

# Young Blood

*Andrew Giuliani played with consistency and maturity all season, earning him MGA Player of the Year honors*

BY BOB NIELSEN



Andrew Giuliani headed into this season with one goal: win or contend in every tournament he entered. “Instead of playing well in three or four events, I wanted to play well in eight or nine,” said Giuliani. He did just that, finishing in or near the top ten in seven of his nine Met Area events. As a result, the 20-year-old becomes the youngest winner of the Jerry Courville Sr. MGA Player of the Year Award.

After his victory in the 2005 Ike Championship, Giuliani, now a sophomore and member of the golf team at Duke University, was officially labeled as one of the rising stars in the Met Area; an exciting and talented player poised to fill the void left by Johnson Wagner and Andrew Svoboda when they turned professional. These are some big shoes to fill, but of the many talented young players to emerge in the Met Area in recent years, Giuliani seemed the most likely candidate to fill them. As the son of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and author/actress Donna Hanover, he is accustomed to the spotlight and the pressure of a big situation. When he defeated Mike Stamberger in a three-hole playoff to win the 2005 Ike, Giuliani’s stature as a player rose even further.

It was in 2006, after he had worked out a few glitches in his game with teacher Paul Silva of Van Cortlandt Park, that Giuliani began to put together a complete season. He was a runner-up at the Havemeyer Invitational and tied for 5th at the Hochster Memorial in this past spring. However, Allan Small of Fairmount had an even hotter start with victories at the Hochster and the New Jersey Mid-Amateur, and led Giuliani in the points race by a 405-to-155 margin early on. Giuliani responded by playing the best golf of his young career. He finished t-2nd at the Ike, was low amateur at the N.Y. State Open (t-9th overall) and qualified for the U.S. Amateur to get within striking distance of Small.

The Met Amateur at Baltusrol was the event that put Giuliani over the top. After a disappointing 81 in the first round of stroke play, Giuliani was considered out of contention. “I was tired from the 36-hole U.S. Amateur qualifier two days before, so I don’t think I woke up until the fifth hole of the second round,” said Giuliani at the time. “But the Lower Course really fits my game, so I felt

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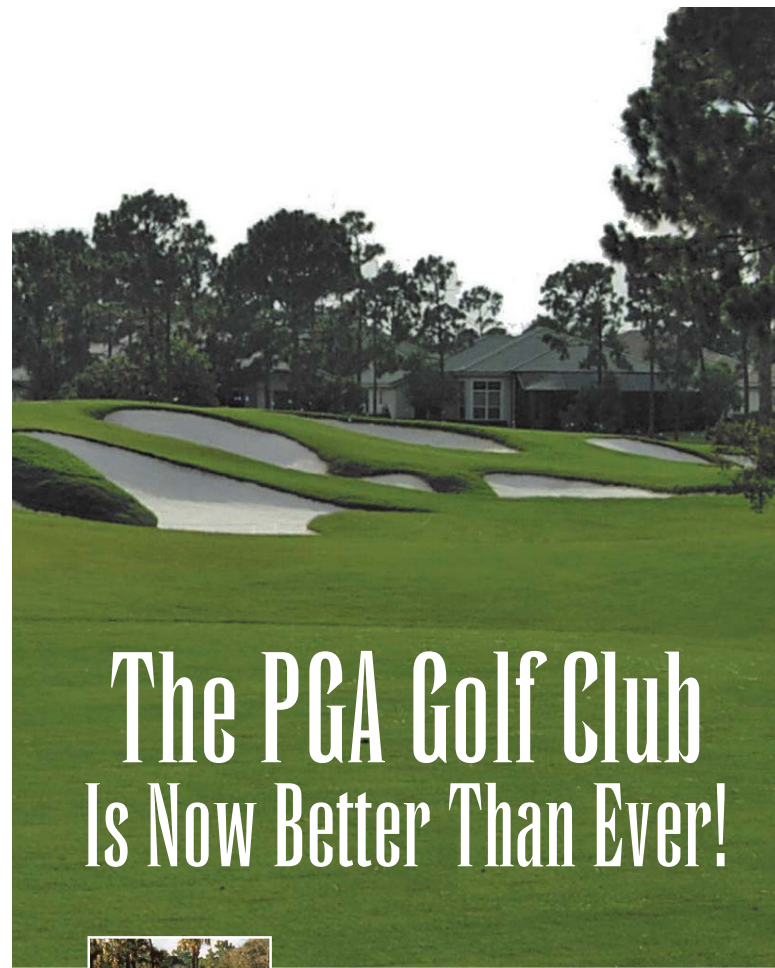


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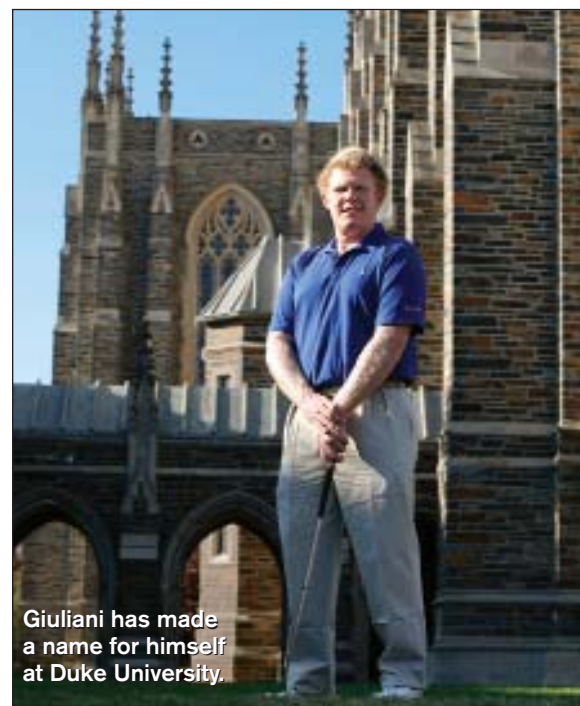
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confident." In a gutsy second-round performance, Giuliani fired a three-under-par 68, including birdies on the final three holes, to advance to match play. After impressive victories over Thomas Gramigna and Mark Farrell, he lost to eventual champion Tommy McDonagh in the semifinals, but had earned enough points to move into first place in the player of the year points race.

A quick jaunt back from Duke in September resulted in a win at the Bergen County Amateur and cemented Giuliani's position as the top amateur golfer in the Met Area. He ended the season 92 points ahead of Allan Small. "I had finished on the Honor Roll in 2005, and after the Ike I realized I was in a position to contend for it," said Giuliani. "I thought it would be pretty awesome to do it."

Allan Small was followed in the top five by 2006 Ike champion Roger Hoit of Baltusrol, who finished with 485 points. The two Met Amateur finalists, champion Tommy McDonagh of Shorehaven (470) and runner-up Kevin Foley of Neshanic Valley (455), finished fourth and fifth, respectively. Players who make the Player of the Year Honor Roll are exempt into the 2007 Ike and Met Amateur, and Giuliani also earns a spot in the Met Open.

It is fitting that Giuliani wins the award on the 30th anniversary of its first presentation to Dick Siderowf, an accomplished player at the local, national and international level. Giuliani takes his position as the leading young golfer in the Met Area and a force to be reckoned with for many years to come. The pressure to win and live up to these standards year after year will be a burden, but Giuliani doesn't seem to mind the extra attention. He's used to it. ■



Giuliani has made  
a name for himself  
at Duke University.



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