

# CHAMPIONSHIP CHATTER

Official Newsletter of the MGA Rules and Competitions Committee

December 2021

## 2021 ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

### 2021 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

### ALLAN W. SMALL



The MGA awarded Allan W. Small the 2021 Distinguished Service Award, in recognition of his many contributions to the game. Small officially began to serve the MGA as a volunteer leader in 2002, joining the MGA Junior Committee to provide and help steer the Association's Junior-related activities and championships. In 2005, Small joined the MGA executive committee and would eventually serve as President of the Association in 2009. During his term as President, Small launched initiatives like a new website, a public golf membership campaign, was instrumental in creating a business structure for the future with the first-ever MGA executive committee retreat, and the expansion of the Golf Central HQ where the MGA is still housed today. He was also instrumental in the expansion of the MGA Foundation's GOLFWORKS intern program and other youth initiatives focused on making the game more accessible.

Small also has an impressive list of Met Area competitive golf records. Small is a two-time MGA Senior Amateur Champion. Small also qualified for 23 USGA events ranging from the U.S. Amateur to the U.S. Senior Open and had top finishes at many of the MGA majors. Congratulations to Al on this tremendous award and all he has done for the game of golf!

### 2021 JERRY MAHONEY AWARD

### WENDY DOMINICK

Presented annually to the MGA Rules and Competitions Volunteer of the year, the JMA—the Jerry Mahoney Award—recognizes a volunteer's spirit of generosity and good will. This year's award honors Wendy Dominick of Newburgh, N.Y. The longtime Powelton Club member's first event with the MGA came in 2010. Dominick, a former teacher, has served as the Chair of the Westchester Rules and Competitions Committee since 2014 and plays an integral role in crafting and editing the MGA's annual Rules Quiz.



2021 JERRY S. COURVILLE PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD  
**MARK COSTANZA**



2021 JUNIOR PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD PRESENTED BY CALLAWAY  
**COLE EKERT**



# MGA CHAMPIONSHIP DEPARTMENT NOTICES

## DIRECTOR'S DESK



Another season is in the books and 2021 was a great year for golf and the championship program. We resumed a full slate of events and USGA qualifiers after disruptions to the schedule in 2020. The players came out in full force this year as we saw exceptional numbers across the board at MGA championships. We also had a memorable season of venues as we conducted our championships at some of the finest courses in the country. The major championship season was truly special with The Bridge, Plainfield and Hudson National hosting our biggest events of the year and Friar's Head providing a perfect venue to cap off the year at the MGA Mid-Am.

As we move into 2022 there's a lot happening at Golf Central to prepare for the upcoming year. On the staff side, Jeff Pepe, who has worked for the MGA as a staff member and most recently a field team contractor, will be leaving the area and ending his time with the Association. We can't thank Jeff enough for all his contributions to the program and all the work he has put in over the last 12+ years. As Jeff departs there have been a handful of internal changes and we are excited to have all of our full-time staff members returning, with many stepping into new roles. Sean Corrison has been promoted to the role of Manager, Championship Operations and Tom Roden and Justin Wexler have been promoted to Championship Coordinator roles. With a great team in place, we anticipate bringing on a new crew, with Fellowship positions and Boatwright internship opportunities opening in early 2022.

In 2022 we will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Metropolitan Golf Association and there's a lot to be excited about. I wanted to highlight a few of the early season opportunities that you can circle on your calendar. The MGA Tournament Officials Seminar will head to the Country Club of Darien, host of the 2020 Ike, on May 9th for a resumption of our in-person training and a nice afternoon of golf. Darien continues to refine their impressive golf course and we'll have the added benefit of seeing some of their newest renovation work that will be unveiled in '22. The major championship season will kick-off with the Ike Championship at Baltusrol Golf Club's Lower Course. The Lower Course recently underwent a restoration led by Gil Hanse. The changes to the course are subtle, yet impressive, and it will be a special experience to conduct the first multi-day championship on the newly restored Lower Course. U.S. Open Final Qualifying will be conducted at Century and Old Oaks for the final stint of the three-year rotation. Before Final Qualifying, don't miss out on Local Qualifying opportunities as we'll be at Hollywood (host of the 2017 Met Open) and Wee Burn (host of the 2024 Met Open) for two of the local qualifiers. Lastly, we have another special milestone in 2022 as the Westchester Open will celebrate its 100th playing. Sleepy Hollow Country Club will host the centennial championship in mid-June. There's plenty more to look forward to in 2022 and we'll continue to highlight these great opportunities throughout the year.

Enjoy the holidays and have a safe and relaxing New Year!

## 2022 MGA CHAMPIONSHIPS DEPARTMENT

**CHRIS GAFFNEY**  
DIRECTOR



**NICK RODEN**  
MANAGER, CHAMPIONSHIP OPERATIONS



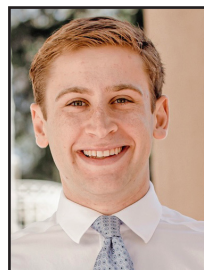
**SEAN CORRISTON**  
MANAGER, CHAMPIONSHIP OPERATIONS



**TOM RODEN**  
COORDINATOR



**JUSTIN WEXLER**  
COORDINATOR

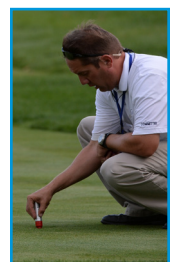


## STAFF DEPARTURES



Jeff Pepe will be leaving the Championships Department to move to Hartford, Conn., with his family and pursue new opportunities. Jeff has worked with the MGA since 2008 starting as a Boatwright Intern. We wish Jeff the best of luck in his future endeavors!

If you would like to send a note Jeff, you can reach out to him via e-mail at: [peperulz@gmail.com](mailto:peperulz@gmail.com)





# VOLUNTEER HEADQUARTERS



## RULES: INSIGHTS HEADING INTO 2022

BY: CHRIS GAFFNEY

The Rules have found their way back into the headlines once again over the last few months, but it's been a topic of Local Rules and not material changes to the Rules of Golf. The USGA continues to give committees more options to address specific equipment concerns and two Local Rules that will be available in 2022 have garnered a lot of attention. The first is MLR G-10, a reduction in the non-putter club length from 48 inches to 46 inches. This Local Rule will be adopted by the PGA TOUR, but we will not see this adopted at any MGA-administered events, including USGA qualifiers, in '22. The distance debate will continue for the foreseeable future and the USGA will continue to take the actions they deem necessary. The other Local Rule available in 2022 is MLR G-11 which restricts the use of green-reading materials. This Local Rule is specifically targeted for the PGA TOUR and will not be adopted at MGA events. While many of us applaud the direction in which the USGA is moving to address the prevalence of certain green-reading materials, this Local Rule is very challenging to administer and will not be implemented at any events that aren't at the Tour level.

The other major development heading into 2022 is the modernization of the Rules of Amateur Status. While this won't change how we see the amateur game played, there are numerous impactful changes and I wanted to highlight one that will affect some of the top players in our area being able to compete in amateur events in 2022 and beyond. The USGA has reduced the minimum "Period Awaiting Reinstatement" for professionals attempting to regain their amateur status. Prior to 2022, this period was a minimum of one year and could increase to two years depending on the length of their breach (professional for six years or more) or playing "extensively for prize money." There was also no minimum threshold for a professional having to wait a year. If a player competed in the Met Open or a Met Open qualifier as a professional, they could not regain their Amateur Status until one calendar year from the date they last played as a professional. The player, regardless of success, would effectively lose an entire season of amateur golf. In 2022, the minimum waiting period will be reduced to six months. This will lead to situations where a player turns professional for the Met Open, doesn't have any success, and applies to regain their amateur status in time to play a full amateur schedule the following year. This is a very welcome change as we see many players turn professional and immediately realize that it wasn't the right decision but find themselves in limbo as they don't want to lose a full season of competitive golf by applying for reinstatement.

### TEST YOUR RULES KNOWLEDGE!

A player's ball lies in the general area outside an area on the course that is marked as ground under repair (GUR). High grass growing within the GUR interferes with the player's swing, but not with the lie of the ball, or with his or her stance. What is the ruling?

- a. The player is not allowed relief since his or her ball does not lie in the GUR.
- b. The player is not allowed relief since his or her stance is not in the GUR.
- c. The player is allowed relief because the high grass within the GUR is part of the GUR and the grass interferes with his or her swing.

### SAVE THE DATE

**January 13th**  
Rules & Competitions  
Virtual Webinar  
Click [here](#) to sign up

**March 26th**  
Regional Rules Education  
(NJ, LI, W/CT)

**March 11th - 14th**  
USGA/PGA Rules  
Workshop in Hartford,  
CT ~ Click [here](#) for Rules  
School Information  
Entire MGA Championships  
Team will be attending

**May 9th**  
Tournament Officials  
Seminar @ Country  
Club of Darien



# 2022 MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW



107TH MET OPEN - BETHPAGE STATE PARK  
BLACK COURSE ~ AUGUST 22-25



120TH MET AMATEUR - FENWAY GOLF CLUB ~  
AUGUST 4-7



67TH IKE CHAMPIONSHIP - BALTUSROL GOLF CLUB ~  
JUNE 27-28

**BALTUSROL'S LOWER COURSE  
RECENTLY UNDERWENT A  
MAJOR RESTORATION BY  
GIL HANSE. [CLICK HERE TO  
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE  
WORK TO THE GOLF COURSE.](#)**



## 2021 R&C PARTICIPATION LEADERBOARD Long Island

- 1) Tom Roden
- 2) Richardson Rusch
- 3) Jack Weishahn

## New Jersey

- 1) Michael Schlein
- 2) Gregory McGrath
- 3) David Hackett



## Westchester/Connecticut

- 1) Charles Weisman
- 2) Michael Leary
- 3) Bill Glass