



# New concepts for landscaping tees

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## From Disuse to 'Tee Garden'

The championship first tee at Faragote CC in Jamestown, N.J. fell into disuse for 20 some years. Shown at top left, the same tee, two years later at top right after landscaping. Second row left shows the view of the tee from the practice green. The pro shop is at the right. Right, the foreground shows part of the Tee Garden special feature. In the background is the every day first tee. Third row left and right are also views of the first tee from different angles.

Fourth row left shows properly designed steps and retaining walls which can turn a mediocre tee into a real pleasure. Right, a screen planting of hemlocks blocks a view into a dusty service road and acts as a windbreak. Bottom left, a massed planting of young American holly separates a new super highway and the first tee at Canoe Brook CC in Summit, N.J. Right, this view of the first tee at Faragote shows the neat, clean-cut look, even in the winter time.

There is a new wave of thinking by people involved in the game of golf regarding landscape treatment of the tees at American golf courses. This change in attitude has been evolving over the past 15 to 20 years. We might even call it a post World War II phenomenon. There is no doubt in our minds that a club here and there has dressed up the 1st tee before this era, but they were certainly few and far between. Recently, we have observed not only the 1st tee but additional tees on the same course showing an obvious attempt at "dressing them up." This article will explain the basic design requirement necessary to achieve a pleasant, functional, and satisfying landscape design for almost any tee. Of course, we feel that the 1st and 10th tees should get first attention in the majority of cases.

### First impressions

Have you ever noticed to what great expense some business firms will go to in order to "set the mood" for the visitor as he or she approaches and enters the main doorway? Frequently the office of a business is a part of the total business structure or building, most of it designed for function and cost efficiency. It is simple and drab. However, the front office understands very well how extremely important the entrance to that building **must** be.

Well, in our visits to many golf courses we are surprised to see the 1st tee looking like anything but a good first impression builder. In fact, they are very often, due to heavy traffic, bag racks, caddie areas, etc., etc., the worst looking tee on the course. There are broken and bent bag racks, paper cups and bottles along with empty golf ball boxes and cigarette packages making up the "1st impressions" of the golf course.

This, in contrast to the polished brass of stainless steel doorways to business establishments, sets the stage for a lack of respect for the entire golf course. If people enter a spotless and highly maintained landscape area of any kind, the usual sub-conscious message from the eye to the brain says, "I'd better be careful of my own

personal conduct around here." That is precisely what you want all golfers to feel as they approach the 1st tee on **your** course. The more respect the golfer has for your course, the more care he will give it. In fact, they will brag about your course to their friends.

A few years back, a husband and wife golf professional team at a New Jersey course conducted a survey of their membership as to the number one item of importance to them when they were out on the course. The women came up with **flowers** and the men said trees. (Apparently they take a good turf for granted.)

Since it is basic to good golf course landscape design to keep flowers and flowering shrubbery out of all areas of play, the best place for such landscape materials is around the tees. (Wild flowers or bulbs in the rough are exceptions.) This is perfectly logical, too, because around the tee is about the only time the amateur golfer can relax his concentration on the game and take time to appreciate the natural beauty of the golf course. This is especially true of par three holes where the logjams so often occur. During such lulls, there is a time to enjoy the results of attractive plantings.

### Club competitiveness

In fact, since many courses have to compete with neighboring courses for golfers and their greens fees, this is a successful way to pamper the patrons. A properly designed golf course landscape can become an important aspect of the course itself as far as conversation is concerned. Just think back to how many times the sports announcers who do the "Masters" refer to the "spectacular display of azaleas and dogwoods" that enhance that very prestigious layout. Many people still are surprised to hear that the Masters course at Augusta, Georgia was cut out of a former landscape nursery.

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**New concepts for landscaping tees** will continue in the September issue of **Golf Business**.