Last month, I wrote about the historical background of how trees became such fixtures on American golf courses. But there's much more to say.

I'm in favor of removing trees where necessary, but the trick is figuring out which trees must be removed, which of-

necessary, but the trick is figuring out

clear shot to the green. At one club, I
was called in for a discussion about
whether it's fair to be blocked from go-
ing for the green from any point in the
fairway. In that case, the tree should be
removed further toward the rough, given
the large number of players it affects
and because it was a short par-4.

I often save specimen trees just beyond
normal landing areas to affect strategy. At
Cowboys Golf Club near Dallas, there's a
specimen tree about 350 yards off the tee
on the 12th hole that's trimmed high be-
cause it can block the green from the far
left of the fairway. A big hook or low-run-
ning shot is required to reach the open front
green. Golfers learn the right side is pre-
ferred. And while golfers have an option
to get to the green from the left, they must
invent a shot. This creates the half-shot
penalty.

I like not providing golfers road signs	on every hole, telling them exactly what
to avoid. Why is a low-running or big-
curving shot less exciting than a recovery
shot from a bunker when it's success-
fully pulled off?

I also like an occasional tree encroach-
ing into the fairway to force a draw or
fade from the tee. I'm always careful to
leave enough room to find some part of
the fairway with other shot patterns.
These work best at about 180 to 210
yards from the tee because the ball
reaches its vertical apex and maximum
horizontal curve there.

Sometimes trees located close to tees
make for better safety, but placing them
too close to the landing areas creates an-
other lateral hazard.

Equal consideration

There are many perspectives to consider
when trying to reverse the long-term re-

su All Golf Scapes, a golf course
design firm in Arlington, Texas. Brauer, a past
president of the American Society of Golf Course
Architects, can be
reached at jeff@jeffreydbrauer.com.

More on trees as hazards

PLAYABILITY, AESTHETICS AND SAFETY ARE CONSIDERED WHEN MAKING A DECISION TO KEEP OR REMOVE A TREE.

Jeffrey D. Brauer is a licensed golf course architect and president of GolfScapes, a golf course design firm in Arlington, Texas. Brauer, a past president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, can be reached at jeff@jeffreydbrauer.com.

www.golfcoursenews.com | March 2005 | 23