

Ready, Aim, Shoot and Edit for Project Success



*Before photo of cart path area to be naturalized.
Photo by Kyle Sweet.*



*Photo-shopped version of what conversion might look like.
Photo by Kyle Sweet.*

By Kyle D. Sweet, CGCS

As we all know, being a Golf Course Superintendent in Florida is a nonstop job. We're busy with the golfers in the winter and then fill our summers with course renovations and improvement projects. As managers, we are all skilled in getting the daily course duties accomplished for our players. Summer projects, however, can be a much bigger challenge to get planned and successfully completed. We have always taken on in house projects and with the current economy we are all doing more ourselves or working alongside contractors to make every dollar count.

Fortunately, I have been involved in a very effective process for the past three years that has put our in-house skills to the test as well as involved an outside contractor, Country Club Services. A committee was formed that included the G&G Chairman, Golf Chairman, Club President, Director of Golf, select committee members and myself. This group is dubbed the Aesthetics and

Playability Committee and annually travels the course together looking at improvements ranging from course conditioning to manipulation of several aspects of the course. After the course is reviewed a list is compiled, prioritized and approved: we contact our golf course architect Arthur Hills for approval and recommendations on how any design changes should be implemented.

I have been photographing the course for nearly 15 years and it has never been more important that it is now with this new program in place. Each proposed change, regardless of size and scope is photographed before, during and after and kept for reference. It has become second nature to provide project progress photos to our membership during the summer months. This year, for the first time, we utilized Photoshop to show both our members and Art Hills what we anticipated the finished outcome of the projects to be. The use of Adobe Photoshop proved effective in the approval from both parties and is a part of the project process that we intend to carry out in future years.

This is not a difficult process. You will need a digital camera (at least 12 megapixel), digital photos, a photo editing program and a program to resize your photos. Most of the communication can be done via e-mail, but the purchase of a good photo printer capable of 8X10 photos is a must if providing the photography as handouts to your committee or club.

With the editing program in hand and a good original to work off of, much of the work you will be doing is accomplished with simple coloring, cropping, erasing and cloning tools. It's a lot of fun once you get started and fortunately you have infinite opportunities to edit it to look like your hopeful project outcome. Unlike working the land, you have many opportunities to get the result you envision.

Once you get the desired project outcome look using photo editing, save it and use it to get that project done that is either already planned or that you have been trying to get approved to make both your job and your course better. Good luck and have fun with it!

