



TEE TO GREEN

The Official Publication of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association



2021 Meeting Schedule

(Dates & Locations Subject to Change)

All other meetings for 2021 TBA

January 18, 2021

Meeting/Chili Cook-off/Top Ten
Cypress Lakes Golf Club

January 19, 2021

Annual CEU Pesticide Class
Virtual

February 2 - 4, 2021

Golf Industry Show
Virtual

March 9, 2021

Meeting/Education
Wildcat - Lakes Course

April 13, 2021

Scholarship Tournament
High Meadow Ranch Golf Club

2020 Sonny DuBose Memorial Distinguished Service Award



Congratulations to Willy Plowman for being presented the 2020 Sonny DuBose Memorial Distinguished Service Award!

Thank you for your many years of dedication to the Association!

Well deserved!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jason Barrington - President STGCSA



Happy New year everyone! 2021 is finally here and I am very excited to serve as President. I want to thank David for his hard work and leadership through a crazy year. I also want to say thank you to Carrie. She has worked very hard to keep things on track, bring new ideas to the table, and keeping in contact with you members. She definitely made all of the changes more manageable for the board and members. 2020 was definitely a year full of uncharted water and uncertainty. Each course had its own challenges and obstacles to overcome just to remain open. I can proudly say that we all buckled down, adjusted, and rose to the occasion. Our profession is very good at having to constantly adapt to changing environments and growing conditions. This was just another example of our value and versatility.

This year is setting up to a great year of meetings. There is still some uncertainty about our education meetings because of COVID-19. Bringing in speakers will be more difficult, but we will be doing everything possible to provide you with the best education. Chris Ortmeier has done a great job of bringing in great speakers and new education ideas, and I look forward to a great year of meetings. If anyone has any educational ideas they would like to share we would love to hear them. Please reach out to Carrie. We want to provide the best meetings possible.

I want to bring a topic to the table that may be a little uncomfortable. I would like to find out what we as a board need to do to get better participation in 2021. The percentage of members that attend one meeting or less is right at 50%. I know 2020 brought a whole new set of difficulties, and many of you may have been uncomfortable attending because of COVID-19. I completely understand. Using wisdom and protecting yourself and your family is everyone's number one priority. I also know that this is not the first year to only have about 50% of the membership attend zero to one meeting. I would love to see that number closer to 75%-80%. The board is trying very hard to bring great education for those who do not prefer to play golf. I truly feel that the relationships you create at the meetings are more valuable than any educator. Having that relationship and being able to reach out to share ideas, ask questions, vent, get encouragement, to encourage others, and many others is priceless. Being able to step away from the course is also very refreshing. When we are grinding day in and day out being able to step away for a day is huge. It is a much needed mental break and allows us to recharge the batteries just a little. If you have not attended any meeting in the past or only attend one per year, please really consider attending at least 2 this year. If it is a team format and you do not have a team we will be happy to pair you with someone. That is the best way to meet new people.

We look forward to hearing back from you and hearing some new ideas. I look forward to seeing everyone at Cypress Lakes on January 18th. Happy New Year and God bless everyone!

Sincerely,

Jason Barrington



South Texas Chapter

GCSAA

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Welcome New/Returning Members!!!!

David Flint - Assistant Superintendent @ The Club at Carlton Woods

Chad Davis - District Sales Manager @ Rain Bird

Josh Hicks - Superintendent @ Timber Creek Golf Club

Chris Holt - President @ Turf and Soil Mgmt, LLC

Josh Truelove - Assistant Superintendent @ Champions Golf Club

We welcome you to the Association!!!!

Our 2021 Board of Directors



David Gray (Past President), Jason Barrington (President), Chris Ortmeier (Vice President), Allen Plagens (Secretary Treasurer), Chris Teafatiller (Director), Steven Chernosky (Director), Jeremy Lewis (Director), Tim Huber (Director), Kyle Brown (Director), Kevin Bednarik (Assistant Director), Mark Baughman (Affiliate Director), Brandon Cole (Affiliate Director), Dale Bowman (Affiliate Director)



Member Spotlight

Doubling down: The U.S. Women's Open at Champions Golf Club

To pull off the December major, the maintenance team at the Houston facility has taken on double the workload to accommodate different daylight and weather conditions.

November 2020 | Howard Richman, GCM

While his baseball teammates slept in on game days, Chris Ortmeier did not.

He awakened before sunrise at his dormitory, Jones Hall, on the campus of Navarro College in Corsicana, Texas. Ortmeier would hop into his pickup truck, which doubled as a tractor during overseed, and drive to the baseball field. Upon arrival, and with the blessings of the coaching staff (and his teammates), Ortmeier mowed the field by himself on an old Toro triplex. "The field was average at best, but it didn't stop me from striping it up. I even burned an 'N' in center field, too," he says. "I enjoyed doing all that probably as much as I did playing."



Oh, he certainly could play. Ortmeier had an accomplished playing career, which is why the Chicago Cubs picked the right-handed hurler in the 31st round of the Major League Baseball draft when he was a teenager. Yet after moving on from Navarro to play for Texas Tech University, Ortmeier decided to take a swing at turfgrass management.

Though he was superb at striking out batters, Ortmeier didn't whiff on his career choice — and it took him to a place in the superintendent world that sets him apart from his colleagues in one aspect.

For the first time, a professional women's golf major will be held in December. Ortmeier is director of agronomy at Champions Golf Club in Houston, site of the 75th U.S. Women's Open, scheduled Dec. 10-13. It was postponed from June 4-7 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Four years ago, when Champions GC was awarded the U.S. Women's Open, nobody told Ortmeier, or anyone else for that matter, that 2020 would be, to use a phrase familiar to Ortmeier, laced with curveballs.

"The biggest thing for us is the variability in weather we can have here," says Ortmeier, a 14-year GCSAA member who will oversee the first major championship in December since the 1984 Senior PGA Championship at PGA National Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. "Looking at the last five years of weather data, we've been as low as 30 degrees and as high as 84. The most rainfall for one day was 4.61 inches, the winds have blown as hard as 30 mph, and we even had an inch of snow on Dec. 8, 2017. It was a 180-degree change when the date was moved from June to December. One thing where superintendents excel at is being able to adapt and change. We'll have to be ready for anything."

An eyeful of Champions

Viewers will get to see all of Champions GC's 36 holes during the U.S. Women's Open, though it wasn't originally supposed to be that way.

Champions Golf Club, which is about 20 miles north of downtown Houston and was founded by major golf champions Jack Burke Jr. and Jimmy Demaret in the late 1950s, is best known for its Cypress Creek Course. Designed by Ralph Plummer, the Cypress Creek Course has hosted, among other events, the 1967 Ryder Cup, 1969 U.S. Open and 1993 U.S. Amateur. It's also where legend Ben Hogan played his last competitive round, in 1971. (continued on next page)

Cypress Creek was set to host the U.S. Women's Open by itself until COVID-19 created havoc — and the change has much to do with the amount of daylight that will be available so late in the year. That's why the first two rounds will be played at Cypress Creek as well as the adjacent Jackrabbit Course, designed by George Fazio and renovated by Tom Fazio. Ortmeier was notified March 31 that both courses would be needed.

"It doubled the workload leading up to the championship, as well as during it," says Ortmeier. "It takes twice the volunteers and equipment. While the grass will not be growing as much in December as it is in June, we still have twice the greens, tees, fairways, bunkers and approaches, mulch beds, pine straw ... but our team has gladly accepted the challenge."



Editor's note: With the PGA Tour's Charles Schwab Challenge last June, Texas' Colonial Country Club and those who maintain it found themselves at the forefront of a trial run of the return of pro golf. Read all about it in [Pro golf and green-keeping in the time of coronavirus](#).

Not much time has passed since each course at Champions GC was renovated. Most recently, and most urgently, was the renovation of the bunkers on Jackrabbit. That work concluded in early September to be ready for the championship. Two years ago, bunker renovation was part of a project at Cypress Creek, where greens were also rebuilt to USGA specs. On both courses, greens are TifEagle, and fairways are 419 bermudagrass. On Cypress, Latitude 36 has been installed around surrounds and bunker faces.

Shannon Rouillard, the USGA's senior director of championships for the U.S. Women's Open, champions what Ortmeier and his staff have accomplished, especially given the small window the crew had to tackle the bunker project on Jackrabbit. "Chris has been a fantastic partner in all of this. He's a professional. He knows his courses very well. When I got back there for a site visit in October, you would be hard-pressed to tell they were done just a month or two ago," Rouillard says.

This U.S. Women's Open is one of four USGA championships that will have gone off as scheduled in 2020. The association canceled 10 championships this year because of the pandemic.

Champions Golf Club's return to prominence

This one is for the Burkes.

Superintendent Brady Forshey helps oversee both courses at Champions GC, where significant events were once a given. Besides the Ryder Cup and U.S. Open, each more than 50 years ago, the club also hosted multiple Tour Championships, including the one in which Tiger Woods prevailed in 1999. Yet after hosting the Tour Championship in 2003, Champions GC has hosted only one other notable event, that being the 2017 Women's U.S. Mid-Amateur.

Restoring the glory days there has been a goal for all involved and a sincere nod to Burke and his wife, Robin, runner-up in the 1997 U.S. Women's Amateur.

"What we have done with the courses here shows how dedicated we are to having this Women's U.S. Open, which the Burkes have been wanting to do for years," says Forshey, a five-year association member. "It is important to them to have large events. This is so good to put Champions back in the national spotlight."



Burke, 97, winner of both the 1956 Masters and PGA Championship, remains a guiding light to Ortmeier, who refers to him as "Mr. B." (continued on next page)

“Everyone respects him. He truly has committed himself to perpetuating the game, especially at the amateur level,” Ortmeier says. “He’s been a great mentor, and no one is a bigger supporter of superintendents than Jack Burke Jr.”

No doubt there’s some pretty talented amateurs at Champions GC. Ortmeier notes that 53 members carry plus handicaps. He hears from them, too. “The members have been appreciative for all of the improvements we’ve made. As a player’s club, they have very high expectations. With high expectations comes an even greater appreciation for quality conditions,” Ortmeier says.

Holiday golf

In a normal year, December often means vacation time for Ortmeier’s team members during the holiday season. Not this year. They’ve got too much work on their plate.

“I told them we have to change the schedule, so 2020 vacations will have to extend into 2021,” he says. “I feel lucky to have a wife (Jenna) who has been with me since my first job at 16 and who understands the flexibility this job requires. Along with my kids (Greysen, Jackson and Lawson), they are a great support system.”

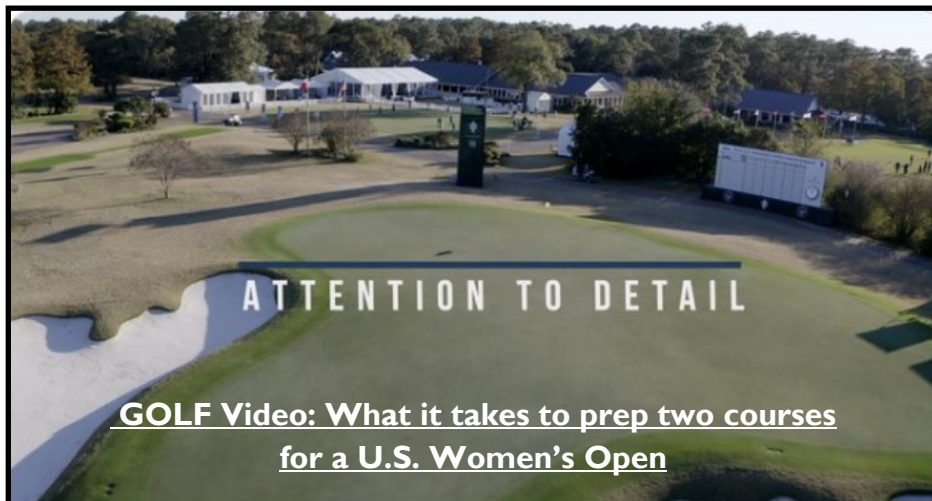


Forshey, though, won’t be sticking around until next year. He will join his fiancée, Ashlea Krupa, in Pittsburgh, where she is in dental school and where he has accepted a position as an assistant superintendent at St. Clair Country Club. When he departs, probably the day following the U.S. Women’s Open, Forshey will pack an experience that Ortmeier supplemented. “He’s a great role model. He continues to push me,” Forshey says. “He’s allowed me to grow.”

That sounds familiar. Ortmeier says Scott Ebers, CGCS, at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas, served as the same type of mentor. Ebers, though, still kids about how he would like to have become Ortmeier’s mentor much sooner. He had a good feeling that Ortmeier would be something special. “When we hired him, we were six to eight weeks from hosting our PGA Tour event, and he was still finishing up baseball at Texas Tech. We wanted him on the property really bad,” says Ebers, a 28-year GCSAA member (Ortmeier, by the way, made it to Colonial early during tournament week). “After he was with us for a while and left (in 2014 for Champions GC), you knew he was more than ready, and there was no doubt he would have enormous success. He was kind of really good at everything.”

For Ortmeier, hosting a major championship is about as good as it gets. And quite a privilege. “I’m very grateful to have worked at two of the most iconic clubs, as far as tradition goes, in Texas,” Ortmeier says. “It’s an honor to preserve their history and tradition on the golf course while being able to raise their standards and make improvements where we could.”

[Click Here to Read the Article Online](#)





Member News

Do you have any news to share such as:

A Job Promotion?

Hosting a Major Tournament?

Moving Jobs?

Getting Married?

Birth Announcements?

Etc.?

Please email Carrie Cole at stgcsa@stgcsa.org so we can share the latest news and get to know our fellow members!

2020 Sonny DuBose Memorial Distinguished Service Award

Congratulations to Willy Plowman for being presented the 2020 Sonny DuBose Memorial Distinguished Service Award!

Thank you for your many years of dedication to the Association!

“I am extremely honored to be the recipient of the 2020 Sonny DuBose Memorial Distinguished Service Award. This is clearly one of the most significant accomplishments in my career; it is even greater to be placed in such distinguished ranks as those of the past honorees. My career began in 1976 at 13 years old on a small 9 hole course in Dickinson, Texas. I had no idea there were so many opportunities out there to become a part of in the golf course business. Now, 44 years later there are so many of you out there that have contributed to my success throughout my career that I have enjoyed each and every day. Thank you to each and every one of you. I’ve had the privilege of serving on the Board for the STGCSA for 8 years, serving as President in 2010, creating the Ultradwarf Summits, and serving The Ambassador Committee for GCSAA. This part of the journey was never imagined and was truly such an honor. I also want to thank Brandon Cole and Mark Baughman for their dedication, both of them have been an outstanding contribution to the association! As my career continues, I always look back to what has made me into what I have become today. I will always take the time and needed efforts to help guide those that work with me, encouraging them in becoming the best of what they can be and just maybe one day they’ll look back and say, a man named Willy Plowman believed in me and helped me to become what I am today.” ~Willy Plowman



Keep It On The Mats, Please

By: Zach Nicoludis, agronomist, Central Region

Most facilities in the northern half of the Central Region have already closed their grass practice tee for the year or the date is fast approaching. The increase in the number of rounds played at many facilities this year resulted in more divoting than typical. When a warm spell is experienced this offseason, or for those willing to brave the cold, golfers should keep all practice on the artificial mats until the grass tee is reopened in the spring, no matter how enticing the pristine turf that is only few steps away appears.



Divots taken late in the season will not heal until growth resumes in the spring.

If the turf on the driving range tee were priced like real estate, the back of the tee would be oceanfront property. This area of the tee is often saved for special events at facilities so the best possible conditions are presented when it is put in play. While the next event is likely several months away, divots that are taken when the turf is dormant will not recover until growth resumes next spring.

Golfers can do their part to keep the grass tee in good condition by following guidelines directing practice from artificial mats when it is closed.



Cypress Lakes Golf Club

Meeting/Chili Cook-off

Monday, January 18, 2021

You Choose:

Golf: 2-Person Scramble (STGCSA picks teams)

-or-

Corn Hole Tournament (pick your partner)

Registration will open at 8:30am!

2020 TOP TEN TBA!

2020 GCSAA Virtual Chapter Delegates Meeting

By: Tim Huber

On October 20th and 21st, I attended the virtual Chapter Delegates meeting via zoom for 3 hours each day. After the general introductions of current GCSAA Board members and CEO Rhett Evans, who recapped a difficult year to navigate but spoke to positivity of golf as a recreation during the pandemic, they focused on the GCSAA's role in advocating where needed to help convince lawmakers that golf courses were a safe place to be and should be allowed to be open for staff to work and players to enjoy while implementing the recommended safety protocols.



The 3 key take-a-ways from the meeting are listed below:

- GIS Virtual will be an easy to use web based platform. Pricing and registration can now be found online.
- Dues increase is to be voted on at the GCSAA annual meeting. Delegates gave mixed feedback on an increase given the optics of this year, the GCSAA says it is based on Consumer pricing index (CPI) and the proposed increase is \$15 for class A and B and \$10 Dollars for Class C. this equates to \$165k to the GCSAA. Ultimately the members control the approval or not with the vote at the annual meeting.
- Certification Update (CGCS) proposed changes are coming to help increase interest in certification. The main areas they are looking to improve is taking out some of the situational sections in the portfolio and adding some additional depth to the in person attesting portion.

Thank you for allowing me to represent South Texas GCSA. I look forward to serving as your Chapter Delegate in 2021.



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Virginia Tech 2019 Field Study
-Dr. Zhang



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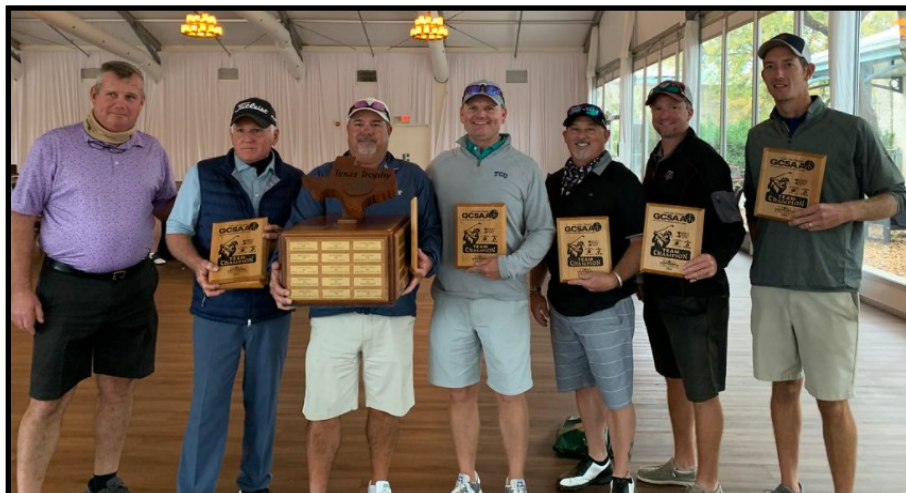
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Golf Results for the 2020 Annual Meeting & Past Presidents Meeting

Northgate Country Club

November 16, 2020

Host: Tim Phillips



First Place Gross

54 – Daniel McCann, Tanner Chrastecky, Chad Davis, AJ Pursley

Second Place Gross

58 – Richard Kane, Cody Spivey, Steven Chernosky, Pat Neuendorff

First Place Net

44 – Ray McFarland, Clint Falls, Jason Burgess

Second Place Net

45 – Chris Mrosko, Steve Vaughn, Jason Barrington, Ben Dickerson

Proximity Winners

CTP #4 – Tanner Chrastecky

CTP #15 – Mike Kellogg

LD #9 – Tanner Chrastecky

LD #1 – Jack Metcalf



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Largest stack of golf balls:

Don Athey of Bridgeport, Ohio, USA, stacked nine golf balls vertically without the use of adhesives on October 4 1998.



GCSAA Field Staff Representative

John Walker - South Central Region

Before joining the GCSAA staff, John Walker was a superintendent, 30-year GCSAA member and past GCSAA board director.

JWalker@gcsaa.org

713-557-0279



Pesticide License Renewal Class

January 19, 2021

VIRTUAL

9:00am - 3:00pm

5 TDA Pesticide CEUs (pending)

GCSAA CEU approved

[Agenda](#)

[Register Here](#)

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VIRTUAL

FEBRUARY 2-4



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South Texas GCSA's 7th Annual Toy Drive is proud to partner with Kids Meals Inc. We are excited to share that we were able to donate over \$1100 worth of toys that will provide a Christmas to over 35 families! Thank you to all of our members who donated to this great cause!



We are truly blessed to give back to our community!

About Kids' Meals

Since 2006, Kids' Meals has been making and delivering free, healthy meals directly to the homes of hungry children. Since inception, we have given more than 7.2 million free meals to food insecure children in 43 Houston-area zip codes. Kids' Meals is a first-responder to children under age 6 facing debilitating hunger due to extreme poverty.

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Thank you to everyone who attended the STGCSA Christmas Party! We gave away over \$3,000 in Prizes! Congratulations to all of our winners!



2020 STGCSA Christmas Party Pictures

Congratulations to our 2020 Scholarship Recipients!

After a record-breaking Scholarship Tournament, South Texas GCSA was fortunate enough to award \$30,000 in student scholarships to 23 recipients this year! To date, South Texas GCSA has given over \$350,000 in Student Scholarships!



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 Ryan Brown
 Caleb Dieckhoff
 Madeleine Ducote
 Blake Fox
 Carter Fox
 Cameron Gilley
 Isabel Huntsman – LEGACY
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Jack Hargrove Construction Company



**Jack Hargrove
Owner**
936-448-2490

hargroveconstruction@aol.com

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Sam Cocke
713-320-9749

scocke@doubleoakinc.com

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