

Golf Course Landscaping

By GUY WILLIAMSON

Woodmont Country Club

Does the presence of magnificent trees, flowering shrubs, groundcovers and bulbs have a place on a golf course? Absolutely, together with turfgrass, they can present an effect of light and shade, color and shape, that is so striking that even the most absorbed player becomes aware of it. But don't they require a tremendous amount of hand labor? No, these areas can exist with minimal maintenance if these principles are followed:

- 1) Lay out shrub beds so corners are round rather than square. This will cut mowing time by eliminating unnecessary maneuvering of mowers.
- 2) Paved roads should be level with the lawn to eliminate hand trimming or scalped areas.
- 3) Construct mowing strips next to all structures and around all shrub and flower beds. These can be composed of stone, bark or bare earth and maintained with non-selective herbicide.
- 4) Use ground covers or shrubs in high maintenance areas such as steep slopes; areas where grass is difficult to grow or excessive hand mowing is required.
- 5) Mulch all beds with bark, hay, pine needles, etc. to preserve moisture and control weeds. The use of non-selective herbicides can almost eliminate hand weeding in conjunction with mulch.
- 6) Try to plant large masses of the same varieties for

easier care. A small bed with too many varieties looks busy or hodge podge. Also try to personalize your design and avoid using straight lines unless necessary. Trees or shrubs in stiff rows serve a purpose only when they are planted for privacy.

- 7) It is best to select plants that require very little pruning. If a variety is desired because of a flower but the shrub is a rampant grower leave it in the container and plant the container in the ground. The restricted root system will keep the shoot growth in check.
- 8) Do not try to grow plants where they are not adapted such as acid vs. alkaline soils, sun vs. shade, or wet vs. dry. Check requirements in plant manuals or with the County Agent before planting.
- 9) Plant only in good soil, or amend poor soils to improve fertility or structure. Otherwise, plants will look sickly, grow erratically, or fail to flower.
- 10) Always try to rely on power to cut labor costs, so construct beds so that power equipment can be used in and around the beds.
- 11) Do not buy plants unless they are hardy in your climate and only buy quality stock. If bargain stock is purchased, make sure it is guaranteed quality stock. Always know precisely what species you are getting and what the height and spread will be at maturity so as not to end up with a maintenance "headache" or small jungle.
- 12) Most important is to draw up a plan. Poor planning or failure to draw a plan usually results in poor utilization of plants and property.

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