



RIGA NEWS

Newsletter of the Rhode Island Golf Association

RIGA MOVING HEADQUARTERS TO BUTTON HOLE

The idea three years ago was to build a place where kids from the city could learn golf. The idea was to expose kids to the game who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity. And the idea was to make it affordable and accessible. Three years later after many trials and tribulations Button Hole has come to be. Another piece to the puzzle will be added early in



the regular balls – all donated – rather than the usual range balls. Golf pros Bob Tramonti and Jerry Morgan organized an instructional program that started in July, and 350 boys and girls from the area were exposed to golf for the first time.

Not everyone thought it was such a great idea at first. "It was the stupidest idea I'd ever heard," admits Kris Leveillee

in a recent Golf World article about Button Hole. As director of the Olneyville Boys and Girls Club she couldn't conceive of a golf course being constructed between two housing projects. Not only is it working, but Leveillee herself began hitting golf balls for the first time and concedes that she's taken a strong liking to the game.

There are still some obstacles to overcome, but the generosity of many individuals and businesses has the project on track. Fund-raising Chairmen Ed Mauro and Stanley Goldstein were thrilled to report that the USGA has recently pledged \$134,000 to complete construction of the third hole and to erect the poles and netting to protect the second hole from the driving range. This most recent USGA grant is in addition to the \$100,000 they pledged early on. At its recent annual meeting the RIGA pledged an additional \$50,000 over two years bringing the RIGA's total donations to the project to \$100,000.

A grand-opening for Button Hole is scheduled for June 26th which will feature a clinic by Brad Faxon and on June 28th the Golf Channel will be there hosting its Drive, Chip and Putt event for kids.

Many people didn't realize that Button Hole actually opened for business this past summer. The driving range attracted many visitors, and most everyone who hit balls from one of the 25 hitting bays enjoyed using

Bill Lunnie Wins Inaugural Joe Sprague, Sr. Award



Bill Lunnie (l), receives award from Joe Sprague, Sr.

The Vardon Trophy on the PGA Tour reflects who is the most consistent performer on tour over the entire season by virtue of his scoring average. The RIGA instituted a similar award in 2000 and counted 15 possible rounds over seven tournaments. The RIGA Executive Board voted to name the award

after the Association's retired executive director, Joe Sprague, Sr. Prior to serving as executive director for 13 years, Sprague was also an accomplished player who was runner-up in the 1963 State Amateur and winner of seven Wannamoisett club championships. The RIGA actually kept track of scoring averages in 1999 and awarded Player of the Year points to the low eight finishers, but points were not given in 2000 in favor of establishing a separate award.

Our inaugural winner of the Joe Sprague, Sr. Award is Lunnie who was also in the lead in the Player of the Year standings until the final tournament where he was passed by George Pirie. Bill's scoring average of 71.06 was more than a half shot clear of Paul Quigley who finished second at 71.76.

Bill's Record in 2000			
Tournament	Scores	Finish	
John P. Burke	73-72	2nd	
State Amateur	71-72	4th Qualifier (Quarter-finalist)	
Fleet Open	71-71-74	T12th	
Mid Amateur	73-68	T3rd	
Stroke Play	69-74-75	2nd	
U.S. Amateur Qualifying	68-65	1st	
In Inter-Club	76	T13th	
1. Bill Lunnie	71.06	5. Herb Stevens	73.26
2. Paul Quigley	71.76	6. Tom Goryl	73.90
3. Charlie Blanchard	72.00	7. John Auclair	75.00
4. Dr. George Pirie	72.40	8. Don Wright	75.46

In Memoriam

The RIGA lost three special people in 2000; Betty-June (Bobel) Stapleton, Manny Raposa and Bob Kosten.

Betty-June (Bobel) Stapleton, 61, was a five-time winner of the RIWGA Amateur and two-time Junior Champion. She also won the RIGA Mixed Foursomes Championship with partner Fred Campanelli a record nine times.

Manny Raposa, 83, the designer and owner of Green Valley CC was a staunch supporter of the RIGA. As the long-time superintendent at the course, he brought it from nine holes to one of the finest 18 hole public facilities in the state. The family atmosphere at Green Valley is always welcoming and Manny made all the players feel welcome when Green Valley hosted the State Amateur in 1995 and Open in 1997, the first time both events were held at a public course. Manny also received the RI Golf Course Superintendents Distinguished Service Award in 1997 in recognition of his many years of devoted service.

Bob Kosten, 85, was a Past-President of the RIGA as well as a three-time State Amateur and two-time New England Amateur Champion. He had several memorable matches in the 1950's against Bobby Allen, the only other player besides Ronnie Quinn considered to be his equal. As chairman of the Northeast Amateur, Bob brought the tournament to national recognition when he attracted Ben Crenshaw to play in 1973. In recent years having moved back to the area from Hilton Head, Bob often came out to major RIGA events including the State Amateur where he would rekindle old friendships and volunteer his time in the scoring tent.

Rhode Island Golf Association
One Button Hole Drive, Suite 2
Providence, Rhode Island 02909
(401) 272-1350
www.rigalinks.org



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dr. Doug Mellion

This year has been a very busy one for the RIGA. We have had outstanding participation, not only in our Weekly tournaments but in the majors as well. The goal I had set for my term of office was not only to continue to lead the RIGA into another successful year, but also to do what we could to foster the Button Hole project.

Ed Mauro came to us mid-summer with an opportunity that I am very pleased is about to come to fruition—the RIGA's move to Button Hole. I certainly hope that many of you will take the opportunity to visit our new headquarters. I am also proud that the RIGA is able to donate another \$50,000 to the project. The project is now within \$400,000 of its total goal and with the guidance of Executive Director Don Wright and his staff, Button Hole should be a great success in 2001.

I have enjoyed my term as president of the Rhode Island Golf Association, and I wish my successor Don Clair a prosperous year during his term. I will continue to be involved with the RIGA and look forward to seeing many of you at the tournaments.

We're On-Line! www.rigalinks.org

Without much fanfare the RIGA web site was launched during the middle of this past golf season. The response so far has been positive, and the site should be fully operational by mid-January 2000, including e-mail and a feedback section for golf related topics.

We had a few glitches getting tournament results and tee times on the site during the summer, but all problems will be cleared up prior to the start of the golf season, and rigalinks.org should be a valuable resource to all RIGA members whether you play in a tournament or not.

A key feature for 2001 will be the ability to download and print out entry forms for the major tournaments. Sorry, no on-line registration yet, but we think that being able to access all tournament entries from a home computer will be a real convenience for all the players.

You'll be able to follow the Player of the Year standings in 2001 as well as the USGA State Team standings. Rhode Island will once again send a three-man team to the biennial USGA event that features a men's and women's team from every state and Puerto Rico. On the men's side, RI will determine its team as it did two years ago – a running two-year point total with 2000 points counting 75% and 2001 points counting 100%. The cut-off for accumulating points will be sometime in late-July (no entry deadline as of this writing) and you can follow the race right on the RIGA's web site.

Weekly updates are planned so that all the information is kept current. When major tournaments are in progress the updates will be daily. There are also plans for an archive of some of the more compelling newsletter articles of the past nine years including a 1995 interview with Brad Faxon.

Please let us know what you think. We know that there are many web-savvy people out there who just happen to be golfers, and we hope rigalinks.org is another member service that you enjoy.

Executive Director's Report

Another golf season has come and gone and it's the same old story—where did the time go? It was another successful year for the Rhode Island Golf Association, but it went by so quickly that it seems like yesterday that I was outside freezing at the first couple of Weekly Invitationals.

Well I guess the biggest news outside of the RIGA's move to Button Hole is that you'll be able to wear shorts when playing in RIGA events in 2001. No, don't adjust your glasses; you read it correctly. The Board approved the change at our recent Annual Meeting. For the record, I still think that slacks look better on players, especially in major championships, but it had become such an issue that I felt it was time to make it a non-issue. I realize that we do get some very hot weather, and we were also the only golf association remaining that had a slacks-only rule. Also for the record, the only acceptable short pants will be knee-length Bermudas.

Getting back to Button Hole for a moment, I'm very excited that the RIGA is moving there. It should be a win-win situation for both organizations, and I look forward to working alongside Don Wright and the Button Hole staff. So many people and organizations have gotten behind this project – not the least of which is the USGA – that I think it can't help but be successful.

I'm also excited about our web site which I hope serves to better communicate with all RIGA members. I won't repeat what's in the accompanying article on this page, but I encourage you to visit

the site and come back often. Our 2001 tournament schedule including the Weekly Packages will be posted there very soon so check it out.

Another major development in the golf world lies in the realm of equipment or, more specifically, non-conforming equipment. Without mentioning any companies by name, certain manufacturers have elected to market their drivers to the general public despite the USGA's declaring these clubs non-conforming with respect to spring-like effect. The USGA has no hidden agenda; they just want to ensure that the game remains a test of a player's skill rather than a test of the equipment designer's skill. Though available for purchase, these non-conforming clubs cannot be used in RIGA tournament play or for posting a score for handicap purposes. I will be sending a letter to all club presidents over the winter that I hope will clarify this issue at the club level.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Doug Mellion, 2000 RIGA President, for all his support and leadership during the year. And special thanks to our Operating Committee that was comprised of Dr. Mellion, Hank Richard, Don Clair, Bob Holmes, Don Lamb and Ron Treanor. We met several times throughout the year, and they all volunteered their time freely for the single goal of making the RIGA a better organization.

I wish everyone a healthy and happy New Year. See you in the spring.

Joe Sprague, Jr.

New England Turfgrass Foundation

The job of a golf course superintendent has become more of an exacting science than ever. Modern equipment has given



Gary Sykes, NERTF
Executive Director

superintendents many more options than in years past. Turf can be mown to lower heights and grass can be kept greener. Keeping pace with advancements in technology has been the expectation level of many golfers. This is not necessarily fair to the superintendent, but research is always ongoing to improve the turf industry.

Most of us know that we have a top-notch turf program at the University of Rhode Island. The school has turned out many of the area's finest superintendents. What you probably don't know is that the funds raised for turf research don't come from URI. The various turfgrass departments must write grant proposals to outside agencies in order to underwrite the research.

Enter the New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation. Incorporated in 1996, the Foundation held its first Conference

and Trade Show in 1998 at the Convention Center in Providence. There had previously been three shows throughout New England, but it was decided that bringing everyone together under one roof would be more beneficial. That show was such a success that it has returned each year with plans for the fourth already in place for March 7-9, 2001 at the Convention Center.

The show brings together golf course superintendents and other green industry professionals alongside product vendors who can demonstrate their wares and take orders for the upcoming season. There are also educational forums and formal talks by turf experts. With the first two shows turning a profit, the Board decided it was time to hire a full-time employee to head the Foundation. Gary Sykes turned out to be their man. A URI grad and longtime superintendent at Green Valley CC, Gary obviously had a strong knowledge of the turf industry which was a prerequisite for the job.

Besides coordinating the annual show, another of Gary's main duties is fundraising. In turn, the Foundation funds turf research; during 2000 alone, it gave a total of \$140,000 to various projects at URI, UMASS and UNH. The ongoing mission of the NERTF is to promote the turf industry and educate the turfgrass professional.

Burke Tournament Raises \$12,771 for Burke Fund

The John P. Burke Memorial Fund is having another good year. Thanks to the generosity of the RIGA clubs, its members and other individuals the Burke fund has Awarded \$93,275 in scholarships to 102 students during 2000. The 2nd John P. Burke Memorial Tournament held on May 3-4 at Newport CC and Wamumetonomy raised \$12,771 for the Fund. Kirkbrae's Bob Corio of Robert Corio Designs in Johnston donated personalized ball markers to all contestants. Next year's tournament will be held at the same golf courses on May 2-3, 2001.

Gross Division

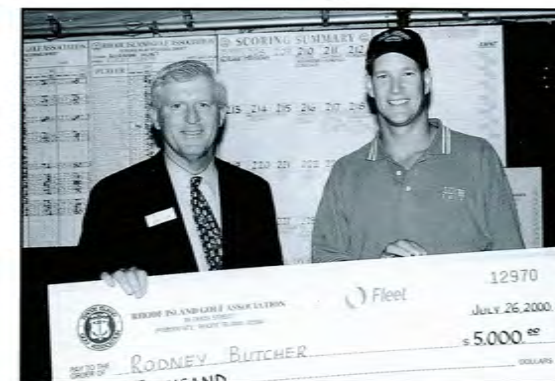
Charles Blanchard	75-69-144
Bill Lunnie	73-72-145
Paul Quigley	72-76-148
George Pirie	75-75-150
Paul LaPoint	75-75-150

Net Division

* Ray Card	68-79-147
Ken Traveyn	71-76-147
Frank DiPiro	75-72-147
George Harlow	75-74-149
Michael Murphy	76-75-151
Ken Wild	71-80-151

* won play-off

2000 Fleet Open Championship



Fleet Vice-President Jack Nixon (l) presents Rodney Butcher his winner's check

Agawam Hunt – July 24-26

Rodney Butcher	70-69-67-206	\$5,000
Scott Trethewey	73-69-66-208	\$3,750
Ryan Porter	72-69-69-210	\$2,316
Brad Adamonis	66-71-73-210	\$2,316
Chris Congdon	69-68-73-210	\$2,316
low amateur: Paul Quigley	70-73-71-214	

2000 CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS



Giant Killer: Wannamoisett's Ben Tuthill proudly displays his State Amateur Championship Trophy

MID-AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP PAWTUCKET CC – AUGUST 7 -8, 2000

Dr. George Pirie*	68-71-139
Charles Blanchard III	72-67-139
Bill Lunnie	73-68-141
John Auclair	72-69-141
Tom Goryl	71-70-141

* won play-off

FATHER & SON CHAMPIONSHIP VALLEY CC – AUGUST 15 & 23, 2000

Junior Division: Paul & Chris Barber	73
Senior Division: Stephen & Stephen Jr. O'Brien	74
Overall Champions: George & Jon Pirie	73

ED PERRY SENIOR FOUR BALL CHAMPIONSHIP FENNER HILL GC – MAY 17 & 18, 2000

Gross Division: Brad Faxon, Sr. & Joe Iacofano, Sr.	72-71-143
Net Division: Dr. A.J. Pedorella & Joe Rossetti	64-64-128

FOUR BALL CHAMPIONSHIP KIRKBRAE CC – SEPTEMBER 12 -13, 2000

Charles Blanchard III & Bill Lunnie	65-66-64-195
Eugene DiSarro Jr. & Robert Schmeck	67-67-69-203
John Auclair & Mike Soucy	68-69-69-206
William Campbell Jr. & Brad Edgerton	66-68-72-206
Joe Iacofano, Sr. & Peter Sozek	69-69-69-207

PARENT & DAUGHTER CHAMPIONSHIP LINCOLN CC – JUNE 27 & 28, 2000

Senior Division: Bill Cooke & Patricia Ray	77
Junior Division: Tom & Lindsey Goryl	77

STROKE PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP WANNAMOISETT CC – SEPTEMBER 19 -20, 2000

Paul Quigley	72-71-66-209
Bill Lunnie	69-74-67-210
Tom Goryl	71-71-72-214
Charles Blanchard III	70-76-68-214
Dr. George Pirie	65-74-75-214

STATE AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP TRIGGS MEMORIAL GC – JULY 3 -7, 2000

Semi-Finals	
George Pirie def. Mike McCormick	1 Up
Ben Tuthill def. John Auclair	1 Up
Finals	
Tuthill def. Pirie	2-1

SENIOR AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP FOSTER CC – OCTOBER 2-6, 2000

Semi-Finals	
Greg Martel def. Pat DiPadua	4-3
Steve Travis def. Craig Gardner	2 Up
Finals	
Travis def. Martel	3-2

JUNIOR AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP WEST WARWICK CC - JULY 31 -AUG. 4, 2000

Semi-Finals	
Mike McCampbell def. Bobby Fournier	1 Up
Greg Sampson def. Chad Spencer	3-2
Finals	
Sampson def. McCampbell	6-5

MIXED FOURSOMES CHAMPIONSHIP CRESTWOOD CC – OCTOBER 10 -12, 2000

Semi-Finals	
P. Barber & F. Revens def. J. Stallman & M. Picerelli	4-2
G. Donnell & K. Marcos def. J. Furtado & K. Dufault	2-1
Finals	
Donnell & Marcos def. Barber & Revens	5-4

Pirie Captures Player of the Year For Third Time



George Pirie after winning Mulligan Inter-Club at Warwick CC

Dr. George Pirie knew exactly what he had to do. After his strong finish at the Stroke Play he trailed Bill Lunnie in the Player of the Year race by 10 points going into the last tournament in which to earn points, the Mulligan Inter-Club at Warwick CC on October 2nd. Points were available for the first three places only – 25, 15 and 10.

Paired with Lunnie, Paul Quigley and Bill Campbell, George canned a 25-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole for a two-over par 71 to beat out Quigley and Green Valley's Joe Occhi by two on a day when Warwick CC was playing extremely difficult. His 25 points for first place moved him past Lunnie by 15 points and into first place for Player of the Year.

George put himself into position to win by having one of the best summers of golf by any player in recent years. That he accomplished this at the age of 50 only adds to the feat. He started his year with a solid fourth place finish at the Burke. After advancing to match play at the State Amateur by virtue of a sudden-death play-off, he made it all the way to the finals where he was upset by Ben Tuthill, the week's "Cinderella Story."

George then followed an 11th place finish at the Fleet Open with a 5th place finish at Quidnessett at U.S. Amateur qualifying. A play-off victory over Charlie Blanchard to claim his first Mid-Amateur crown one week later moved him further up the points ladder but still trailing Lunnie who finished third at the Mid-Am.

After blistering Wannamoisett with an opening round 65 at the Stroke Play it looked like George was serving notice, but he faltered a bit the next day with rounds of 74-75 which was still good enough for third place. When he left Wannamoisett that evening to drive to Taconic GC for the Tri-State Matches he had one thing on his mind and he knew exactly what he needed to do.

Past Players of the Year

1987	Paul Quigley
1988	Brett Quigley
1989	Rodney Butcher
1990	Marc St. Martin
1991	Pat Sheehan
1992	Paul Quigley
1993	Dr. George Pirie
1994	Dr. George Pirie
1995	Paul Quigley
1996	Brad Adamonis
1997	Mike Capone
1998	Joey Iacofano
1999	Mike Soucy

2000 RIGA Player of the Year Final Results

Player	Club	Points
1. Dr. George Pirie	Valley CC	670
2. Bill Lunnie	Wannamoisett CC	655
3. Charlie Blanchard	Wannamoisett CC	625
4. Paul Quigley	Metacomet CC	555
5. Tom Goryl	Wannamoisett CC	325
6. John Auclair	Kirkbrae CC	305
Herb Stevens	Potowomut CC	305
8. Ben Tuthill	Wannamoisett CC	250
9. George Donnell	Woodland Greens CC	220
Mike McCormick	Triggs Memorial GC	220
11. Bob Schmeck	Metacomet CC	210
12. Paul Barber	Potowomut CC	200
13. Mike Soucy	Metacomet CC	170
14. Eric Ahlberg	Warwick CC	160
15. Jonathan Drumm	Cranston CC	155
16. Mike Prendergast	Wannamoisett CC	150
Don Wright	Potowomut CC	150
18. Paul LaPoint	Seaview GC	130
19. Bob Savoie	Rhode Island CC	130
20. Jim Mahoney	Point Judith CC	120
21. Brad Edgerton	Wanumetonomy G&CC	110
Peter Sozek	Metacomet CC	110
23. Joe Fogarty	Triggs Memorial GC	100
24. Matt Lynch	Triggs Memorial GC	100
25. Marc Forbes	Wannamoisett CC	90
26. Eugene DiSarro	Metacomet CC	85
27. Chris Baetzel	Cranston CC	80
Rob Grossguth	West Warwick CC	80
Brad Grossguth	West Warwick CC	80
30. Bob Fournier	Quidnessett CC	71
31. Jim Stallman	Metacomet CC	70
Sam Toland	Green Valley GC	70
33. Dave Apuzzo	Wannamoisett CC	65
Steve Sampson	Crestwood CC	65
35. Dan Perry	Wannamoisett CC	60
Jon Moore	Potowomut GC	60
John Davis	Sakonnet GC	60
38. Jim Colucci	Triggs Memorial GC	50
Walter Hunter	Agawam Hunt	50
Todd Curley	Glocester CC	50
Lou Parente	Valley CC	50
Dan Pilkington	Kirkbrae CC	50
Jim Dearden	Triggs Memorial GC	50
Tom Fielding	Potowomut GC	50
Marc Brocato	Fenner Hill GC	50
Gary McLane	Rhode Island CC	50
Steve Travis	Wanumetonomy G&CC	50
48. Bill Campbell	Wanumetonomy G&CC	45
49. Todd Zegarzewski	Laurel Lane GC	35
Mike Caprio	Wannamoisett CC	35
51. Jamie Luckowicz	West Warwick CC	30
52. Cosmo Minicucci	Triggs Memorial GC	25
Joe Iacofano	Metacomet CC	25
Greg Martel	Foster CC	25
55. Tom McCormick	Triggs Memorial GC	15
Ted Turnbull	Wannamoisett CC	15
Joe Occhi	Green Valley CC	15
58. Ray Lajoie	Triggs Memorial GC	10
Don Dunwoody	Valley CC	10
Mick Hogan	Wannamoisett CC	10
Jon Pirie	Valley CC	10
62. Tom Acciaro	Wanumetonomy G&CC	5