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This page: The MGA now has two drones! One is pictured here during a recent test run on Knollwood Country Club's 19th hole. Being capable of both photo and video, we're looking forward to providing some new angles for coverage this season. Let us know your ideas for their use on Twitter (@MGA1897) or on Facebook, and see more on page 16.



CAREER YEAR



Dobyys, shown here in a practice round for the PGA Cup back in September, competed in the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits and the PGA Cup thanks to his second career PGA Professional National Championship victory.

Just before 2016 struck, Jordan Spieth sent a tweet which read, “Would rather this year not end...” It’s pretty safe to say that Matt Dobyys, the head professional at Fresh Meadow Country Club, probably had the same feelings.

The 37-year-old’s 2015 was one for the books, culminating as he became just the third Metropolitan PGA Section member to win PGA Professional Player of the Year honors—joining Rick Hartmann and five-time winner Bruce Zabriski. He jumpstarted his campaign by

winning the PGA Professional National Championship at Philadelphia Cricket Club in July, while another victory came just over a month later in the Metropolitan Professional Championship at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, Conn. Dobyys rose to the occasion yet again in October at Fenway Golf Club in Scarsdale, N.Y., where he won the Met PGA Championship in a playoff to all but seal his Met PGA Player of the Year honors.

In prime position to add the national award to his hardware haul, Dobyys headed to Florida to compete in

the PGA’s Tournament Series. After tying for fourth in event No. 1, Dobyys fired a 9-under 135 on the Dye Course at PGA Village, winning event No. 2 and clinching the PGA Professional Player of the Year title. Dobyys also finished as the scoring average leader (68.25/8 rounds) for the six-event winter series, putting an exclamation point on his exceptional year.

Look for more on Dobyys and his standout 2015 season in the February/March issue of *The Met Golfer*.

PHOTO: MONTANA PRITCHARD/THE PGA OF AMERICA

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MORE THAN MAJORS



Winged Foot (East)
U.S. Amateur Four-Ball

Photo: USGA/Russell Kirk



Ridgewood
U.S. Girls' Junior

Photo: USGA/Russell Kirk



Liberty National
Presidents Cup

2017



Quaker Ridge
Curtis Cup

Photo: Evan Schiller



Baltusrol (Upper)
U.S. Junior Amateur

It's a great time to be a golf fan in the Met Area. With a major championship slated to be contested here each of the next five years and the PGA TOUR's leadoff FedExCup event (whose sponsor will change to Northern Trust in 2017) being a staple in the area, there are plenty of opportunities to see the game's best.

But the high caliber golf doesn't stop with majors, as three USGA championships and a pair of team competitions will make stops in the Met Area in the next three years alone.

This year, the second U.S. Amateur Four-Ball will take place at Winged Foot, May 21-25, with the East Course hosting its first USGA event since the 1980 U.S. Senior Open. Meanwhile, Ridgewood will host its fourth USGA event when the U.S. Girls' Junior takes place July 18-23.

The Presidents Cup then comes to Liberty National in 2017 (Sept. 25–Oct. 1), making it just the fourth golf course in the United States to host the team match-play competition. After a slim 15.5 to 14.5 victory by the U.S. over the Internationals in 2015, this is sure to be yet another can't miss event.

In 2018, the Curtis Cup, the biennial match-play competition between women amateurs from the U.S. and a team from Great Britain and Ireland, visits Quaker Ridge. With the playing of the event, June 8-10, Quaker Ridge will become only the third club in the U.S. to host both the Walker Cup and the Curtis Cup, having hosted the former in 1997. Additionally, the U.S. Junior will take place at Baltusrol, July 16-21, using the Upper Course for match play.

Here's a composite schedule if you can't keep track. Any one up for the challenge of attending them all may want to use this as a checklist.

2016: U.S. Amateur Four-Ball at Winged Foot
U.S. Girls' Junior at Ridgewood
PGA Championship at Baltusrol

2017: U.S. Women's Open at Trump National Bedminster
Presidents Cup at Liberty National

2018: Curtis Cup at Quaker Ridge
U.S. Open at Shinnecock
U.S. Junior Amateur at Baltusrol

2019: PGA Championship at Bethpage

2020: U.S. Open at Winged Foot

LAYOVER: Charlotte

BY TIM HARTIN

How do you make the most out of a business trip? With golf, of course! So, for a new spin on *The Met Golfer EXTRA's* travel stories, we're focusing on easily accessible courses with nearby conveniences and attractions—so, hopefully you can squeeze in a round before you have to hit the airport.

COURSES:

1 The Golf Club at Ballantyne – Lakes and creeks present several great risk/reward opportunities, while the course is known for high quality conditioning year round, especially on the greens. Views from the tee can sometimes be imposing, but clever mounding effectively widens safe landing areas for an enjoyable round.

Nearby: Just south of the city, The Golf Club at Ballantyne provides a lengthy list of its own first-rate amenities—including a full-service spa, quality dining and three options for accommodations. Adjacent plazas provide added convenience with a quality variety of shopping and dining.

2 Rocky River Golf Club – Feel free to bomb away on most of the opening holes on this Dan Maples design in Concord, but prepare to call upon your accuracy skills on the inward nine, which is carved through forests and wetlands next to the Rocky River. Challenging features such as elevation changes, fescues, water hazards and wetlands also enhance the scenic setting.

3 Skybrook Golf Club – This course weaves throughout the Skybrook community, but hills and tree-lined fairways help disguise what could be considered a residential course. The layout embraces the landscape, making its challenge come through elevation changes—both from tees and into greens—and several blind shots.

Nearby: Both courses are located slightly northeast of Charlotte, with Rocky River lying between the popular shopping center Concord Mills and Charlotte Motor Speedway, two of the area's most visited attractions. Those staying at Embassy Suites receive rates to play Rocky River as if they were a Concord resident.

It's all carry on Ballantyne's 10th hole, a par-3 playing up to 160 yards.

From Fairways to Front Office

Being born and raised in Mount Vernon, N.Y., Richard Thomas developed a great passion for his city, though at the same time he saw the potential for improvement. Now at the age of 33, Thomas has become the youngest mayor in Mount Vernon's history and, as a Westchester Golf Association Caddie Scholar, credits his experience with golf as a major reason he now holds a position of leadership.

EXTRA: *What led to you becoming a caddie?*

Richard: Honest money. My family hit hard times when I was 10 and I knew early on that I had to contribute so ends could meet. Instead of selling drugs, I chose to caddie. I chose to work harder, stronger, and longer than others so we – the family – could survive. The real story is how I avoided answering questions about my age when I started caddying at Siwanoy and the Golf Club of Purchase.

E: *Golf is often called a character-building game. What values did you develop through your involvement with golf?*

R: Discipline, patience, and diligence. These values have strengthened my perspective and enhanced my ability to assess strategic options. We make choices all the time, and I believe that golf has given me values that made me a better decision maker.

E: *What sparked your interest in politics and ultimately wanting to become the Mayor of Mt. Vernon?*

R: Disrespect for the status quo. I grew up on the streets of Mount Vernon, but was raised on the greens of Siwanoy and the Golf Club of Purchase. Having the knowledge that life could be better for the regular Mount Vernon resident compelled me to put my energy career [Thomas worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers] aside to offer my new ideas to make a difference.

E: *What are some of your fondest memories as a caddie?*

R: Chilling with the guys in the caddie yard. Playing spades and exchanging loop stories about who was cheap and generous. For the record, Bloomberg was not cheap. Neither were many others except for those that know who they are.

E: *Are you still connected to the game of golf?*

R: Absolutely. I am looking forward to buying my three-year-old son his first set of clubs this spring, so he and I can go play. As Mayor, I will also make time to bring PGA reps in to Mount Vernon to engage inner city youth to become aware of how fun the game is.



Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas, accompanied here with his wife while being sworn in by former New York Governor David Paterson on January 1, 2016 at Mount Vernon High School, says carrying golf bags helped carry him through college at NYU.

GET A GRIP!

BY CHRIS CAVANAGH | Chris Cavanagh is the Director of Golf at Hudson National Golf Club

While we may not love the offseason, it's an excellent time to get back to golf basics, including the grip. The importance of a sound grip is often overlooked by many amateurs, but understanding the impact that one of the most fundamental parts of the golf swing has on the clubface is extremely important. Use this quick check for your golf grip to create more consistent golf shots and lower your scores.



First, consider two of the more common flaws golfers have with the grip: A weak positioned top hand (which delivers an open club face to the ball and most likely a slice) and a strong positioned bottom hand (which delivers a shut club face to the ball and most likely a hook). Both faults can easily be fixed.



Try this:

Put your top hand on the club more in your fingers as shown. When you wrap your hand around the club and as you look down, you should see two knuckles. When placing your bottom hand on the grip, make sure your palms are parallel and no portion of your bottom hand's palm is visible as you look down. This leaves both hands neutral and allows them to work as a team.



Grip Tip:

Once you've ensured a proper grip, make sure your grip itself is the proper size. A correct size golf grip leaves your two middle fingers just touching the palm of your hand; if those same fingers dig into your palm, then the grip is too small and if there is a gap between your palm and fingers, then the grip is too big.

OnCourse is OnAir



Frank Darby and Brian Crowell are having fun with their new show, *On Course*.

The Met Area's Frank Darby and Brian Crowell are bringing a different angle to golf radio, as their new show *On Course* debuted nationally on SiriusXM's PGA Tour Radio in December.

With an idea for a show focusing on collegiate and developmental levels of golf, SiriusXM President and Chief Content Officer Scott Greenstein presented the opportunity to Darby, who spent 20 years as head golf coach at St. John's University and is now in his first season leading Manhattan College's program.

Enthusiastic and excited about the show, Darby put together a demo, but found hosting solo to be a difficult task. He quickly thought of Glen Arbor head professional Brian Crowell—who is no stranger to broadcasting, having experience with multiple major championships—as a co-host that would bring great knowledge and personality to the show. The duo produced a demo and has proved to be an entertaining combination, with their jovial relationship being apparent on air and also spilling over to Twitter.

On Course airs every Tuesday from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. EST on SiriusXM PGA TOUR Radio, available nationwide on satellite radios (Sirius channel 208, XM channel 92) and on smartphones via the SiriusXM app. Darby and Crowell have already welcomed Rich Beem, Dottie Pepper and Bobby Clampett as guests. The show is scheduled to have a special airing live from the 2016 PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando, Florida. Visit SiriusXM PGA TOUR Radio's weekly schedule page to view a complete list of programming, which

also features the Met Area's Michael Breed (*A New Breed of Golf*) and Jeff Warne (*Golf School with Jim McLean and Jeff Warne*).

Keegan Bradley and Matt Dobyns were among call-in guests for the debut show, while Met PGA Section President Heath Wassem joined in-studio.



Get your NEW YEAR ROLLING

BY SCOTT KRAMER

No matter the level of your game, you'll always perform at your peak using fresh golf balls. Thankfully, now is the time of year when manufacturers debut their latest models. And for 2016, there's something new being offered for every ability and budget. All are designed to feel nice and soft at impact. A sampling:



The soft cover and core of Bridgestone's Extra Soft (\$22/dozen) feels heavenly at impact. Yet, the combination also reduces spin for straighter drives and approaches. The seamless cover contains 330 dimples that work in concert for flight consistency.



Pinnacle's Rush (\$16/dozen) is all about distance on full-swing shots. Its high-energy, low-compression core helps generate a surge of initial velocity, which translates to yardage. Plus its dimple design makes for a penetrating, consistent ball flight.



Nike RZN Tour Platinum (\$48/dozen) is a soft-feeling, four-piece premium ball that's also a distance monger. Its urethane cover features dimples and micro-dimples that together help lengthen ball flight. Meanwhile, its larger-than-predecessor core helps energize shots.



Wilson Staff's low-compression DUO Urethane (\$38/dozen) feels soft, but travels far and straight. Its new multi-layer construction also helps achieve spin that better players like around the green.

The BIG CHILL



Padraig Harrington @padraig_h · 30 Nov 2015
Knee op recovery is going great, I could already play if I had to. It helps to have a cryotherapy unit in your garage



Padraig Harrington, who put his own cryotherapy unit in his garage, used the treatment extensively as he recovered from knee surgery.

Padraig Harrington/Twitter



Impact Cryo

Trends in fitness come and go, but cryotherapy has been building steam (albeit at chilling temperatures) since gaining more exposure in recent years. Simply described as an updated form of cold therapy, a three-minute whole body cryo session uses nitrogen vapor to subject the body to temperatures between -120 C to -140 C, with users citing decreased muscle soreness, heightened energy and increased endorphin levels among the benefits. So, how can it help your golf game?

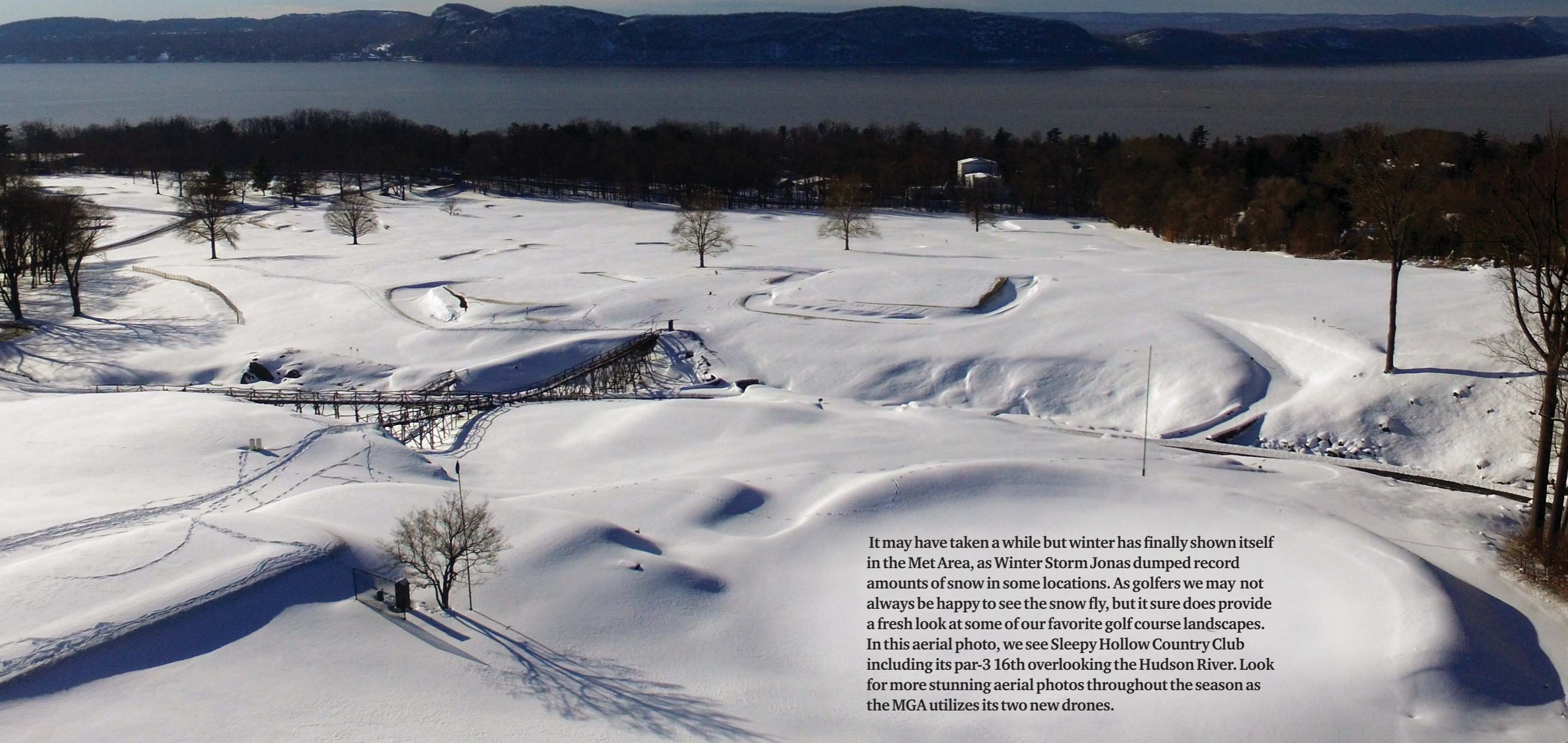
According to Don Saladino, whose fitness center Drive 495 in Manhattan just added cryotherapy to its list of amenities, the treatment's effect on recovery time is key for athletes as it triggers a response to inflammation. While stress is put on the body every day, the golf swing is certainly a repeated stressor which can develop a range of aches and pains. "We see players come in and complain initially that they've played four or five rounds and they aren't able to play without their backs hurting them," Saladino reported. "The cryo has been an incredible tool because it helps golfers recover faster, so they can repeat bouts of practice or play, more frequently."

The reputation of the therapy—which feels less chilling than an ice bath treatment according to some users—continues to gain momentum as it becomes more mainstream in health and wellness facilities. "Organizations are investing in it now because they're seeing the positive effects athletes and people are having from it," said Saladino of cryotherapy's recent boost in popularity.

Additionally, Drive 495's director of golf instruction Mark Braziller points to the therapy as an aid in pairing practice and workouts. "If you want to practice all morning and work out in the afternoon, that's going to take its toll in one form or another and the cryotherapy seems to lessen the detrimental effects of all that hard work," Braziller said. "In essence, it allows you to do more."

Getting your golf game hot may just take some extreme cold.

WELCOME, WINTER



It may have taken a while but winter has finally shown itself in the Met Area, as Winter Storm Jonas dumped record amounts of snow in some locations. As golfers we may not always be happy to see the snow fly, but it sure does provide a fresh look at some of our favorite golf course landscapes. In this aerial photo, we see Sleepy Hollow Country Club including its par-3 16th overlooking the Hudson River. Look for more stunning aerial photos throughout the season as the MGA utilizes its two new drones.