



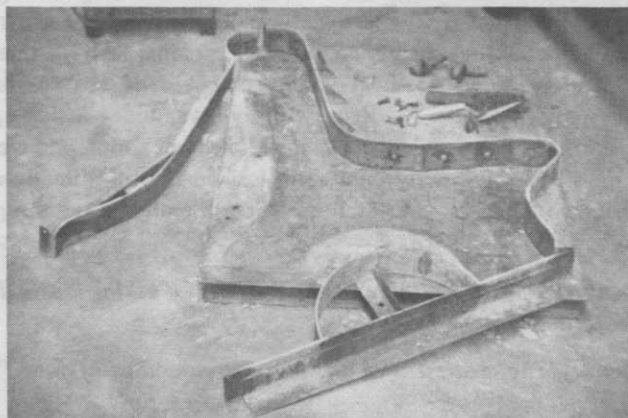
## Thinking Superintendent Constructing Benches

By George Thompson  
Columbia Country Club

Five years ago, I purchased a steel form for park type benches at a cost of \$110.00. This was a good investment because we have made 35 benches with it. We constructed 18 in 1970 (one for each tee) and have been adding about five more each winter.

The form was purchased from R. L. Spillman Co. in Columbus; they are America's largest manufacturer of specialty forms. We also purchase concrete inserts and Phillips bolts to secure wood planks from Spillman.

I had the 2x4's cut 6', however 8' would probably be more desirable on Par 3 holes where golfers generally have to wait; a 6' bench is not quite wide enough for four adults. We have used both kiln dried hemlock and construction grade redwood. The hemlock is a little harder and holds up better under golf spikes. For some strange reason golfers like to stand on benches even where fairway visibility is good. Another factor is cost and the hemlock or fir is one-half the cost of redwood. Most lumber yards will let you pick out your own lumber if you ask. If you don't pick it over, figure on 10% or more unusable.



We use a solid-hide exterior wood stain. This covers well with one coat and holds up for two years. I brought all my benches in this year, disassembled them, turned the planks over and repainted them, most of them look as good as new. It is easier to do it this way than to paint in place assembled.

### Material Cost:

7 2x4's, 6 foot	\$ 5.50
2 80 lb. bags, sacrete concrete mix	4.70
14 3/8", 16 threaded inserts	4.20
14 3/8" x 2 1/4" Phillips bolts	2.10
	\$16.50

The solid hide stain is \$6.60 per gallon and does at least 15 benches, and the white masonry paint for ends costs \$9.10 per gallon and also goes a long way. It is not necessary to paint ends, however. Labor involved is approximately three hours per bench, which would bring the total cost per bench to approximately \$28.00.

The concrete needs to be reinforced. Generally we use old greensmower bed knives or other scrap iron. We also add one gallon of Portland cement to each bag of sacrete for added strength. One bag of sacrete does one end with very little waste.

The benches are heavy (175 pounds) and could be an aid or a hindrance. They are difficult to transport unless you have a forklift; however, they don't walk away either. I did find one fifteen feet off the ground in a silver maple tree

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one morning, but this was exceptional. If I had caught these kids, I would have hired them.

Some useful hints:

Let concrete set up for 48 hours before removing sides.

Coat form with oil, otherwise it is difficult to remove without breaking.

Reinforce neck well, where it starts to taper down.

Wait until you have enough material for 4 or 5 benches, and then set up a small production line.

Use caution transporting them — they crack.

The membership has received the benches very well and they add considerably to a tee or club house area. They can be tipped over to facilitate mowing, however a permanent platform is more desirable, otherwise you end up with a sunken bare spot. Other supers I know of who use these benches are Sam Kessel and Mike Claffey; their ideas may differ from mine.

George Thompson, C.G.C.S.

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Grant Pensinger receives certification plaque from President Al Watson at our March meeting at Washingtonian Country Club. Congratulations, Grant.