faded. Pete Ballo (opposite) made up the most ground on the last 18, briefly getting within two of Theodorakis. Ballo made five birdies, shot his second consecutive 69, but came up five short when the champion, with four birdies in a final-nine 32, shot 66 for the decisive victory.

**M**ax Theodorakis won it coming home and going away. At his home course, Ridgewood Country Club in Danbury, Theodorakis improved with each round while the rest of the field, with few exceptions, was moving the other way. He shot 34-32-66 in the rain-interrupted final round of the 86th Connecticut Open presented by Reby Advisors, matching the best score of the championship. He birdied the final hole in front of 100 fans, though by then the Open was shut. An experienced field, including four-time champion Kyle Gallo, three-time champion Frank Bensel and Defending New England Open Champion Jason Thresher could not match Theodorakis' confidence or course knowledge. "I had a target score in mind, six under, and I concentrated on that," said the 22-year-old who starred at Campbell University before playing his first Connecticut Open as a professional. "I figured if I shot six under, I would have it. I ended up with seven under, which is pretty good." In the

combined (Wednesday and Thursday) final round, Theodorakis made seven birdies, three on the front, four on the back, with two bogeys. Theodorakis had been part of a 3-way Open playoff in 2017, was Low Amateur in 2018, and finished T8 last year. "To do it here, on my home course and have it be my first pro win, well, it all kind of fell into place," said the champion. He said his knowledge of Ridgewood's tiny greens made the difference. "I know these greens well and I know them at a lot of different speeds," said Theodorakis, who had his father Alex on the bag. "[With the weather] the greens changed from round to round. They were faster today. The course was soft, and that probably was not something some of field was used to." Silvermine's Pete Ballo had no problem with them and mounted a late charge, but his 69 failed to catch Theodorakis. The closest he came was when Theodorakis, then five under, bogeyed the par-4 14th and Ballo, then one-under, hit 5-iron on

the 223-yard par-3 17th to 12 feet. His putt narrowly missed and what might have been a two-shot swing didn't materialize. Theodorakis birdied the next hole, the par-5 15th, and the engraving began. A hole later, after hitting an errant tee shot among trees to the left of the long par-4 16th, Theodorakis shaped a 4-iron to six feet. "When I made that shot, I thought, okay," he said after. "That kind freed me up on the final couple of holes." Ballo likewise pointed to the 16th, where he got up and down for par. "That was huge," said Ballo, and would have been even more important had the putt at 17 fallen. Ballo tried for eagle at 18, but his 269-yard second failed to find the par-5 green. He made a nifty up-and-in over a bunker from the right rough, but the miss at 17 stayed with him. "I knew I needed that," he said. His birdie at 18 separated him from third-place finisher Blake Morris, of the Country Club of Waterbury, who for the fourth consecutive year finished in the top 5. Gallo was fourth at even par, 213 with three straight 71s.



**GALLO OF COURSE** Kyle Gallo said before the Open that he no longer plays serious competition, but the four-time Open champion was once again in the hunt. He shot three consecutive 71s, was even par, and finished fourth alone. Three-time champion Frank Bensel was two over, tying for eighth. Bobby Gage was close again at T5.



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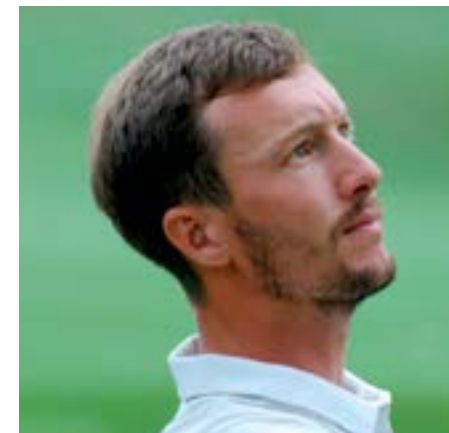
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Last year's runner-up Paul Pastore of Fairview Country Club in Greenwich and former PGA and Champions Tour player Bobby Gage were tied for fifth at one over. Amateur Saptak Talwar, who led the championship after 18 and 36 holes at -4, shot 77 to finish at plus-2 (T8) with another amateur, Patrick Casey of Torrington, who shot 72 on the last day and made birdie at the final hole to tie Talwar for Low Amateur.



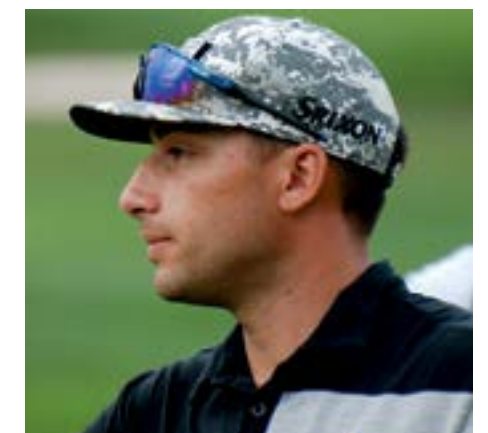
**Blake Morris, with brother Chandler on the bag, was top five as usual, as was Paul Pastore (lower right). Patrick Casey of Torrington C.C. (lower left) tied Saptak Talwar for Low Amateur.**

In the end, only three players broke par. "The course won, pro," said one of the members to host professional Justin Foster, a top teacher and a competitor in the Open. Though the club's 100-year celebration was muffled by the pandemic and shaken by a hurricane, a member winning the championship and the course playing as tough as it did, were reasons to celebrate.

Runner-up Ballo found reason for satisfaction as well. "With the waiting, and the storms and everything that's been going on, I'm happy to have played as well as I did," said Ballo, whose father Mike twice won the Open championship and was on hand to watch. "I've been very busy with lessons and arranging member events [at Silvermine] and it's been great, golf has really been

something people are into during this time. That's a good thing. But normally I've played two Opens by now. So for me to do this well at the first, I have to be happy."

Theodorakis is the second member to win the Open at Ridgewood. Ken Green, who won two Connecticut Opens, did it in 1992. At the media day in July, Green predicted that Theodorakis would take the \$14,000 first prize.



**86th Connecticut Open presented by Reby Advisors  
Ridgewood Country Club - Danbury, Conn. - Par 71 / 6,758 yards - Entries: 381  
August 3-5, 2020**

<b>1 Max Theodorakis, Ridgewood C.C.</b>	<b>72-68-66-206</b>	<b>T5 Bobby Gage, Green Woods C.C.</b>	72-69-73-214
<b>2 Peter Ballo, Silvermine G.C.</b>	73-69-69-211	<b>T8 Patrick Clark, Wee Burn C.C.</b>	74-71-70-215
<b>3 Blake Morris, C.C. of Waterbury</b>	70-72-70-212	<b>T8 Frank Bensel, Jupiter, Fla.</b>	72-70-73-215
<b>4 Kyle Gallo, Timberlin G.C.</b>	71-71-71-213	<b>T8 Patrick Casey (a), Torrington C.C.</b>	73-70-72-215
<b>T5 Paul Pastore, Fairview C.C.</b>	72-74-68-214	<b>T8 Saptak Talwar (a), Great River G.C..</b>	67-71-77-215
<b>T5 Casey Pyne, Stanwich Club</b>	72-74-68-214		



A golfer wearing a blue cap, a dark blue polo shirt, and orange shorts is captured in the middle of a golf swing. He is positioned in a field of tall, dry grass. The background shows a clear blue sky and some green foliage. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# AMATEURS

An amateur season that did not begin until June nonetheless gave us thrilling golf, from the Amateur at firm, fast Shorehaven to Innis Arden and the Senior Match Play. Like the salvaged season itself, it was a year of comebacks, when no lead seemed secure. Ask Conroy. Ask Fosdick. Ask Stevens. Ask Szewczul. 2020 was a surprise from start to stop.





## A MILD-MANNERED BULLDOG

There's not a nicer guy than Rick Dowling. Just don't expect that good nature to afford you any mercy on the course. At Waterbury on the final 18, **he turned what looked like collapse into his first Palmer Cup victory.**

**W**hen Rick Dowling went double bogey-bogey on the fourth and fifth holes of the final round at the 17th Russell C. Palmer Cup presented by Chris Cote's Golf Shop, eyes turned elsewhere to find a champion. There were plenty to choose from. Ahead of Dowling on the leaderboard now were two former Palmer Cup winners, Cody Paladino and Ben Day, along with the very hot Chris Fosdick, who had just shot 64 in the second round. Dowling, the 2019 Player of the Year, seemed out of contention.

But if one thought that, one was mistaken.

After shooting 38 on the first nine of the final round, Dowling quietly ignited, making birdies at Waterbury Country Club's 10th, 12th, 13th and 17th. A nifty punch approach at 18 closed the deal and Dowling won going away, seven under.

"It's so cool," said Dowling, the 2017 and 2019 Amateur champion. "I mean, all the things that Mr. Palmer did for the CSGA and the State of Connecticut golf, it is cool to win his trophy." Dowling said he loved Waterbury. "I really like playing here," he said. "Par is a good score."

For Day, playing at home, the loss was particularly painful. "It was really 11 and 17. Two bad swings. It's disappointing," he said, referring to tee shots out of bounds on both holes, the second when he was



**Sometimes you just have to laugh. Chris Fosdick played great, but couldn't drop the putts to match Dowling, who went on a tear on the final nine, making four birdies and shooting 30. Three back, Fosdick shared second with Cody Paladino and Ben Day.**

"It's so cool. All the things that Mr. Palmer did for the CSGA and golf in Connecticut, it is cool to win his trophy."

— Rick Dowling

four-under and a shot back of Dowling. For Paladino, who had come close at the Amateur, losing on the final hole to Fosdick, it was also tough to swallow. "I burned a few edges coming in, but I really didn't hit it close enough. Twenty-five, thirty feet. You're just not going to make many of those. I wasn't as sharp in the final round." There was a moment, though, on the 12th hole, when it looked to be his day. After his tee shot hit a sprinkler head left of the green, and bounced 15 yards into deep fescue even farther left, he managed a mi-

17th Russell C. Palmer Cup			
C.C. of Waterbury- Par 69/ 6,591 yards - Entries: 104			
August 17-18, 2020			
1 Rick Dowling, Golf Performance Ctr.	66-67-67-201	5 Christopher Ayers, Goodwin G. C.	67-71-67-205
T2 Chris Fosdick, Wallingford C.C.	70-64-70-204	6 Nick Piersall, TPC River Highlands	69-68-69-206
T2 Cody Paladino, C.C. of Farmington	67-67-70-204	T7 Ben Conroy, New Haven C.C.	70-67-70-207
T2 Ben Day, C.C. of Waterbury	67-65-72-204	T7 Chris Cappella, East Mountain G.C.	68-72-67-207



17th RUSSELL C. PALMER CUP

raculous up and down. Paladino pumped his fist when his save went in. "I thought, okay, maybe this is it," he said after. But only pars, and a final bogey, followed.

Fosdick, who seemed to be the player to beat after his 64 in the morning, could manage only 70 in the afternoon. "I wasn't as accurate with any of my clubs the second time around today. Beginning the final nine holes five under, he bogeyed the long par-3 14th and the par-4 15th, and made no birdies on the back.

Fosdick said the wind, about 8-10 miles an hour Tuesday afternoon, made it difficult to get shots close and was one reason there weren't more birdies in round three. "What it was doing up there was not," he said pointing to the sky, "what you were feeling down here."

Also under par were Chris Ayers of Goodwin Park, who finished in 5th alone at two under and Nick Piersall of Bryant University, who shot 69-68-69 for 206, one under par.

Greenwich's Jackson Fretty, who now plays for Princeton, shot his second straight 68 in the morning to reach two under and fifth place, but slipped to 74 in the afternoon.

2018 Amateur Champion Ben Conroy, of New Haven Country Club, finished at even par, tied with Christopher Cappella of East Mountain Golf Club.

Defending Champion Rick Hayes of Silver Spring Country Club shot 72 to



make the cut on the number on Monday, followed by 70 Tuesday morning. He finished with 72 for 214 and T20th.

Thirty-nine players qualified for Tuesday's 36 holes, shooting 72 or better on August 5. Scores were lower than normal in a Palmer Cup, which is usually played in

damp, chilly May.

Eric Bleile of Sterling Farms, following a strong showing in the Public Links Championship the week prior, led the way on day one. He was first in with 66 (-3), taking advantage of receptive greens and lively fairways that allowed more wedges



**After shooting 65 in round two, Day (above) slipped to 72 and second place. Paladino (opposite) followed consecutive 67s with 70, tying Day. Chris Ayers (opposite, below) finished with 67 to grab fifth behind Dowling.**

than usual, to make four birdies against a single bogey, on the 385-yard par 4 fourth.

Dowling recorded the second 66 later in the day, despite a bogey at the last. Dan Murphy had 67, as did Day and Paladino. Dowling predicted that players would have to take it low in round two to survive. "If the weather stays like this, you've got to keep going. It's really receptive. The greens are so you can be aggressive on putts. So you gotta' keep the pedal down." He did.

The Russell C. Palmer Cup, presented by Chris Cote's Golf Shop, is the state's premier stroke-play championship. It is named after the former CSGA director, now in the Hall of Fame, who established the GHIN system throughout the state and moved the CSGA to the "Connecticut Golf House," its home for 30 years.





# FOSDICK FIGHTS HIS WAY BACK

A great young player who lived his high school career in Ben James' shadow made it to the Amateur final, only to meet one of the best who ever played in Connecticut. He was five down early. And then the magic happened.





**T**his was as good as it gets. The final match of the 2020 Connecticut Amateur at Shorehaven Golf Club may have been the most competitive—and well-played—in the 118-year history of the championship. If you're thinking that's hyperbole, consider the following:

Both finalists shot 133 over 36 holes at par-71 Shorehaven Golf Club—nine under par—at the end of four days of two rounds a day, on greens that were running at 12 and a half. They made, between them, 20 birdies and 2 eagles. Many times birdies did not win holes. There were only 6 bogeys throughout the 36 holes. In the afternoon 18, the champion shot 63, one over the course record, and still was not able to clinch victory until the 36th hole.

In the end, 19-year-old college sophomore Chris Fosdick of Wallingford Country Club defeated former professional and 2013 Connecticut Amateur Champion Cody Paladino, one up.

It was the second consecutive former pro that Fosdick had faced and the second teenager that Paladino had faced. On Wednesday Fosdick eliminated 37-year-old Brad Tilley of Redding Country Club, two up, in the semi-final. The 31-year-old Paladino defeated 2019 Connecticut Junior Amateur Champion Ben James, 17, of Great River Golf Club, one up in a quarterfinal match.

The 2020 final contained none of the sloppiness that some finals can, coming as they do at the end of a marathon of golf. Nor was it a slugfest. It was more like the most beautiful boxing match you've ever witnessed. Fosdick shot 70 (-1) in the opening round, and after 16 holes was 5 down. Paladino finished that round at 66. His seven birdies enough to floor most competitors. "It's over," said a member of the media. "We're going home early."

But Fosdick's counter-punch was com-

**Paladino (above) fought through a difficult bracket, defeating Shorehaven's own Tommy McDonagh, then 2019 Junior Amateur Champion Ben James (opposite) and finally Mid-Am Champ Ben Day. Cody was nine under in the 36-hole final, and it wasn't enough.**



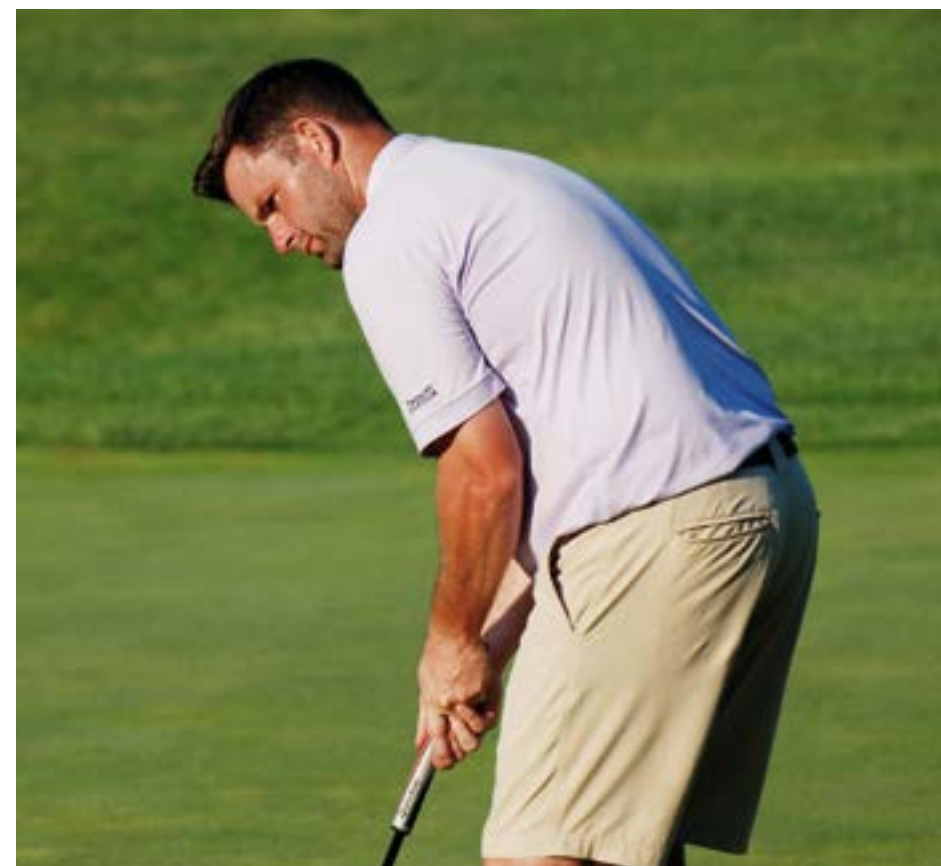
ing. After winning the last two holes of the morning round to get himself to "only" 3 down, he returned from the lunch break by eagling the par-5 first, hitting a 7-iron to 5 feet and one-upping Paladino's birdie. They tied the second with pars. Fosdick birdied the third from 12 feet. Paladino birdied the par-4 fourth, dropping a downhill putt of about 20 feet. Fosdick parred the 235-yard par-3 fifth to win the hole when Paladino found a bunker. They parred the sixth, seventh and eighth. Fosdick birdied the ninth.

The match that was "over" 11 holes ago was now tied with nine to play. Paladino had shot 34, Fosdick, 31. "Who needs the GHO, when you've got this," quipped one spectator, using the Travelers Championship's old name. The nine to come were even better. Fosdick shot 32, Paladino 33. At the 10th, Fosdick birdied from eight feet. He was one up. He birdied the par-5 11th to go two up when Paladino failed to get up and down from left of the green. They both hit the par-5 12th in two and birdied, Paladino missing a 10-footer for eagle. Fosdick won the par-3 13th with

par when Paladino's 4-foot putt did a 360 and lipped out. Fosdick, who had been three down to start the round, was now three up. Paladino hit driver on the short par-4 14th, then splashed a green side bunker shot to a foot for a winning birdie. Fosdick now two up. They parred the par-3 15th, both missing longish uphill putts for birdie, but with Fosdick dropping a tough downhill comebacker from five feet to tie and punctuating it with another short fist pump.

On the 536-yard, par-5 16th, Fosdick's second found the right fringe, about 25 feet from the front-right flag stick. Paladino hit the green. Fosdick chipped close. Paladino buried his 15-footer for eagle. He was now just one down. They both hit and parred the long, par-3 17th, narrowly missing birdies.

One up, one to play, Fosdick, hit driver on the 385-yard, par-4 18th, and landed in the bunker lying between the fairway and the marsh to his left. He then hit what he called probably the best shot of the match, a 122-yard wedge to 12 feet. From the fair-



**Brownson's Bob Murphy didn't realize this wasn't the Senior Amateur. He shot 146 to qualify for match play, the oldest player, at 60, to get there. Seeded 13th, he won his first match against 21-year-old Quinn Greene of the Country Club of Waterbury. Greene, Day (left), and Chandler Morris won the Amateur team trophy for the Country Club of Waterbury. McDonagh, Jason Jaworoski, T.J. Trimboli, Ron Eppert and Dan Suozzi took second for Shorehaven.**







way, Paladino hit wedge to 20 feet. When his putt missed, Fosdick was the champion.

“It’s hard not to get down when you’re behind 5 holes after 16,” said Fosdick after, “but you have to know that you still have twenty holes left. It’s not over till it’s over so you kind of hang in. The par on 17 in the morning and the 25 footer I made on 18, very aggressive, but that just gave me a lot of momentum heading into the second 18. I knew I needed to leave myself a little hope.” Paladino saw the 5-up lead similarly. “It’s match play, so you know you’re going to have the ups and downs. I’m disappointed in the result, for sure, but I’m not

disappointed in my play. I played really solid golf. I played really well this morning, then sort of played mediocre in the middle when I kind of sat back and watched him play outstanding, and then great again at the end. Chris was exceptional. It’s not like I started playing really poorly or anything like that. So am I disappointed in myself? No. Am I disappointed in the result? Of course.”

Asked later if the lip-out on the par-3 13th might have been what cost him the championship, Paladino argued the opposite. “If anything it motivated me,” he said. “It actually struck a chord with

me to hit driver on 14 and [pushed me to] make eagle on 16. I wish I had been able to make the putt on 17, honestly, that was the one I wish I had had. If I could square the match coming to 18, it’s a whole different story.” He called Fosdick’s shot out of the fairway bunker on the final hole phenomenal. “Honestly I didn’t know what he was looking at, but it couldn’t have been good. I give him all the credit in the world. He played outstanding golf.”

As for Fosdick’s age, Paladino smiled. “Honestly, being 19-years old makes no difference. I played [17-year-old] Ben James yesterday and it doesn’t matter. It’s

**Tilley looked invincible as medalist, and took out Josh Cameron (right) early, but lost to an unshakeable Fosdick in a semifinal that went 18.**

kind of what has happened in the golf world generally. You see it happening on all the tours, I mean kids right out of college winning on the PGA Tour. The level of golf has changed so much in the last 20 to 30 years that if you’re playing a high level of junior golf, you’re playing basically tour-level golf. Is Chris Fosdick young and inexperienced at 19 years old? Absolutely not.” No one at Shorehaven could argue with that.





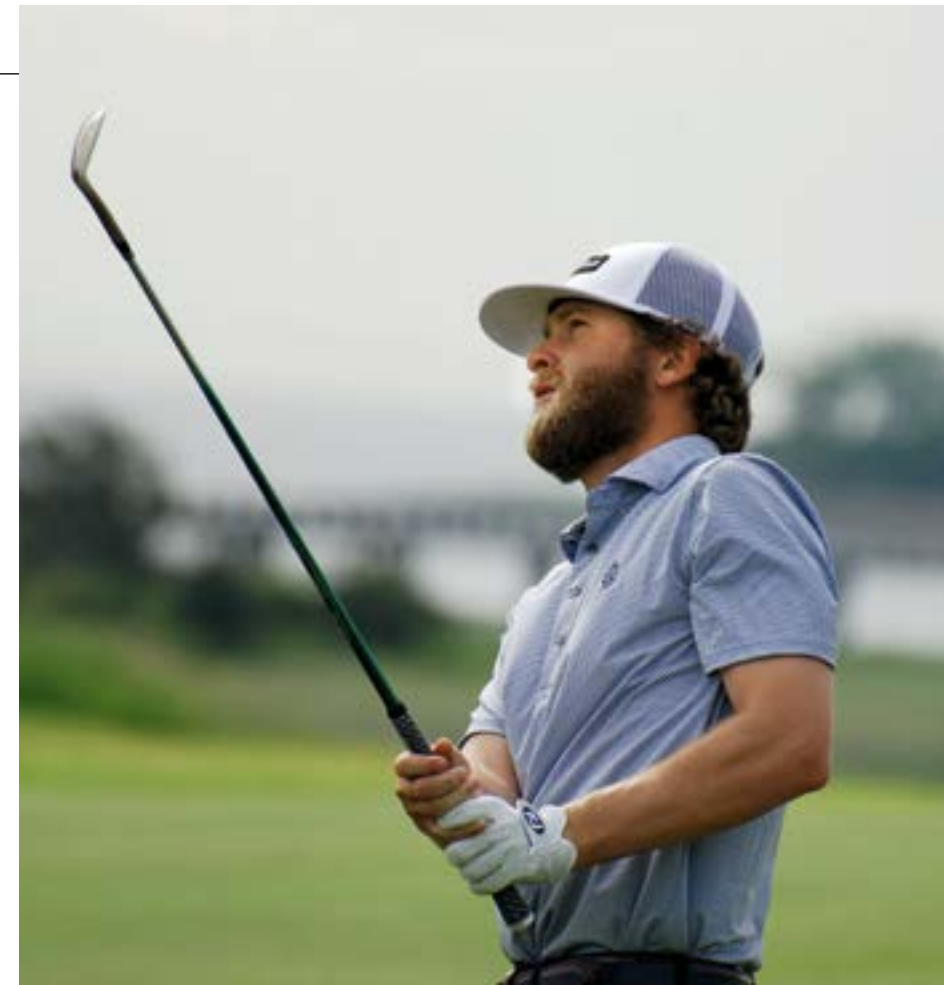
Fosdick won the inaugural CIAC high school open championship three years ago, and has played consistently strong golf. He was required to qualify for the Amateur this year and did at Lyman Orchards Golf Club, where he grew up learning the game. He shot even par, with four-under 32 on the back, to co-medal. Fosdick competed in a pre-qualifier for the Travelers Championship and made the Monday qualifier. He chose to play the Amateur instead. "I think I made the right call," he said.

Certainly the competition, especially during the quarter, semifinal and final matches that included Fosdick, Paladino, James, Tilley, two-time Amateur Champion Tommy McDonagh, and Ben Day, who lost to Paladino in the semis, made Paladino's case for a new level of amateur play. Even the opening round produced drama. Tilley, one of the finest Mid-Amateurs in the country, met 17-year-old Michael Hanratty, who made four birdies on the second nine and chipped in on the 18th to send the match to a playoff, which Tilley won on the first hole. It was a friendly match. Hanratty was about to enter Colgate, where Tilley's best friend, Keith Tyburski, would coach him.

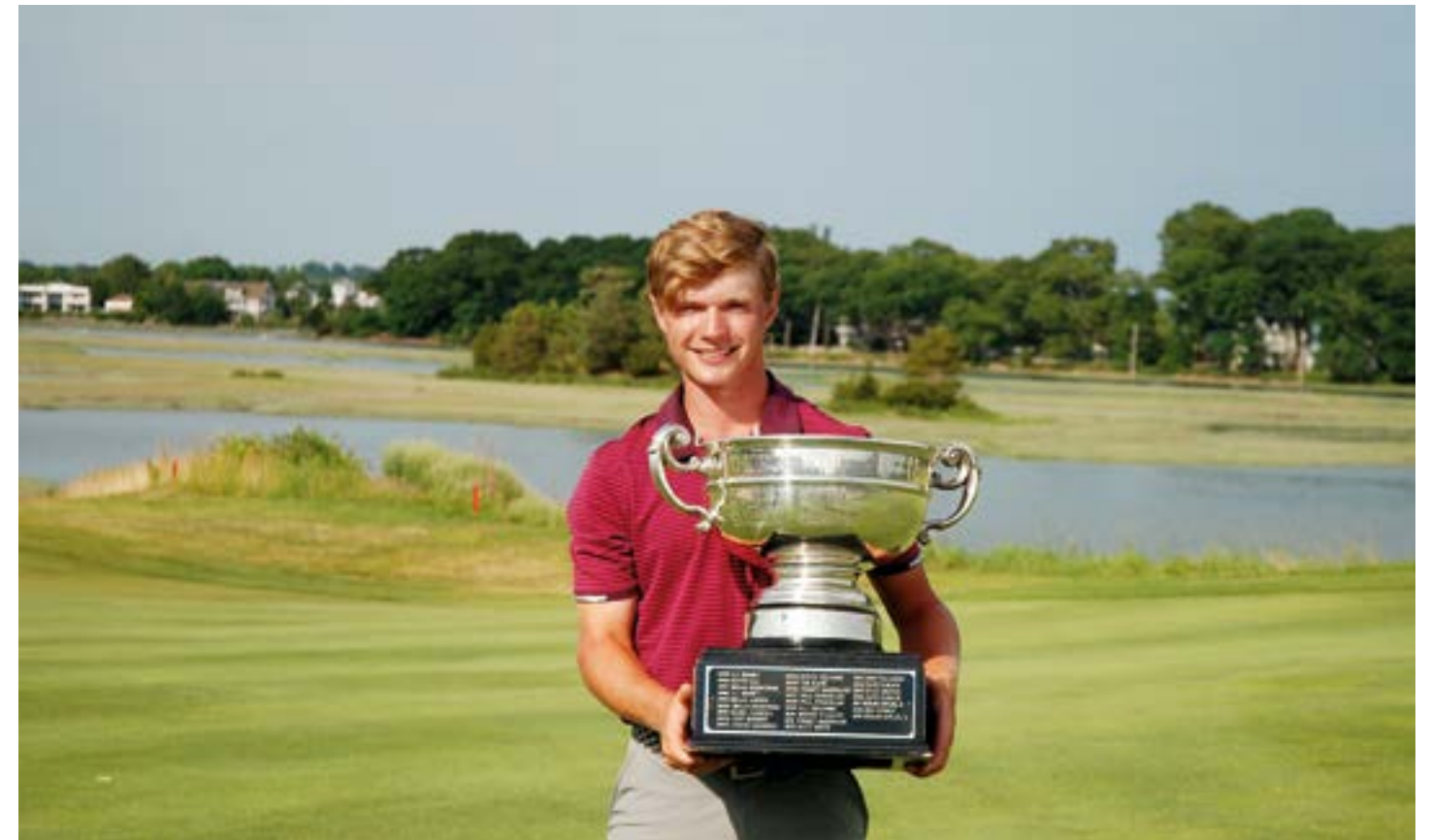
"It is probably the strongest field of any Connecticut Amateur ever," said Executive Director Mike Moraghan in presenting the Robert D. Pryde trophy to Fosdick. "Far and away the best final I've ever witnessed or heard about."

CSGA President Jim Healey, whose father James won the Amateur twice, praised the membership and staff of Shorehaven, including head professional Mike Laganza and General Manager James Connolly, and expressed the association's gratitude for their hosting of the 118th Amateur. "We thank you for holding our most important championship and for welcoming us so warmly," said Healey. He singled out Ryan Segrue, Shorehaven's superintendent and staff for the course's superb condition, which drew high praise from players.

**Betting money was on McDonagh (above), who played great at home. Thomas Durkin (near right) took out Ben Conroy but lost to Day. Adam Friedman of Great River battled Fosdick to the 18th, losing 2 down.**



**Ben Conroy (above) defeated Patrick Griffin in the opening round, but fell to Suffield's Durkin. Dan Murphy's (left) length made Shorehaven look short, but Tilley's five birdies in the quarterfinals did him in. At 19, Fosdick, now a University of Virginia sophomore, defeated two former professionals to win the Robert D. Pryde trophy.**





# 118<sup>TH</sup> CONNECTICUT AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP

Shorehaven G.C. ~ Norwalk, Conn. ~ Par 70 / 6550 yards ~ Entries: 277

June 22-25, 2020



MICHAEL HANRATTY



JASON JAWOROSKI



CHANDLER MORRIS





35<sup>TH</sup> CONNECTICUT PUBLIC LINKS  
PRESENTED BY GOLFTEC

## AIRMAN, AIM HIGH!

In his last full season before a career in the Air Force, Connor Roche played his home course like a pro, shooting 69 twice despite some unsteady nerves.

**At six under par, he won the Public Links at Simsbury Farms by a shot.**

Connor Roche finished the job and looked unflappable doing it. That, it turns out, was camouflage.

"I felt pressure from the first tee on," said Roche, who indeed bogeyed the first hole at Simsbury Farms Golf Course, but went on to win the 35th Connecticut Public Links Championship presented by GOLFTEC by one shot over Chris Ayers, the Old Dominion star on August 11. "There were putts where I was shaking. But I just tried to stroke it along my line."

The 22-year-old, who departed for Air Force training in November, acknowledged that some of the pressure was self-inflicted, given that this would be the biggest victory of his golfing life on the course where he learned the game and played high school competition. It seemed like fate that he might win here.

But it was less fate than fortune on two holes early on the final nine that turned out to be key. At that point Roche was five under, Ayers (above) four. As Ayers played the par-4 11th and hit a huge drive to 80 yards, Roche, a hole ahead, hit a smother hook off the tee, thrashing through the trees along the left side, and looking dire enough for him to hit a provisional. "That's gone," said one rules official. But Roche found his ball in the rough and Ayers lost his footing while hitting his wedge shot, leading to bogey at 11. Suddenly Roche's lead had grown to two. Roche birdied 12, they both birdied the par-5 14th. Roche added one at the short par-4 15th, lost it to a bogey at 17, and led by one as Ayers played 18. (Seth Jainchill had already finished at four under.) Ayers hit it close but couldn't coax the 6-footer in.

Call it a victory for the home team.





# CONROY'S COMEBACK

Four back on the final nine, 2018 Mid-Amateur Champ Ben Conroy stayed steady, trusting that things can change in a hurry. At Madison they did. A birdie at 14 and another on the second playoff hole brought victory over Cody Paladino, who suffered his third hardluck finish.





**O**n the final 18 holes of the Connecticut Mid-Amateur Championship at Madison Country Club in late August, Cody Paladino and Ben Conroy first separated themselves from the field. And then they separated themselves from one another and decided a winner.

That took longer. The two finished 54 holes of regulation at four-under 206, the only players under par, and then tied their first playoff hole, the 18th. Conroy, the 2018 Mid-Amateur Champion, like

Paladino a former professional, birdied the second playoff hole, the par-4 8th, to win the 33rd Connecticut Mid-Amateur Championship in sudden death.

After a long-iron tee shot on the second playoff hole, Conroy hit lob wedge from 93 yards to two feet. "It was the perfect lob wedge, I didn't have to kill it, a nice full swing," said Conroy, who confessed that he felt a little nervous over the two-footer. "I know how hard it is to close." Paladino, who hit his second from the deep rough to 25 feet could not

convert. To catch Paladino on the final nine holes, Conroy had to shoot the low round of the championship, 66 (-4), while Paladino shot 70, level par, after a second consecutive 68 in the morning. Both were three under par for the day when Paladino began the difficult final eight holes of the course, more open but much longer than the first ten. Standing on the 11th tee, he was -7 and four shots ahead of Conroy, who had already played the 11th and bogeyed to go to -3. The four-stroke difference was where they had begun the final round.

Three consecutive bogeys by Paladino that followed, at the long par-3 11th, the par-4 12th and the downhill par-3 13th, and a 20-foot Conroy birdie on the par-5 14th, put them both at -4. Each had makeable chances at 16, 17 and 18, but could not get birdies to drop.

Paladino's best chance came at the final hole. After a perfect drive, he hit pitching wedge to just six feet from the back left pin. His putt lipped out. "I played it on



**Matthew Diramio (left) shot 68 in round one, tying Cody Paladino and Dave Szewczul (opposite), but lost the touch after. Justin Beal (above) got most of them to fall in round three, shooting 69, but not all. He finished sixth.**



**Riley Goes Low**  
Jeffrey Riley of Black Hall Club shot the second-low round of the championship, 67, in round two, and, despite a 73 in the final round, finished third alone. By then the 33rd Mid-Amateur had turned into a battle of two former champions.



the right edge, and needed a little higher line,” said the disappointed Paladino, who in 2020 has finished runner-up in the Amateur and T2 at the Palmer Cup. He was seeking to become the first player in Connecticut history to win all of the men’s major championships: the Open, the Amateur, the Public Links, the Palmer Cup and, in his first attempt, the Mid-Am.

Long before Paladino’s lip-out on 18 in regulation, it had become a two-man championship. Jeffrey Riley of Black Hall Club shot 67 in the morning and began the final round at one under, but slipped to 73 and finished third alone at 212 (+2). Austin Cilley of the Lakes of Isles Golf Club finished a shot back of Riley at 213, and Josh Cameron of Shennecossett Golf Club finished fourth at 216. Only one other player broke par in the final round, Justin Beal of Fox Hopyard Golf Club, who shot 69 to finish sixth.

What kept scores down in the morning was a 20-mile-an-hour wind that pushed balls long on 18, held them up on the long par-3 11th, and created cross currents in the heart of the golf course, the testing Nos. 14, 15 and 16. Conroy said he was prepared for more wind in the afternoon, but found the conditions much more benign. “I thought it was only going to get worse and if it had, four under would not be possible,” said Conroy. “But it eased and definitely made it more scoreable.”

What also made for better scoring was a putting change Conroy devised between rounds. “I made an adjustment to my head position that got me hitting the ball more on my line.” He said his full swing thoughts were “keep my head steady and pause at the top.” His tempo in the final round was just as steady. He and friend T.J. Fitzgerald, who knows the course well and caddied for Conroy this week, seemed to have figured out Madison’s tricky greens. That helped the 2018 Player of the Year get off to a hot start. He birdied the 3rd, 5th and 7th holes, giving him a front-nine 32, despite not making birdie at the short par-5 6th. But Paladino made three birdies of his own, against a single bogey, to finish the nine at 33, three ahead. Both birdied the short par-4 10th with threes.

After each made four at the 11th, it was a championship of seven holes. Paladino



“I thought the wind was only going to get worse,” said Conroy of the final round. “But it eased and definitely made it more scoreable.”

recovered from an errant drive on 12 and got it on the green, but in a difficult spot, missing a 5-footer for par. On 13, “an okay shot” left him next to the green but an indifferent chip prevented a conversion. “That hurt,” said Paladino after. “I didn’t really know where things stood at that point, and then I looked at some point on 14 or 15 and I saw that Benny was obviously playing a great round. I had my chances coming in. I had a good look on 16 and obviously the one at 18 in regulation. I just didn’t play a high enough line.”

Conroy knows from lost leads in the Mid-Amateur, having lost one himself in 2017 before an unsuccessful playoff. His



comeback today, four shots, was one more than the lead he lost then. The players were in universal praise of Madison, which was at 6,500 yards was in perfect condition and, given Conroy’s 66 and Riley’s 67 Tuesday, “scoreable.” But as defending champion Ben Day, who finished T9, predicted before the event, it played “harder than people expect.”

First round co-leaders with Paladino, Dave Szewczul and Matthew Diramio, finished T9 and T13 respectively.

As his father Jay congratulated him for his patience and gutsy comeback—“I’m so proud”—Ben Conroy accepted the trophy and headed home to see his own son, Miles, just a year old, before bedtime.

“It was a great championship and a terrific venue for a very strong field of Connecticut mid-amateurs with two exceptional players in Ben and Cody leading the way.”

It was Madison’s first Mid-Amateur Championship. The bones of Madison, built in 1900, belong to Willie Park Jr., who also designed the site of last year’s Mid-Amateur, Shuttle Meadow Country Club. In 2015 architect Brian Silva



Lake of Isles’ Austin Cilley (far left) opened with 69 and finished alone in fourth. Josh Cameron of Shennecossett (opposite) played well, as he had in the Amateur and finished fifth. Conroy shared congratulations from Paladino and dad Jay with friend and caddie T.J. Fitzgerald.



undertook a wholesale renovation of the course, restoring Madison’s links-land feel. Five holes were redesigned completely. Every hole was affected. Greens were moved, some raised and almost all made larger. Fairways were re-grassed in pure bent grass. The par-70 layout was lengthened by some 200 yards to about 6,520 yards and the slope rating

jumped from 127 to 134. Winds off the Sound are its defense.

Madison was awarded the CSGA’s Distinguished Club of the Year award this year, not only for its willingness to host championships like the Mid-Am, but its contributions to the game in general. “It is a very special place with a very special membership that just

wants to improve and improve,” said architect Silva about the club.

“We’re a golf club,” said President Ed Detmer. “No pool. No tennis courts. No restaurant. And the membership and staff are proud, I’m sure, that Madison stood up to the best players in the state the way it did this week.”

33rd Connecticut Mid-Amateur			
Madison Country Club - Madison, CT - Par 70/ 6,500 yards - Entries: 203			
1 Ben Conroy, New Haven C.C. *	69-71-66-206	4 Austin Cilley, Lake of Isles	69-73-71-213
2 Cody Paladino, C.C. of Farmington	68-68-70-206	5 Josh Cameron, Shennecossett G.C.	70-71-75-216
3 Jeff Riley, Black Hall Club	72-67-73-212	6 Justin Beal, Fox Hopyard G.C.	73-75-69-217

\*won on 2nd playoff hole



# CODY CLOSE

Cody Paladino came within five shots of running the table in 2020—and winning every major amateur event of the season. He lost on the last hole of the Amateur Final, shooting nine under over those 36 holes. He tied second at the Palmer Cup, three shots back. He lost to a birdie on the second hole of a playoff at the Mid-Am at Madison Country Club to Ben Conroy. He was runner-up by a shot at the Tournament of Champions. He swept his individual and team matches at the Julius Boros Challenge Cup. He established an average in state stroke-play competition of 70.25. In his first full year back as an amateur Paladino played at a level rarely witnessed in Connecticut. It was a record that, despite disappointment, set him apart from every amateur in the state and made him the 2020 Dick Tettelbach Player of the Year.





# WOMEN

Put your game face on. Alexa Brown's stare at the Women's Amateur says it all. With college players at home, and high schoolers missing CIAC events, female CSGA tournaments often resembled a battle of generations. Play in CSGA, CWGA and SNEWGA competition was, well, serious.



## LEFTY LEAVES NO DOUBT

Fifteen-year-old Sophia Sarrazin took care of business when some said youthful nerves might betray her. Facing pressure like a veteran, **she took the Women's Amateur at Fairview Farm by four shots.**

**T**he Connecticut Women's Amateur is not match play, but on the back nine at Fairview Farm in July it became that. A match of generations, a match of experience, a match of the newest face of women's golf in Connecticut versus the long established.

In the end, 15-year-old Sophia Sarrazin of the Patterson Club played like the unflinching veteran she will become, shooting the lone sub-par round of the championship, 71, and winning by four over perennial Women's Player of the Year, Jen Holland, who won this championship in 2008 and once again took the Senior Division (ages 50-59) trophy. Holland was four over-75—after 74 the day before. Her second-place finish was, by her count, “about the eighth.”

First-round leader Mia Grzywinski, a 19-year-old Quinnipiac sophomore from the Country Club of Farmington, followed 73 with 80 and tied with Gia Watkins of Brooklawn Country Club for third. An unfortunate bounce on the par-5 third, where the teenager's second shot, only slightly off line, bounded into deep rough and led to a double bogey (while Sarrazin and Holland were birdieing). It was a ditch that, despite solid play, she was never able to climb out of.

Watkins shot 75 to go with 78 and took the Super Senior Division (60 and over) by 12 shots.

Sarrazin's steadiness on the back nine won the day. After a rare bogey on the par-3 tenth, causing her lead over Holland to shrink to two, she bounced back with an 8-foot birdie on the par-4 11th, and never led by less than three after that. Even a drive into the left penalty area on 15, leading to her third and final bogey of the day (against four birdies) didn't upset her. Perhaps because it was then she got a



**Former champion Jen Holland could not find the birdies down the stretch.**

little advice from “caddie” Susan Sarrazin, her mother, who drove a cart while Sophia walked. “At that point my mom just told me, ‘Relax. Breathe!’” laughed Sophia. There were no more flinches to follow.

Her goal in the final round, she said, was to play “fearlessly.” “I wanted to play with confidence and finish in a good position whether that meant winning or not.” She kept that attitude to the end. Of the back nine, she said: “I didn't want to play like I had already won. I wanted to play like I was still trying to win. Because anything can happen on the last three holes. And I think I did.”

For her part, Holland felt the frustration of opportunities not seized. Three down going into the back nine, and only two after Sarrazin's bogey at 10, Holland would not birdie for the rest of the day. She was unable to hit a short approach close on 11, where Sarrazin birdied, and on the short par-4 14th three-putted from the fringe after Sarrazin, who left an approach 40-feet short, deftly lagged close.

“My first putt didn't break the way I thought it would. And then I wasn't able to make the four-footer. That one really hurt,” said Holland. After birdieing both par 5s on the front nine she played those







on the back one over, failing to get up and down for par on the 16th after a short approach—a miscalculation she said—followed by an indifferent chip. Sarrazin, meanwhile, coaxed a long, green-side chip at 16 to a few feet and converted, the final dagger. In the end, Holland had two bogeys and no birdies on the back, Sarrazin two bogeys and the birdie at 11.

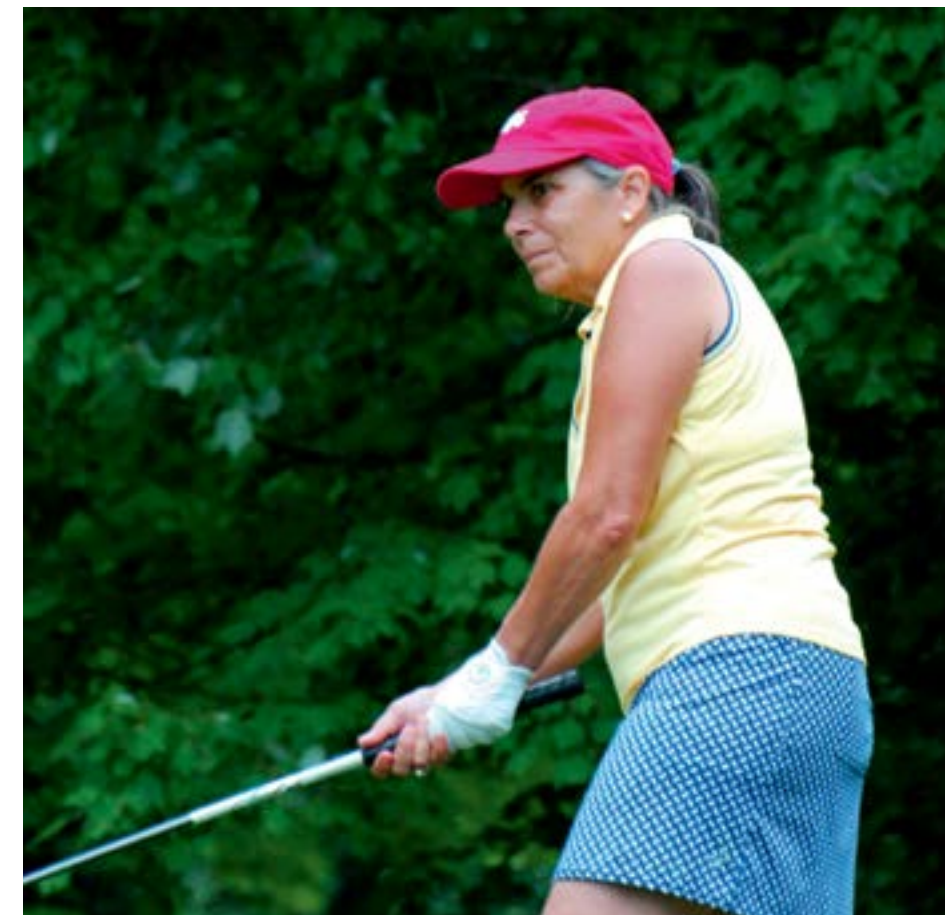
“Sophia was fantastic. She and Mia both hit shot after shot that were great,” said a gracious Holland after. “It’s disappointing to lose, but I’m happy to be competitive. My game today wasn’t stellar.

**Grzywinski set the pace in round one, but a double early in round two cost her. Watkins (right) took the Super Senior.**

Too many blunders.”

Sarrazin also won the Junior Division of the championship, open to players 17 and under. Jensi Nicholas of Tashua Knolls was second.

In the new “Open” division, ages 18 to 49, Grzywinski won by six over Caroline Petchark of Great Neck Country Club and NoraNoel Nolan of Shorehaven. Grzywinski stole the show on day one, shooting 73 with three birdies, despite a bogey at the final hole, a manageable par 5. She played in the final group with Holland and Sarrazin in the final round, but lost her touch on the greens, making only one birdie and finishing with three



consecutive bogeys.

It was Sophia Sarrazin’s tournament in the end. “She held up so well under the pressure of being in the final group,” said Debbie Johnson, who was second in the Senior Division. “Jen didn’t lose it. Sophia

won it.”

“It’s very exciting,” said Sarrazin. “I was very nervous coming into the end because I realized that this is a big tournament with a lot of really amazing players. So it means a lot to win it.”

**55th Women’s Amateur Championship  
Fairview Farm G. C. - Harwinton, Conn.  
Par 72 / 5,704 yards Entries 52  
July 22-23, 2020**

<b>1</b>	<b>Sophia Sarrazin, Patterson Club</b>	<b>74-71-145</b>
<b>2</b>	Jen Holland, Lyman Orchards G.C.	74-75-149
<b>T3</b>	Gia Watkins, Brooklawn C.C.	78-75-153
<b>T3</b>	Mia Grzywinski, C.C. of Farmington	73-80-153
<b>T5</b>	Caroline Petchark, Great Neck C.C.	81-78-159
<b>T5</b>	NoraNoel Nolan, Shorehaven G.C.	82-77-159
<b>T5</b>	Elizabeth Garfield, Tashua Knolls G.C.	79-80-159
<b>9</b>	Leah Ayers, Goodwin G.C.	79-82-161
<b>T10</b>	Debbie Johnson, Oronoque C.C.	83-79-162
<b>T10</b>	Genevieve Courtney, Candlewood Valley C.C	77-85-162







## 'I LOVE TO PLAY THE KIDS'

Jen Holland won her fourth consecutive Liz Janangelo Caron Player of the Year Award by being willing to compete against players half her age. Her next goal: **Meeting the best seniors at the the U.S. Senior Women's Open.**

**T**he surprise is not that Jen Holland won her fourth consecutive Liz Janangelo Caron Player of the Year Award.

The surprise is that, in a year when teachers like Jen were forced to cope with the new world of distance learning, then adjust to half classes and move back to in-school classes—knowing that at any point it all might change again—she was able to play often and well enough to win anyway.

Holland found a way.

At 57 a “senior” player who still relegates golf to the school recess, Holland won the Southern New England Women's Golf Association Individual Championship by 11 shots at Richter Park Golf Course. It was her eighth championship since 1999. She finished second in the Connecticut Women's Amateur at Fairview Farm. She finished second by a shot to Mercedes Large in the SNEWGA Senior Championship, an event she has won three times.

Sophia Sarrazin, who won the Amateur as a 15-year-old—she has since turned 16—was second in the Player of the Year race, Large third.

Holland seems to love competing—against old or young. She especially enjoys the mix that open events such as the Amateur provide. “I love to play against the kids,” she says. “I want to play against the very best players. Some of the young kids are really so good.”

Holland's game remains unchanged. Strong off the tee, she focuses most of her practice now on approaches and short game. She's as long as the kids, too.

“It's funny. All my life I played a fade, and then about 10 years ago I hurt both



Holland finished second to 15-year-old Sophia Sarrazin at the Women's Amateur, contending well into the last few holes. She won her eighth SNEWGA individual title.

“Some of these kids are really good. I love competing against them.”  
—Jen Holland

of my thumbs spotting kids in gymnastics. I can't grip the club as hard now and the result is that it's easier to square the face and even turn the ball over.”

During a summer when those high school and college players were around to compete in the Women's Amateur, Holland nonetheless excelled, giving herself a chance to win her second Amateur exactly 12 years after she won her first.

Holland's groundedness in this most topsy turvy of seasons sustained her.

“She is a master at managing her emotions and maintaining the same ‘energy level’ throughout the round—

never quickening or slowing her routine, never losing her composure,” says fellow competitor and friend Gia Watkins, who finished third at the Amateur and fifth in the Player of the Year standings. “Jen is competitive...not against the field, but against herself. I get the sense she is always trying to achieve her personal best. And if that personal best wins the tournament, that's even better.”

She displays as much patience on the course as she does with her elementary school kids. Her demeanor rarely changes. She's a grateful winner and a gracious loser.

Holland did not play in a USGA event this year. She has played recently in both the Women's Senior Amateur and the Women's Mid-Amateur, eliminated this year due to COVID. Her big goal in 2021 will be to qualify for the Third U.S. Senior Women's Open at Brooklawn Country Club in August.

The kids in that one will be at least 50.



# WORKIN' FOR IT



Everybody knows those great  
shots just don't just happen...





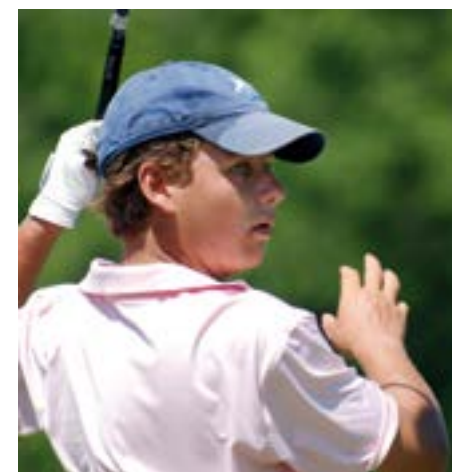
**There must be golfers who can hit a shot, and having given it their best, stand back and reflect calmly on the result. We haven't met them. The golfers we know work until the final second to shape, sculpt or sweeten their product. You know them by their body english.**







As with swings, you have choices. Go with Nabeel Khan's Standard Twist, Julia Bazata's Stack- and-Tilt-Back, Eric Dietrich's All-Prone position, Sophia Sarrazin's Half-Garland Coax or the graceful Let-Go-But-Look-Good motion of Calvin Smith. Maybe you just give it the glare, like Shaun Powers. You can't be cooler under the pressure than smiling Rick Hayes, or the leaner, Bill Wallis. When it comes to putting, though, who beats Mia Grzywinski's cheerful Bend and Peek?





# JUNIORS

*At the Borck Junior, Molly Mitchell of the Country Club of New Canaan had a pretty good caddie in sister Meghan Mitchell, the 2019 Connecticut Amateur Champ. The CSGA oversaw the Borck for the first time and watched Mia Scarpati defeat Defending Champion Sophia Sarrazin in the final. At the Junior Amateur Matthew Doyle of Madison broke through.*





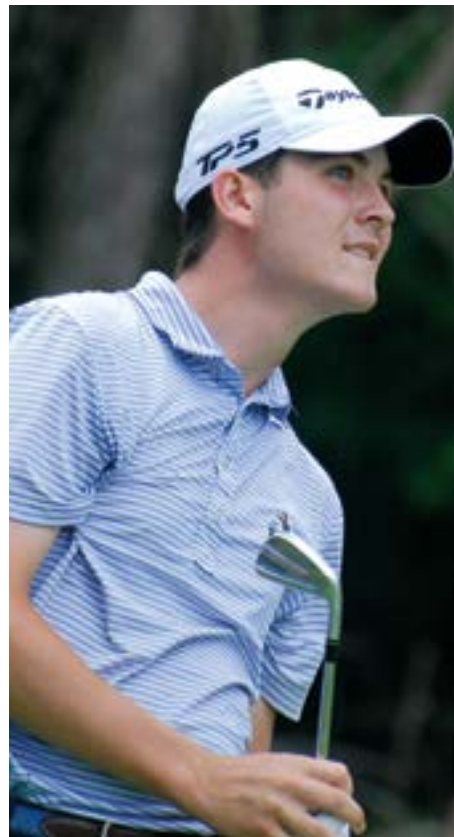
## THIS TIME IT'S MATT'S TIME

For Madison's Matt Doyle, runner-up in 2018 as a 15-year-old and a victim in match play again last year, it was about time. Surviving mostly tight matches, **Doyle took charge in the final against Kyle St. Pierre with four birdies.**

**M**att Doyle has been close before. This time was his time. Doyle, of Madison Country Club, defeated Kyle St. Pierre of Newtown, 2 and 1 to win the 79th Junior Amateur at Watertown Golf Club.

Doyle, the No. 5 seed, made four birdies, beginning at the first hole, and was never down in the match. St. Pierre, who had defeated Jack Bosworth in 20 holes in the semi-final, was level par through 17, but couldn't match what would have been a 68 (-3).

"Two years ago, I was the runner-up in this [to Connor Belcastro]," said Doyle.



"Two years ago I was runner-up. I knew I was going to get my shot at redemption."

— Matt Doyle

"I knew going in I would have my shot at redemption and I got it. It feels great, an honor to win."

Doyle came into the Junior following a victory at the PGA Junior at Keney Park, which he took by ten shots. The Junior Amateur proved tougher. He defeated Bradley Sawka in 21 holes, got by Ben Boyd of Wampanoag Country Club, 3 and 2, and then met his friend Alexander Gu in the semis.

They've each played in four Junior Amateurs and made match play every year. And yet they'd never met head-to-head—until this year.

When Gu beat Cody Brew of Tumble Brook Country Club and Doyle eliminated Ben Boyd of Wampanoag in the quarters Wednesday morning, the battle the two friends talked about for weeks came to fruition. Sort of.

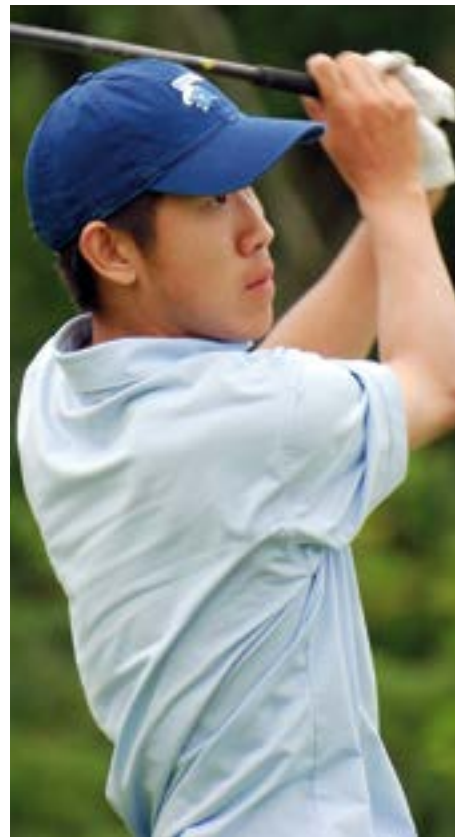
"The problem was, we were thinking it would be in the finals," said Doyle.

**St. Pierre (left), son of former Connecticut Open Champion Jim St. Pierre, lost ground on the front nine of the final against Doyle, falling two down, and then played steadily until the end, losing on the 17th. Gu (right) reached the semi-finals but could not stop his friend and the eventual champion.**

"Oh well."

In the end, it was Doyle's day. Following a 3-hour rain delay that interrupted the match after four holes, Doyle defeated his friend, 5 and 4, shooting one-under through 14 holes. Gu, uncharacteristically was three over on each side.

"Give Matt all the credit," said Gu, who was plagued by a balky putter. "He played very steady. I had some putts that I thought were good that didn't fall, but Matt was solid." Gu, who had been making swing changes in preparation for college golf at Dartmouth said he "had a lot of positive things to take away from the week."







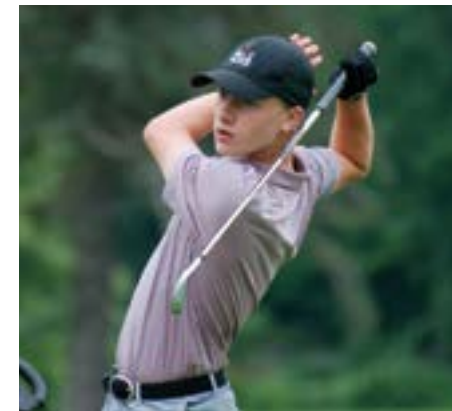
In the other semi, St. Pierre and Hop Meadow Country Club's Jack Bosworth had a fight-to-the-clubhouse battle in which the lead changed hands nine times, including on the 17th when Bosworth birdied to go ahead and on the 18th, when St. Pierre hit his approach to inches to tie the match. St. Pierre won on the 20th hole, with a par.

Last year St. Pierre lost in the semi-finals to eventual Champion Ben James. Bosworth, two years and about 12 inches of growth ago, stunned the championship and his brother James with a 69 to make match play. He beat Aidan Stuart (like Doyle, from Madison Country Club), 4 and 3 in the quarters to meet St. Pierre.

St. Pierre had eliminated Jackson Roman of Shuttle Meadow, 3 and 1.

The two semi-finals exemplified what was an unusually level playing field in

**St. Pierre (left) beat "experienced" juniors Smith, Hanratty, Roman and Bosworth (upper right) to reach the final. Medalist Max Chubet (below) fell early. Sawka took Doyle to extra holes.**



the Junior this year. The reason: Overwhelming favorite Ben James, who went on last year to play on the U.S. Junior Presidents Cup team at age 16, was forced to withdraw. James was invited to play in the North & South Men's Championship prior to the Connecticut/New York/ New Jersey COVID travel restrictions, accepted and then was forced to quarantine upon his return to Connecticut.

The quarterfinals contained less late-hole drama than the first two rounds had. Four of those went extra holes (including one each of Gu's and Doyle's) and six others ended at holes 17 or 18.

It often came down to short putts missed, the competitors said. Greens were

fast, firm and rolling out. Aggressive putters often left themselves with five-footers. Matt Doyle proved up to that challenge, and in the end it made all the difference.



**79th Connecticut Junior Amateur  
Watertown Golf Club 6,400 yards  
July 6-9, 2020 Entries: 75**

**Matt Doyle's path to the William A. Salvatore Trophy**

Stroke Play Qualifier: 72 (+1), seeded fifth

Round of 32: Defeats Luke Stennett of CSGA Club for Schools, 2 and 1

Round of 16: Defeats Bradley Sawka of Ellington Ridge C.C., 21 holes

Quarterfinals: Defeats Ben Boyd of Wampanoag C.C., 3 and 2

Semifinals: Defeats Alex Gu of CSGA Club for Schools, 5 and 4

Finals: Defeats Kyle St. Pierre of Newtown C.C., 2 and 1





## ROMAN AND SCARPATI SOAR

Mia Scarpati turned the tables on friend and frequent rival Sophia Sarrazin. Jackson Roman took advantage of a game on fire. At C.C. of New Canaan, **this year's Borck Junior saw two champions play at their peaks.**

**M**ia Scarpati was officially out from under the radar. And Jackson Roman was officially on fire.

They won 2020 Borck Junior Tournament, both with breakthrough stories to tell.

For Scarpati, 16, who sometimes gets lost in discussions of Connecticut's great young junior players, it was payback of sorts. She defeated Defending Champion and 2020 Connecticut Women's Amateur Champion, Sophia Sarrazin, 15, her friend and frequent playing companion, 3 and 2, with a putting performance that left Sarrazin, who beat her in the final last year, shaking her head.

It was Scarpati's third straight Borck final—she won it in 2018—and she's is now part of a rare group in the event's 51-year-history who have their name on the Jay Borck trophy twice, a group that includes J.J. Henry.

For Roman, 17, it was the conclusion of a dream month. The 51st Borck was Roman's third victory in July and he didn't start until mid-month. He won the AJGA's Junior Golf Hub Championship at Chicopee Country Club, July 14-17, shooting 64 in the first round. On July 22-23, he won the 36-hole US Challenge Cup Championship at Agawam Hunt in East Providence, with rounds of 67 and 69, and this year plowed through a strong Borck field, his opponents including Ben Loomis on his home Country Club of New Canaan turf, and then, in the finals, Connor Goode of Glastonbury Hills Country Club, who played as well as a person can play and not win the championship.

Scarpati said a new approach to com-



**Twelve-year old Isabella Hassan of Rolling Hills was one of the new-to-competition juniors that the Borck welcomes. When victory comes, expect a call from J.J. Henry.**

"I think the difference between last year and this year is mainly mental preparation," said Scarpati

petition, under the tutelage of Tashua Knolls head pro Bobby Brown, was key. "I think the difference between last year and this year is mainly mental preparation," said Scarpati referring to last year's final when she led Sarrazin by three at one point only to fall on the final hole. "I've worked hard on playing confidently. I think last year I got careful. I didn't do that today."

Her confidence showed in her putting. She made par- and birdie-saving putts that gave her a lead early and allowed her to maintain that lead in the middle of the round when Sarrazin challenged.

(Her putting also helped her to a decisive win over Molly Mitchell of New Canaan in the semis).

"She putted lights out," said Sarrazin, who, like Roman, plays for the Hamden Hall golf team. "I don't think she missed a single putt inside eight feet and made at least one outside of that. I didn't make those. When you hit the same number of greens and don't make those putts, you're not going to win."

Roman was also never down in his final against Goode and took a two-hole lead into the ninth. On the back nine, he made birdies at 15 and 17, the last one from a few inches.

When it was over, the champions received a congratulatory call from the Henry, an avid Borck supporter. The Borck is named after Brooklawn Junior Champion Jay Borck, who died shortly after winning that tournament, and welcomes both seasoned players and juniors new to competition.



# SENIORS

Sometimes, seasoned competitors like Mike Lazzara will tell you, moves have to be adjusted to accommodate new aches and old muscles. But don't be fooled. Competitive fires flow as fiercely as ever, as 2020 competition, with two major events late in the fall, proved.





# SZEW CZUL'S SUPER AGAIN

Dave Szewczul was not talking about surgeries: "They're behind me." And maybe the withering heat of Longshore in the Super Senior was a balm. **Whatever it was, he was again the last man standing, the only one under par.**

The challenge of super senior golf is to resist talking about your ailments. Everybody's got 'em. Dave Szewczul, who spent a year recovering from surgery in 2018 was not talking medicine at Longshore Golf Course for the Super Senior. He was talking golf.

On a sweltering day in late July, Szewczul played like a man without aches or pains to win the Super Senior by two shots over Mike Moraghan of the Country Club of Waterbury. Szewczul, of TPC River Highlands, shot 68 and was the only player to score under par. Moraghan had 70 (+1).

It was the 24th playing of the Super Senior, for competitors 65 years and older, but just the second year of Szewczul's eligibility. He was third last year. As an open and senior competitor, he has won the Amateur, two Mid-Amateurs, four Public Links Championships, three Connecticut Senior Amateur championships and five Senior Match Play championships.

"It feels good to know that I'm still competitive," said Szewczul, who two years ago underwent multiple back, knee and eye surgeries. He was the 2019 Senior Player of the Year, but did not win. "I've felt a bit rusty this year, too, partly because it was hard to get into



A couple of late bogeys kept the Country Club of Waterbury's Mike Moraghan, also the CSGA Executive Director, from catching Szewczul. He finished two back of the man who has won almost everything there is to win in Connecticut golf.

"I'm just happy to know that I'm still competitive."  
—Dave Szewczul

a rhythm with the COVID situation. Physically I was fine, but the competitive side wasn't quite there."

It was at Longshore. Szewczul, in

sunshine-blocking floppy hat, made nine straight pars on the front side to shoot 35, then birdied two par fours on the back, the 12th and 17th, to finish with 33.

Brooklawn's Bill Dober, also a former Senior Amateur champion, was one of two at two over par, tying for third with Jonathan Groveman of Aspetuck, who shared net honors with Bill Wininger and George Fjellidal.



## Super Senior Championship Longshore Golf Course Westport, Conn. July 20, 2020

Par 69/ 5900 yards - Entries: 70

<b>1 Dave Szewczul, TPC River Highlands</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>T5 Paul Flament, Orange Hills C.C.</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>2 Mike Moraghan C.C. of Waterbury</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>T5 Terry Ruzzo, Tallwood C.C.</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>T3 Jonathan Groveman, Aspetuck Valley</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>T9 Rick Lawrence, Ridgewood C.C.</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>T3 Bill Dober, Brooklawn C.C.</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>T9 Bill Wininger, Tallwood C.C.</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>T5 Shawn McLoughlin, Ridgewood C.C.</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>T9 Bruce Krackowsky, Blue Fox Run</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>T5 Tom Yellin, Stanwich Club</b>	<b>72</b>		





## IT'S STEVENS IN THE END

A late bogey hurt, but Dick Stevens kept grinding. With a birdie on the par-4 35th hole at Farmington and a par at the last, he forced and won a playoff. **"You gotta' play 'em all," smiled Rick Malafronte in defeat.**

If there's such a thing as muscle memory, then maybe there's trophy memory, too.

2007 Senior Amateur Champion Richard Stevens won the Senior Amateur in September at the Country Club of Farmington on September 30 by remembering that anything can happen in amateur golf, and by grinding to the finish, even when the championship appeared out of reach.

He birdied the 17th, got up and down for par on the 18th, and then watched fellow competitor Rick Malafronte of Indian Hill Country Club, playing with a two-shot lead, double bogey the last, Farmington's 209-yard par 3. The two then played the same hole in a playoff, with Stevens parring it again, Malafronte bogeying, to win his second Senior Amateur title.

Malafronte, who has not won a CSGA title but who is one of the steadiest players in state competition, led the final round almost from the start. After nine holes, he was level par for the championship, where he'd begun the round, and two up over Stevens and Dave Jones of Mohegan Sun Golf Club. He played even until the last.

"Believe me, I know how bad that feels," said Stevens of the finish, who won this championship 13 years ago at Wethersfield Country Club. "My goal all day was not to make any bogeys and let the birdies take care of themselves." He made two of each, shooting 71—the best round of the day—and finishing as he'd started, at two over. Malafronte shot 73 thanks to the final double, also finishing at plus two, 144.

"Honestly, I did not feel nervous over the [36th hole] tee shot," said Malafronte. "I might have been a little quick, but I

wasn't nervous. It was just a bad swing. Hey, I only had to two-putt to win it."

Malafronte left his 25-foot-par three feet under the hole and missed. In the playoff, his hole-high tee shot went left, and he was unable to get up and down.

For 35 holes Rick Malafronte played almost perfect golf. It was that final par 3 that got him. Twice.

Stevens hit the front of the green and two-putted from 35 feet.

Jim Lawler of Mohegan Sun Golf Club, the only player under par in the opening round at 69 (-2), slipped to 81, and finished at 150 (+8), tying fifth with Brooklawn's Mike Hooper, who ended with 76.

Jones shot 74 and finished third at five over. Steven Frisch of Bull's Bridge Golf Club shot 74 and finished fourth alone at plus seven. At nine over were Dave Szewczul, Kevin Foster, Tom Yellin, Randy Rzy and Bill Hermanson.

By the 14th hole of round two, it was a tournament of two men—Malafronte and Stevens—both at even par for the day and securely ahead of Jones, Lawler and Frisch. Stevens parred the 375-yard 15th, before Malafronte, playing behind him, bogeyed it after pulling a short-iron into the left green side bunker from an awkward, downhill lie in the fairway. But Stevens bogeyed the 430-yard 16th when his hybrid shot rolled down the false front



and he was unable to get up and down. Malafronte parred there, with a brilliant hybrid directly at the hole, two putting from above it. While he was parring 16, however, Stevens, a hole ahead, hit a "7-iron-equivalent" hybrid to 10 feet and converted for birdie.

Malafronte hit his drive in the middle of the fairway at 17, experiencing a bit of "angina" as he put it, when the ball plugged and could not be found right away. It was found, he hit his second to about 15 feet and made a routine par. They were back to two apart.

And so it came down to the final hole, a hole Dick Stevens will remember fondly and one Rick Malafronte would just as soon forget.



## DAVE TAKES THE FIFTH

Two down on the final nine against Mark Vassalotti, Hall of Famer Dave Szewczul made three birdies, shot 33 and won again.

**In the 14th year of the championship, Szewczul made it a handful.**

**A**fter nine holes of his final match against Dave Szewczul in the 14th Senior Match Play at Innis Arden, Mark Vassalotti found himself in a place most people never see.

He was two up.

But Szewczul, like a marathoner timing his kick, quickly erased that lead and by the 15th hole had built a two-up lead of his own. It wasn't perfect golf, he said after, but in the end it was a perfect fifth victory in the Match Play, and his 2-up victory assured him of another Senior Player of the Year title.

"My back was tired today," said Szewczul, 66. "It's been a lot of golf, with COVID and the tournaments pushed together, you don't get the time to relax that you normally do. So I'm a little tired, a little mentally fatigued I think. But you know I hung in there. I kept playing it shot by shot. That's all you can do. I told myself anything can happen."

For the man who has won every amateur title there is to win in Connecticut golf, most multiple times, his comeback started with a chip-in birdie at the uphill, par-3 tenth. It was propelled by an improbable birdie from the rough at the long, par-4 12th. And it included two nifty up-and-ins from green side bunkers—for par on the long par-4 13th, where he went one-up for the first time, and at the short par-4 14th, nearly holing the sand shot but making a tying par. Then, on the long downhill, par-4 15th, with the wind blowing hard now, he played safely to the left of the green and took the hole when Vassalotti found water fronting the green.

When Szewczul hit a nearly perfect hybrid directly over the pin to 15 feet on the 190-yard, water-hugging 16th, he was up two. Szewczul's tee shot at 16 forced



**Vassalotti's smile-producing pitch-in on 17 vs. Fitzsimmons, gained him the final.**

Vassalotti, who also parred there, to be perfect from that point on. He came close. Vassalotti made a clutch par putt at 17 to extend the match, but a hybrid held up by the stiff wind at 18 found the bunker fronting the par-3 green. Szewczul, seeing that and going to a longer club, closed the door with a perfect shot to 15 feet, winning two up.

It was his fourth senior title of the year. He also won the Super Senior at Longshore in July, as well as the New England Super Senior and the Senior Tournament of Champions in September. For Vassalotti it was a different kind of victory.

"I'm just happy to be standing here," he told Szewczul when it was over. "I haven't played for six weeks, so just to be here and playing is great." The two finalists then talked for five minutes about backs and surgeries—Szewczul had multiple surgeries two years ago on his back, his knees and

his eyes—and the champion's last words to the runner-up were: "Avoid surgery if you can."

Such is senior golf. But tired backs or no, Innis Arden witnessed impressive golf on the final day in October winds that ranged from 10- to 20-plus miles an hour. It had been tamer but still playing tough two days before when 2015 Match Play Champion Bill Hermanson and Dave Jones, a semi-finalist last year, shot 72 (+2) to medal. Sixteen players at 77 or better advanced to match play. Defending Champion Mark Vasington made the final spot in a playoff, as well as Senior Amateur champion Dick Stevens (whom Szewczul met and defeated in 19 holes in the opening round.)

Despite the high qualifying scores, players had high praise for the golf course, designed by Kenneth Tod, A.W. Tillinghast, and renovated by Ken Dye ten years







ago. “Everything about it is wonderful. It’s right there in front of you. You just have to hit golf shots,” said 2016 Senior Match Play Champion Bruce Krackowsky.

On the last morning, Vassalotti won his semifinal against Paul Fitzsimmons of Brooklawn two up, closing out a man who the day before was “delirious” when he came a from five down to beat a stunned Tom Yellin, with a pitch-in for par at the 17th. “Hey, that’s what I’m supposed to do,” laughed Fitzsimmons. “He read the script wrong.” Six down after nine,

**After stunning Yellin, Fitzsimmons (left) lost to Vassalotti’s magic. McGuinness had Szewczul down, but lost 3 & 2.**

Fitzsimmons won the 10th, 11th and 12th with two pars and a birdie (at 11) to reduce the lead to three. His par on 16 got it to two, but Vassalotti’s pitch-in at 17 precluded a second straight miracle.

For most of the semi-final match between Szewczul and 2018 Match Play Champion McGuinness, things were tight. Again, Szewczul came from two down after eight to square the match at the par-5 11th. He won the uphill 12th with a par, the short par-4 14th with a birdie and the 15th with par. They tied the long par-3 16th and it was over. “He’s impressive,” said McGuinness afterward. “You just can’t make a mistake against him. But that’s why he’s so much fun to compete against.”



**14th Senior Match Play  
Innis Arden G. C. - Old Greenwich, Conn.  
Par 70 / 6307 yards Entries: 103  
October 5-7, 2020**

**Dave Szewczul’s path to victory**

Stroke Play Qualifier: 76 (+6), seeded ninth  
Round of 16: Defeats Richard Stevens,  
E Club of Connecticut, 19 holes  
Quarterfinals: Defeats Dave Jones of Mohegan  
Sun Golf Club, 2 and 1  
Semifinals: Defeats Pat McGuinness of  
Keney Park Golf Club, 3 and 2  
Finals: Defeats Mark Vassalotti of  
Sterling Farms Golf Club, 2 up





# THE MAN

Dave Szewczul lives to compete. He takes no shot for granted. He takes no hole, no round, no tournament for granted. So say his peers. With most of a painful rehabilitation behind him, Szewczul says he takes *nothing* for granted anymore. And perhaps that's his secret: gratitude. For the game, for his fellow competitors, for the chance to compete again. With a rebuilt swing not as powerful as it once was, he says, but with the same competitive drive that has always extracted the most from his considerable talent, Szewczul won four times as an individual in 2020, and once with partner Bill Hermanson at the Senior Four-Ball. He won the Super Senior, the New England Super Senior, the Senior Tournament of Champions and, in the final event of the season, the Senior Match Play. He was also part of the CSGA amateur team that defeated the pros at the Julius Boros Challenge Cup. It all added up to his 10th Dick Siderowf Senior Player of the Year Award.



Team play, with the pressure to be there for your partner, can drive you crackers. Team Glen Boggini and John Sawka did not win the Two Ball at Black Hall Club in a new format this year. But give them credit for savoring the experience.

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2020 PARTNERS

## HEY, DAD NICE WORK!

Playing with a loved one is tricky, especially when you're trading shots.

**For the Fretlys and the Nolans  
It looked like a piece of cake.**

**I**t was a year when golfers and non-golfers alike came to enjoy and appreciate time together with the family. On course was no exception. At Tumble Brook Country Club in the Father Son Championship and at Wethersfield Country Club in the inaugural Parent Child there was joy in the air, albeit at times with a mixture of angst and frustration. "It's the hardest tournament to play," said one Hall of Famer about playing the Father Son.

For the Fretlys, Steve and Jackson, it looked pretty painless. In the modified alternate shot format in which the team selects one drive and plays alternately from there, only the Fretlys were under par. Jackson, a star at Princeton, and his dad Steve, a 7.9 handicap at Greenwich Country Club, shot 71 (-1) with Steve making a slippery 4-footer to save par at the par-5 17th. "We hammed and egged it pretty well," said Jackson. "We made some clutch par saves...and..." continued Steve, "you made a couple of long birdie putts." Jackson nodded. "The one at 11 was big."

Three teams shot even par: defending champions Ben and Brian Jessen, Len and Greg Horvath of Manchester Country Club, and Jason and Matt Burrill of Rockledge.

At Wethersfield NoraNoel Nolan and her dad Gerard took the Mixed Division title in the first Parent Child Championship, born of the old Father Son Net Championship. The Nolans shot 75. Chip Kohn and Meredith Norton, along with Greg and Bethany Fell, shared second at 11 over. In the Men's Division, Les and Brett Zimmerman won on a match of cards with Kurt Myers and his son Peter at level par 71. The grandmother/grandson team of Toby and Matt Schuman won the net Mixed title with 72. In the Men's net competition Nick and Alexander Kapinos shot 65 to win.





# PARTNERS OLD AND NEW

Winning teams at Wintonbury and  
Chippanee told the same story:  
**Perseverance is the secret to  
taking home the trophy.**

**I**t wasn't perfect. But Jack Bracken and Nicole Elliott, playing for the second time together in the Mixed Team Championship at Chippanee Golf Club, got it done.

Three over after as many holes, the Hartford team—Bracken is a member and Elliott caddies there—righted the ship and played three over the rest of the way. Their 76 beat the team of Jace Rosenbluth and Andrea Rosenfield by a shot.

“We made a couple of early mistakes and missed a couple of short little putts and then settled into a nice little rhythm and played pretty solidly,” said Bracken. “[The Chapman format is a tough format and it is certainly hard because you don't want to leave your partner with a four or five footer that you wouldn't worry about if it was your ball.”

In the Chapman format both team members tee off, then play each other's ball for the second shot. One ball is then chosen and played alternatively from there. In the Net Division Larry and Joyce Tomasetti won with 67.

At the 39th Senior Four-Ball Championship at Wintonbury Hills in July the longtime partnership of Dave Szewczul and Bill Hermanson (below), two Hall of Famers, shot 63 (-7) to tie the team of Rick Nappi and James Kulacz of Timberlin Golf Club. Szewczul and Hermanson won with birdie on third extra hole, playing against only Nappi because Kulacz had to leave, their team having teed off early, the other late. The Senior Four-Ball is open to players of 55 and over. Szewczul, of TPC River Highlands, and Hermanson, of Black Hall, played together in the Two Man at Black Hall two months later and tied for fourth.







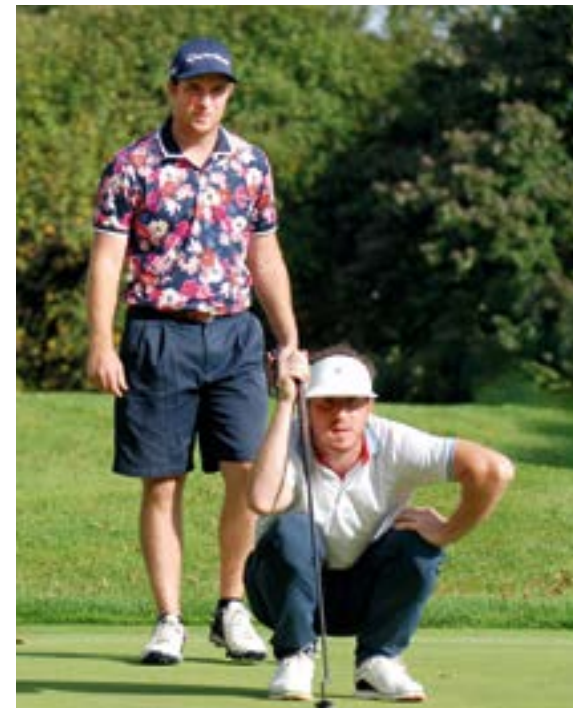
## Chillin' at Ten Under

The Four-Ball at Wallingford Country Club and the Two Man at Black Hall saw some of the strongest play of the season. At a new site and an old... **breakthrough winners and tight finishes were the order of the day.**

**A**t the 80th Connecticut Four-Ball, played this year at Wallingford Country Club when its usual site, Yale, did not open until late in the season, Chris Durocher and Corey Mitchener shot 10 under (their target score) to win. They were five under on each side for 61. Durocher made five birdies and an eagle. Mitchener made five birdies, too. "We got hot early," said Durocher of Trumbull. "And our goal all along was 10-under. I've played in the U.S. Four-Ball and I know you have to get to

double figures." Said Mitchener: "When you're playing well like that, you relax. And then you play even better."  
Jamie Sheltman of Alling Memorial and Dan Murphy of H. Smith Richardson came to the final hole nine under. Sheltman had a putt of at least 30 feet to tie, but missed. They shared second with the team of Aaron Wheeling and Patrick Griffin after Wheeling chipped in from behind the green at the last to reach nine under.  
For Sheltman and Murphy it was a different story at the Two Man Championship

in September at Black Hall. In a format altered for the change in season—the Two Man is usually played in May—the teams played 27 holes instead of 36, with the final nine holes in modified alternate shot. Sheltman followed Murphy approaches and made birdies at the seventh and ninth holes to tie Kevin Ward of Race Brook and Kevin Newlan of Grassy Hill at -8 and share the title. Their alternate shot score of 32 was low for the day. The co-champions had a simple philosophy. "I think we just wanted to swing as fast as we could and get



**Corey Mitchener (upper left) and Chris Durocher took the Four-Ball at Wallingford. The Kevins, Ward and Newlan (left) recorded -8 early at Black Hall. Late in the day Jamie Sheltman (far right) sank two birdie putts in the last three holes to help him and partner Dan Murphy reach that number and share the title.**







# AMATEURS WIN AGAIN

With the New England junior cancelled and the Tri-State matches rained out, the CSGA side made the most of things at Julius Boros Challenge Cup. **The ams won their third straight by the most lopsided margin yet.**



Playing captain Ian Marshall of the PGA side ran into a buzz saw in Roger Everin's amateurs.

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It was more than a captain could hope for, and Roger Everin doesn't hope out loud. Running back and forth between the greens of the 18th and the ninth at New Haven Country Club, notes in hand, he watched Rick Hayes and partner Mike Kennedy take 6.5 of nine points from Marc Bayram and E.J. Altobello, and smiled. "That's it. We've got it."

The Amateurs of the CSGA had taken the Julius Boros Challenge Cup again, their third straight victory, and the margin would prove hard to imagine much less hope for: 48.5 to 23.5.

"We had the strongest team I've seen, and I was still nervous," said four-time captain Roger Everin. "On those greens today nothing was safe. You'd miss a

three-footer and have a 25-footer coming back. But it feels good. Our guys really played well." The amateurs won the four-ball matches 17-7, the singles matches 31.5 to 16.5.

Leading the way for the CSGA side was the team of Cody Paladino and Nick Cook, both former professionals who have regained their amateur status. They defeated Brian Keiser, recent winner of the Connecticut PGA Championship, and Adam D'Amario of Indian Hill Country Club, 8.5 to .5.

Paladino, who plays at Wampanoag Country Club, was one of four amateurs who swept their opponents in singles matches: Former Amateur and Palmer Cup Champion Brian Ahern, 2019 Palmer Cup Champ Hayes and former Senior

Amateur Champion Richard Stevens were the others. On the CTPGA side former section champion Chris Tallman swept his singles match against Ben Conroy.

The Challenge Cup format comprises singles and team matches played simultaneously. In each foursome, a total of nine points is at stake, three in each singles match and three in the team match.

The three-peat by the amateurs comes after the professionals had won six consecutive matches. PGA player-captain Ian Marshall of IAMGOLF was gracious in defeat. "They played great," he said of the amateurs. "I will say, and this is not in any way an excuse, our professionals have been busy this year. They have not had the chance to play as they normally do, but that's a good thing."



## ONE DAY AT A TIME

With a schedule revamped due to the pandemic, the Chris Cote's One Day Series flourished, with 1,708 participants. At the Al Acker Championship **Kraczkowsky and Salvador won. Brett and Griffin were again POYs.**

**T**here may never be another season like this one. And yet golf, suddenly the sport of social distancing and "home officing," enjoyed unprecedented popularity. Rounds were up—some courses reporting well over 50 per cent—and the One Day Series, sponsored by Chris Cote's Golf Shop, enjoyed remarkable levels of play. Despite one cancellation and several date shifts due to COVID and Hurricane Isaias, more than 1700 players participated, according to the CSGA's Marsha Rupp, who oversees the events.

"I've never seen the golf industry so busy," said Cote, who said his company's support for the series since 2013 was never in question, even after the all-important Connecticut Golf Show cancelled in March due to COVID. "We love that the CSGA in the One Days brings together all ages and abilities to compete on a great venue of courses. The relationship continues to grow and we love that."

What looked grim in early spring turned out to be a different year altogether for Cote's Golf Shops. "We had to shut down all of our locations for over two months during our busiest time of year: March, April and May," he said. "But I'm happy to share we are in the green and up for the year! It's been amazing for golf and I think it will carry over for years to come. We are very lucky because many businesses are really struggling and I feel for them."

The season that might not have been became one of the most competitive ever, with One Day Player of the Year honors coming down to the final event of the year, the Al Acker Championship at Shennecossett Golf Course in Groton. Anthony Salvador won the under-55 Tettelbach Division, surviving a two-hole playoff with Amateur Champion Chris Fosdick and the Country Club of Farmington's Chris Maxwell. All three shot 69 (-2) in regulation. In the Siderowf (55 and over) Division Bruce Kraczkowsky shot a bogey-free 70 (-1) to edge Bill Hermanson and Mark Vassalotti.

Tom Brett of Manchester Country Club shot 72 to tie for fourth, and repeated as One Day Player of the Year in the Siderowf Division by just two points over Bob Murphy. Patrick Griffin, also T4, repeated as Player of the Year in the Tettelbach Division.

BRUCE KRACZKOWSKY





# #1

## TETTELBACH DIVISION

**PATRICK GRIFFIN** of Chippanee C.C. won three times—at Heritage Village, Hop Meadow and Torrington—in eight events, finishing 300 points ahead of Chris Fosdick, who won three times in three events. Griffin repeated as One Day POY in the Dick Tettelbach Division.



JOHN SAWKA

# June

## Wethersfield C.C.

June 2  
Tettelbach Division  
Gross: John Sawka 67  
Net: Carlo Guerrera 69  
Siderowf Division  
Gross: Bill Hermanson 66  
Net: Tom Hurd 66



SHAWN MCLOUGHLIN

## Mill River C.C.

June 15  
Tettelbach Division  
Gross: Peter Cerrato 68  
Net: Dan Ekstrom 68  
Siderowf Division  
Gross: Shawn McLoughlin 71  
Net: Richard Zanini, Rich Jusko 68



# #1

## SIDEROWF DIVISION

**TOM BRETT** of Manchester C.C. won the One Day Siderowf Division POY again, by just 2.08 points over Brownson's Bob Murphy, Jr., thanks to Brett's T4 at the Al Acker. Brett tied first at Indian Hill, finished second twice and third twice in eleven events.



BILL HERMANSON

# July

## Heritage Village C. C.

July 6  
Tettelbach Division  
Gross: Patrick Griffin 69  
Net: Branden Strileckis 66  
Siderowf Division  
Gross: Bill Hermanson 69  
Net: Rich Jute 68



RICH JUTE







SETH JAINCHILL

# July

**Torrington C.C.**  
 July 16  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Patrick Griffin 72  
 Net: Jason Morrow, Mani Capece,  
 Allyn Sedgwick 71  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Rick Malafronte 71  
 Net: Martin Brayboy 68

**Manchester C.C.**  
 July 27  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Seth Jainchill/Pat McKenna 66  
 Net: Branden Strileckis/John Richardson 62  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Jeff Dolin/Derek Waddington 66  
 Net: Rick Clough/Bob Pagani 64

# Sept

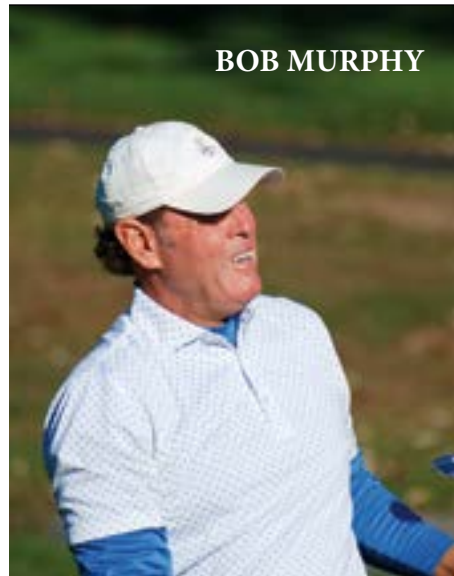
**Twin Hills C.C.**  
 September 28  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Jeff Riley 66  
 Net: Tim Donnel, Danny  
 Oquendo 66  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Richard Stevens 70  
 Net: Richard Zanini 65



ANTHONY SALVADOR

# Oct

**Al Acker Championship  
 Shennecossett G. Cse.**  
 October 20  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Anthony Salvador 69\*  
 Net: Danny Oquendo 66  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Bruce Krazkowsky 70  
 Net: Carl Musante 65  
 \*won in playoff over Chris Maxwell  
 and Chris Fosdick



BOB MURPHY

# Aug

**Stonington C.C.**  
 August 13  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Ben Day 66  
 Net: Glenn Pelt Jr. 64  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Bob Murphy 66  
 Net: Donald Kreh 65

**Hop Meadow C.C.**  
 August 31  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Patrick Griffin 69  
 Net: Mario Aregentino 65  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Frank Geiger 69  
 Net: Dean Foley 65

**Indian Hill C.C.**  
 August 18  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Brian Ferney 70  
 Net: Luis Datil 70  
 Mike Breen 70  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Al Germano, Bob Murphy, Shawn  
 McLoughlin, Tom Brett 72  
 Net: Nick Snyder 65

# TOC

**Tournament of Champions**  
 Bull's Bridge G.C.  
 September 8  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Chris Fosdick 66  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Dave Szewczul 70\*

\*won in a playoff over Frank Geiger



CHRIS FOSDICK



CHRIS MAXWELL

# Sept

**Lyman Orchards G.C.**  
 September 10  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Chris Fosdick 67  
 Net: Frank Jozefick 64  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Bob Murphy 66  
 Net: Alden Foss 71

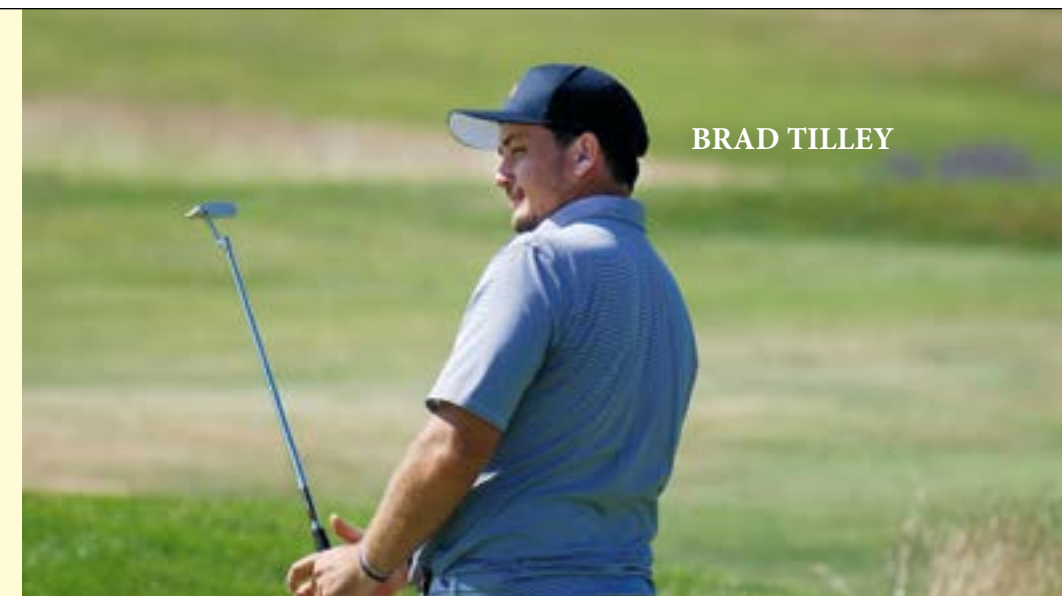
**Ellington Ridge C.C.**  
 September 21  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Chris Fosdick 66  
 Net: Chris Maxwell 71  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Dave Jones 71  
 Net: Scott Harger 72

**Suffield C.C.**  
 September 16  
*Tettelbach Division*  
 Gross: Salvador/Easdon 70  
 Griffin/Libby 70  
 Net: Warner/Poloski 69  
 Eisenhaure/Gemme 69  
*Siderowf Division*  
 Gross: Ruzzo/Byrne 71  
 Net: Floss/Weik 67

## USGA QUALIFIERS

Though many USGA events were dropped this year, qualifying for the 2021 Four-Ball took place in the fall and will continue in the spring. State players fared well.

In early October, Tim Connors of Rye, N.Y., and Brad Tilley of Easton qualified at Westhampton Golf Club. Qualifying at Glen Arbor Golf Club were Brad Jordan of Rowayton and John Lamendola of Greenwich. In that same qualifier brothers Dan and Tim Murphy of Fairfield earned alternate status. Brothers Dan and Ben Day are expected to try to qualify in March.



BRAD TILLEY



A photograph of a golf bag on a cart, partially obscured by tall, golden-brown grass in the foreground. The background is a soft-focus green field. The text '2020 HONOREES' is overlaid in white serif font on the right side of the image.

# 2020 HONOREES





## A CHAMPION OF WORDS

Genevieve Hecker of Darien was a two-time national champion. But she made a lasting mark as an author. Believing that golf instruction failed females, **Hecker wrote the first golf book exclusively for women.**

**W**hat Connecticut player won two national USGA Championships and wrote a seminal book about golf?

Hint: It was not Gene Sarazen, who did win two U.S. Opens and did publish a book, saying famously when he received the final manuscript from his ghost writer, “I have read my book and I like it very much.” Nor was it Julius Boros, who won the U.S. Open in 1952 and 1963 and wrote several instruction books including *Swing Easy, Hit Hard*. Strong books, but

not necessarily momentous.

No, it was Genevieve Hecker, a Darien native who learned the game at the Wee Burn Club, and won the Women’s Amateur Championship in 1901 and 1902—there was no U.S. Women’s Open then.

Hecker wrote what is considered to be the first golf book aimed exclusively at women, called simply, *Golf For Women*. Hecker’s two consecutive national championships, at the age of 17 and 18, were part of an early dominance by Connecticut females in the sport. In 1904 Georgianna

Bishop of Brooklawn Country Club won the title, too.

This year Hecker will be inducted into the Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame for both her play and her writing. In *Golf For Women* Hecker produced a practical, charming and, at times, feisty introduction to the game, much of its advice still applicable today. As one who often played golf with men, Hecker was not at all patient with their condescension. Her book celebrated the fact that women, both in the UK and in America, had won the freedom

to play without, for the most part, restriction by “the Lords of Creation.”

*When women in America first began to play golf, they were allowed at many of the big clubs to use the links only at certain hours on certain days when it was thought that their presence would not incommode the Lords of Creation. The idea that a woman could learn to play a really good and serious game of golf was laughed to scorn, and if there were many women who evinced a desire to play at the various clubs, numbers of them would doubtless have followed the example of Shinnecock Hills Club and laid out a course exclusively for women...After much hesitation and head-shaking on the part of those men who, never having had sisters, had no idea of the physical capabilities of a girl, and her ability to do anything she really wanted to, permission was granted....*

Disappointed that there never had been a book which presented the game to women, Hecker took it on, publishing in 1904.

“The idea that a woman could learn to play a really good and serious game was laughed to scorn.”

*Golf For Women* offers straightforward instruction, taking readers through every club in the bag, while suggesting that they might need only a few clubs to start.

Her book represents a snapshot of a sport coming of age in America.

She wisely advises her readers to limit their expectations and remain patient. “*The tortures of Tantalus are as nothing compared to the mortal who has once tasted the joys of a full cleanly hit shot.*”

Hecker, who as a longtime member of Apawamis Club in Rye, N.Y., won several Metropolitan Golf championships, died in 1960 at 76.







## PROFESSOR OF STROKES

Mike Flis teaches course rating the way some people teach the law. Stick to the process. Read the tables. Follow the formula.

**In the complicated world of handicapping, he's a dean of clarity.**

**M**ike Flis has a bit of the Charles Kingsfield about him. You remember Kingsfield. Or maybe not. He was the brilliant, demanding contract law instructor in the 1970s drama, *The Paper Chase*. Played by John Houseman, Kingsfield was a fearful presence, but respected and, in the end, endearing.

This chilly fall day Flis is training course raters at Richter Park in Danbury, bundled up near the green of the 14th hole and working hard to be patient. He fires a question about three green side bunkers and the answers from his two charges are slow to come and sound uncertain.

"These newbies will drive you crazy," he says, but with a smile that Kingsfield would have omitted.

When the values finally come from David Blakeslee and Carl "Butch" Paternostro, they are in the "average difficulty" range. "Nothing wrong with down the middle," Flis says, carefully charting their numbers. "Let's get to 15."

Of the hundreds of CSGA volunteers, it's arguable that none has more impact on the average golfer's game than Mike Flis, the 2020 CSGA Volunteer of the Year. Flis is not only a seasoned rater of courses, having been at it now for almost a decade, but has become a kind of professor of course rating to new volunteers. His "newbies" today have been at it all season, but they haven't quite graduated from that moniker. When they do, they'll be good. And they'll understand a system, like contract law, that is far from intuitive.

"You have to trust the formula," he says, holding the ever-present Course Rating



System Guide, now produced jointly by the R&A and USGA. "Stick with the tables. New raters tend to overemphasize the things that scare them on a course. But that's not what the numbers say. It's a bit like the law that way." Personal preference, in the law or in the law of course rating, will lead one astray, as anyone who has taken an LSAT exam will tell you.

To teach this law, it helps to know its history, and Flis can tell you about that, too, back to the time prior to the present process when Al Acker and his One Day volunteers managed handicaps. We've come a long way, he says.

"Within the state, our handicaps travel pretty well," says the analytical Flis. "Outside the state, it's not so certain. Every state has its own version of the system and that complicates things."

It's because of his knowledge of the numbers that Flis, a retired Hartford stockbroker, garners such respect among other raters, and from the CSGA staff.

"Mike has a thorough understanding of the course rating system and how to objectively evaluate a golf course," says Director of Member Services Bill Bigler, who oversees the rating of about 25 course

"Mike is a great teacher," says Carl 'Butch' Paternostro, a new rater. "He has a lot to say, but he listens, too."

a year. "Beyond his contribution in the rating of courses, he is a very important resource for developing that understanding in new course raters and is a valuable mentor for the team."

The "newbies" agree. "Mike's a great teacher. He knows so much," says Paternostro, who's sold on the job. "It comes at you pretty fast," says Blakeslee, sounding very much like one of Professor Kingsfield's charges.

A 15 handicap who these days is more interested in what he calls "long walks" unspoiled by golf, Flis looks forward to adventure trekking with his wife Carol in England and Scotland, where they may walk 12 or more miles a day, from B&B to B&B.

No rating required.



# LOVELY IN ITS BONES

A charming summer course in a charming town becomes, with an enlightened membership, a championship venue and a golf community willing both to serve the interests of the sport and to challenge its best players. Madison Country Club, site of this year's Mid-Amateur Championship, continues to evolve and contribute to the game. At its core is a course, as the poet said, that is "lovely in its bones." Madison is a golf club,' says President Ed Detmer. "No pool. No tennis courts. No restaurant." It is also the CSGA's Distinguished Club of 2020.



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# OFF SEASON

## CHRIS COTE'S INDOOR GOLF

IN PORTLAND, CT

Indoor Golf is home to 4 climate-controlled hitting bays equipped with TrackMan simulation technology giving golfers in CT the opportunity to play golf year round.

**TRACKMAN**  
UNLEASH YOUR POTENTIAL



## HEATED TEES AT CHRIS COTE'S TOPTRACER RANGE

IN SOUTHINGTON, CT

Chris Cote's Toptracer Range is a heated and covered range with Toptracer's interactive technology. Golfers can track practice sessions and play the world's best courses without leaving CT.

 **TOPTRACER RANGE**



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# THOSE WE REMEMBER



# Commemorating those we lost



**John Merchant**  
1933-2020

Lifelong Connecticut resident and former member of the Country Club of Fairfield, Bridgeport attorney John Merchant was the first African American elected to the USGA Executive Committee. He served on the USGA Board from 1992 until 1995 at which time he was named Executive Director of the newly formed National Minority Golf Foundation. John was the driving force behind the National Minority Golf Symposium series in the 1990's that among many accomplishments laid the foundation for the creation of The First Tee. Brilliant and engaging, John was a charter member of "Team Tiger," the advisory group assembled by Earl Woods when Tiger turned professional in 1996.



**William "Billy" Bianowicz**  
1944-2020

Billy Bianowicz served as the golf course superintendent at Litchfield Country Club for 30 years. After retiring from Litchfield Billy lent his expertise to many in the industry including Ed Goodhouse at Torrington County Club where Billy worked part-time. An affable outdoorsman with an untiring work ethic, Billy trained numerous assistants who went on to their own careers in agronomy at clubs throughout the country.

**Owen Canfield**  
1934-2019

One of the most prolific sports writers in Connecticut history, Owen Canfield's career with the Torrington Register, Hartford Courant and as a freelance journalist spanned nearly 60 years. He was regarded as an outstanding golf writer who covered local, statewide, regional and national competition including the PGA Tour. Owen's human-interest stories were legendary, and he took particular interest in golf courses and golfers of all ages throughout Connecticut.



**William "Billy" Day**  
1957-2020

Billy Day graduated from Amity High School with the Class of 1975 and went on to attend Southern Connecticut State University where he was selected to play on the Division II All-American Golf Team. A talented lifelong amateur with a remarkable knowledge of the game and its history, Day won numerous tournaments in Connecticut. He was a former member of Race Brook Country Club in Orange and both a member and a manager at Highland Golf Club in Shelton.





# 2021 SITES

Two Man Team Championship  
Julius Boros Challenge Cup  
Russell C. Palmer Cup  
Connecticut Women's Open  
Connecticut Amateur  
Connecticut Senior Match Play  
Four-Ball Championship  
Junior Amateur Championship  
New England Amateur Championship  
Connecticut Open  
Borck Junior  
Connecticut Mid-Amateur  
Senior Four-Ball Championship  
Tournament of Champions  
Connecticut Senior Amateur

Black Hall Club  
New Haven C.C.  
C.C. of Waterbury  
Black Hall Club  
Hartford G.C.  
Torrington C.C.  
Wallingford C.C.  
Watertown G.C.  
Great River G.C.  
C.C. of Darien  
Silver Spring C.C.  
The Farms C.C.  
Norwich G.C.  
Bull's Bridge G.C.  
Patterson Club