



Good landscaping need not be dramatic. Native plantings in non-play areas not only reduce maintenance costs but also create a natural setting for the residents.

Landscaping the course



14 professionals share their philosophies for 'painting with plants'

BY TOM BENEFIELD, CGCS

As the editorial focus for the winter issue of the *Florida Green*, we have chosen the subject of landscaping of the golf course. At first glance, many superintendents felt uneasy about writing on this subject. However, after thinking the subject through, superintendents realized that there are many facets of their varied programs which were really landscape-oriented.

Everyone who manages a golf course is a landscape architect to some extent. One of the basic golf course landscaping principles is that of tree removal and replacement.

Most golf courses rely on the expertise and knowledge of the superintendent to develop and imple-

ment long-range tree-planting program, not only in an effort to improve the health and vigor of the turf, but also to provide demanding shotmaking while protecting the integrity of the original course design.

The instituting of color in the golf-course environment is another aspect of landscape-design principles that superintendents are faced with. The use of flowering annuals and perennials is growing in popularity on golf courses.

The aspect of flowering trees and shrubs for the golf course environment has taken on a whole new meaning. From powder puffs to crepe myrtles we see a tremendous array of flowering trees appearing

This change in people's initial reaction to the course has been tremendous... It is funny what a little landscaping can do to help change people's perception about a golf course from 'goat ranch' to 'country club.'

on the golf courses. Every golf course member speaks in reverence of the floral masterpieces like Augusta National.

Well, enough from me. Now let us hear from fellow superintendents around the state about their programs. I think you will be impressed with their knowledge and expertise. I know I was.

1. Landscaping, does it matter?

Fort Myers Country Club was built in 1916, in the southern outskirts of tiny Fort Myers. The road to the golf course was a one-lane dirt roadway known only as the Tamiami Trail. Just a few short years later — 75 to be exact — the course is on the northern edge of an expanding metropolis and the Tamiami Trail is a six-lane major highway.

"How does all this related to landscaping?" you ask. I am getting to that.

During the summer of 1991, the City

of Fort Myers renovated the old "Fort." These improvements included the installation of a new irrigation system, construction of USGA-spec greens, expansion of the tees, replacement of cart paths, and construction of a new maintenance facility.

In addition to these important improvements, we also decided to berm and landscape the roadways that surround the golf course. The cost of these landscape improvements was insignificant compared with the cost of the overall project.

Which improvement has had the most significant impact on the "Fort?" Is it the slick putting surfaces, improved tees, smoother cart paths? No!

The landscaping improvements have made the most significant difference.

Literally thousands of people drive by the "Fort" every day. I have spoken to



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many people who have never set a foot on the golf course who say, "Wow! The country club has really improved!"

This change in people's initial reaction to the course has been tremendous. When we reopened for play, the positive reaction by the general public was almost immediate.

It is funny what a little landscaping can do to help change people's perception about a golf course from "goat ranch" to "country club."

George Bowling is the golf course superintendent at Fort Myers Country Club and he started in February 1991.

*Michael K. Mongoven, CGCS
Assistant Director of Golf
City of Fort Myers*

Be sure to take into account the amount of sunlight the plants will be exposed to. Note below the careful planting of native trees creates a natural-looking buffer between the golf course and the homesites.



2. Practical Landscape Ideas

Landscaping is a very important part of the Golf Club at Marco, especially around our clubhouse. The selection of plant material is based on location, moisture requirements and labor involved in maintenance.

When selecting a location for ornamentals, take into consideration the amount of direct sun the plant will be receiving on the average day. Shady places need plants that require less light to grow and sunny places need plants that thrive in and tolerate full sun. Wind will also play a factor in the selection.

Tender, brittle plants should be placed away from direct wind blowing on them. Winter cold should also be considered before the north winds freeze what you have planted.

Understanding moisture requirements for different plant varieties is critical. Make sure irrigation will cover all plantings and can be adjusted to give the plants enough but not too much water. Group plants together with similar moisture requirements. Mulch plant beds to keep moisture in the soil on windy, sunny, dry days.

At the Golf Club at Marco, we try to select plant materials that are native to our location. Native plants have good survival rates and tend to be lower maintenance. Also, less fertilizer and insecticides are needed, meaning less labor and less overall maintenance costs for the year. Watering is minimal because natives are better suited for their environment.

Plants that flower at different times of the year are mixed to produce color all year along with placing annual flowers on borders and around trees. Native flowering plants also attract butterflies and birds to give your beds a feeling of natural beauty for everyone to watch and enjoy.

*Tad Altman, Director of Grounds
The Golf Club at Marco
Marco Island*

3. Blend course to community

The Grey Oaks Community is a heavily landscaped upper-income community. The major theme of our landscape design is geared towards colorful flowering shrubs. We use annuals only in a few

Landscape areas should not intrude on the playing of the game. Using plantings as backdrops or to emphasize certain areas is fine as long as they aren't in play. Too many times I see ornamental plantings and flower beds placed where they are too close to a green, in the direct path of the playing of the hole, or even in areas marked off as hazards.

places to accent the shrubbery beds. The golf course was left fairly natural with the plan of slowly enhancing the landscaping to make it blend with the rest of the community.

One of my major winter projects every year is to try and utilize my landscape budget to add to the golf course landscaping.

We have found at Grey Oaks that we can have dramatically colorful areas without the use of annuals. We use combinations of plants like bougainvillea, thryallis, allemande, pentas, hibiscus, oleander, copper leaf, roses, crepe myrtle, lantana, blue daze or any plant we can find that flowers.

In the few annual beds we do have, we will use several different kinds of annuals in each bed to try and take advantage of as many colors as possible. We also use many different types of ornamental grasses to help hide man-made obstructions like irrigation boxes, well pumps and cart paths.

You would be amazed at the color you can add and the response you will get by taking a can of Rustoleum to pampas grass plumes.

We are very fortunate in South Florida that we have such a large selection of

beautiful flowering plants. By using the right combination of plants, you can create a landscape bed that is beautiful, cheap to install and requires less maintenance than any annual bed.

*Mike Hamilton, CGCS
Grey Oaks CC, Naples*

4. Flowers, flowers, flowers everywhere!

You know when November rolls around each year in Southwest Florida by the spectacular arrays of colors which seem to suddenly appear everywhere like magic.

Our Audubon entrance is adorned with white petunias along the Tamiami Trail, bringing focus to our community which normally blends in with the evergreen appearance of this part of the state.

Planning for the type and amount of foliage begins in July when a grower is contacted and cost estimates are obtained for evaluation. After all is said and done with the nursery, we then begin our bed preparation in late September or early October.

We drench our ornamental areas with Vydate L for nematode control two weeks before planting. These same areas are again drenched a week later with Ferrazole

for root and stem diseases caused by Pythium and Phytophthora.

When it comes time to start designing and planting, I was very fortunate to be able to hire Ted Green. At 68, I don't know of anyone that is in such great physical shape. Ted was a nurseryman in the Mt. Kisco area of Westchester County, N.Y. for more than 30 years when he retired to the Naples area.

It is his knowledge of the plant world that makes our club look as beautiful as it does.

During the planting process, we incorporate a 3-9-9 fertilizer along with a 5-2-4 100% natural organic fertilizer.

The entire floral display takes about a month to complete as Ted works only 20 hours a week as a part-timer.

Throughout the remainder of the growing season, which for us runs through the middle of June, applications of fungicides and insecticides are applied only as needed.

The members of Audubon are very appreciative of the beautiful vistas created by Ted around the clubhouse, common grounds, and golf course areas.

At 43, I feel like a son of Ted's and I'm learning something new every day and, the good Lord willing, I'm looking forward to a long and valued friendship.

*Walter J. Owsiany, CGCS
Audubon Country Club, Naples*

5. Landscaping on the golf course

My outlook on what impact landscaping should have on the game of golf itself is twofold.

The most important factor being the beautification aspect, and the introduction of color to the predominantly green of the golf course. Number two being that the playing of the game itself should not be affected by the landscaping.

Beautification: the use of ornamental plants and flowers certainly adds greatly to the esthetics and overall appearance of the grounds in general, and that in itself helps golfers to relax and, as the adage states, "take time to smell the roses." Through the use of the many varieties of colors of flowers and shrubs, we can vary the vistas that are seen day in and day out

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Bright colors — whether from annuals, perennials or flowering trees and shrubs — provide a cheery environment that gets everyone in the mood to slow down and take time to smell the roses.

by many of our clientele.

Shotmaking: Landscape areas should not intrude on the playing of the game. Using plantings as backdrops or to emphasize certain areas is fine as long as they aren't in play. Too many times I see ornamental plantings and flower beds placed where they are too close to a green, in the direct path of the playing of the hole, or

even in areas marked off as hazards.

These scenarios lead to the slowing down of play, arguments between golfers as to whether a free drop is allowed, and even to lost golf balls. Speed of play is a paramount issue these days, so everything we can do to decrease the time spent on a round of golf is important.

Colorful landscaping is a definite as-

set to any golf course, but be careful not to sacrifice the integrity of the game itself.

Pete Bass

6. Tree maintenance

During the construction and grow-in at Gateway Golf Club, one of the biggest challenges we had to face was keeping several thousand newly planted live oak trees watered.

A drip system was installed initially, using pressure-reducing valves off the main lines of the irrigation system, coupled to 1/2-inch PVC. The 1/2-inch PVC pipe was installed using a small vibratory plow. This caused minimal disruption of the turf and the pipe was just snaked through the trees to afford the closest access to each group of plantings.

Quarter-inch tubing was then attached to the 1/2-inch pipe and hand-trenched to each tree. A half-gallon-per-hour emitter was attached and we were in business. After approximately one year, the drip system was phased out as the trees established a good root system.

The second phase of our tree maintenance program began with the use of water-absorbent polymers.

The polymers were placed in the root zone by injecting them through a modified spray rig. A powdered form of polymer was necessary to allow it to pass through the sprayer and the injection



A touch of formality can blend nicely with more natural plantings with thoughtful, careful planning.

We also are on a yearly pine tree inoculation process that was started in 1991 with the assistance of the University of Florida Forestry Department. To date we have inoculated more than 2,000 trees.

wand.

The rate of application of our particular program was 30 pounds of polymer per 150 gallons of water. This gave the solution the consistency of Jell-O before it sets up.

We injected each tree at the drip line six times, completely circling the tree.

A manganese and iron liquid solution was also added at a rate of 10 gallons per 150 gallons of water. This procedure was carried out for three years in a row. The trees are now six years old and continue to thrive. I firmly believe in the use of polymers when doing new landscape installations, and the high quality of the oak trees at Gateway are living proof.

*Michael J. Cantwell, Superintendent
Gateway Golf & Country Club
Fort Myers*

7. Keep it natural

At Pelican's Nest Golf Course, we have a limited amount of maintainable landscaping. The golf course was carved out of a thick oak, pine, and palmetto strand.

Any landscaping that is added are common species for the area. Oaks, pines, wax myrtles are the most commonly used.

We try to keep everything natural on the golf course, and leave the colorful annuals at the clubhouse.

We are on a yearly pine tree replacement program, replacing any trees lost due to lightning or insects. We also are on a yearly pine tree inoculation process that was started in 1991 with the assistance of the University of Florida Forestry Department. To date we have inoculated more than 2,000 trees.

In the summer months, we do an exotic tree and plant removal project. If we are lucky enough to get a permit, we prune our environmentally-sensitive areas during the summer months.

We do spend a lot of man-hours trimming palmettos around tees and greens. We concentrate on trimming palmettos that interfere with playability and aesthetics. Pruning palmettos is generally an ongoing process on our golf course.

*Jim Leiseberg, Superintendent
Pelican's Nest Golf Club
Bonita Springs*

8. Maintaining natural areas

We employ the following procedure for the annual maintenance of our natural areas at The Forest.

Once a year, preferably in the fall, we edge around all of our natural areas with a sod cutter. Painting a line that you can follow with your sod cutter helps to keep things consistent. The purpose for using a sod cutter is to establish an edge, two to three inches in depth, to hold your mulch within the natural area.

Remove all dead debris and prune any vegetation necessary. Spot spray broadleaves and undesirable grasses with Round-Up. Mulch — we use pine straw but any mulching material will do.

Apply preemergent — we use a combination of Ronstar WP at 4 pounds per acre and Gallery at 1 pound per acre. This application will give you approximately 90 days of control on your broadleaves and grassy weeds.

In order to keep a clean edge to our natural areas, we edge them biweekly,

and put new pine straw out twice a year: September and January.

*Rick Tatum, Golf Course Superintendent
The Forest Country Club, Fort Myers*

9. Begins at clearing

Our landscaping plan at Olde Florida Golf Club was initiated the day clearing began on our 220-acre site located in Naples.

The site is extremely wooded with native Florida vegetation. Olde Florida is a nonresidential golf club, which enabled us to construct our golf course with considerably less restriction than a typical residential club that uses the golf course as a means to sell real estate.

There was a concerted effort by all parties involved to remove only what was necessary to establish the 110 acres of turfgrass and excavate the 30 acres of lakes.

There are three predominant plant varieties on the property — bald cypress, cabbage palms and pines. Our goal was to use as much of these existing varieties to frame the golf holes and provide scenic backdrops to as many of the greens and tees as feasible.

Corridors between parallel golf holes were created through *selective* clearing of the underbrush and preserving the native trees. These corridors provide cover for wildlife movement through and across the property as well as add to the tranquil setting.

Another aspect of the construction of the golf course that related to the landscape plan was the design and installation of the irrigation system. The system was designed and installed so that natural vegetation would receive as little irrigation as possible. Numerous part-circle, adjustable heads were installed around the perimeter of the turfgrass, throwing in and away from the wooded surroundings.

Upon the completion of the golf course, phase two of our landscape plan was initiated.

It began with aquatic plantings consisting of soft rush, pickerelweed, and arrowroot on the lake banks that were on the opposing side of the lake from the golf course. These added plants improved the aesthetics of the lake, especially as the



Pines will provide a natural but dramatic backdrop for this green when they mature.



water table fluctuates.

It also provides increased cover for wildlife.

Another important part of our landscape plan is the protection of our existing trees. Numerous pines that provide backdrops to greens, or those which we considered specimen trees are scheduled for the installation of lightning protection. These pines will also be monitored for symptoms of pine tree decline. Should these symptoms occur, the use of a microinjection system will be used.

Only native plant material such as bald cypress, cabbage palms and pines will be added in areas where additional plant material is needed to frame a golf hole to block an undesirable view.

Olde Florida Golf Club is guided by 20 founding members with a maximum capacity of 275 single members. These individuals are golfers who have joined with a common objective, to play golf. Therefore, we have no intention of planting any annual or perennial flowering material or nonnative vegetation.

We will, however, do our best to encourage the survival and increase the numerous existing natural flowering grasses and shrubs.

Our main goals at Olde Florida were clear and simple. Only remove what was necessary, protect and enhance the re-

Placement is an art form and you "plant to transplant" as trees mature. Note that the cart path soon will be largely shielded from green.



Aquatic plant communities not only provide beauty to the golfers, but also provide food sources for wildlife as well as cover and nesting sites for the many species of birds that inhabit the course.

maintaining native vegetation and add only currently existing varieties on the golf course if additional material is needed.

Darren Davis
Golf Course Superintendent
Olde Florida Golf Club

10. Tree placement on the golf course

The placement of trees for golf courses has many applications and considerations that should be examined. Due to the limitations of space in this article, we will concentrate on tree placement with respect to shot value and aesthetics. In brief, we will be examining both the physical side of tree placement as well as the psychological side.

Golf course architects have incorpo-

rated trees as strategic objects or focal points, often making use of existing grandfather trees, as a tool in design. Much debate surrounds the use of strategic or “key” trees in golf course design.

Properly placed key trees have become the focal points of some excellent golf holes. Number 17 at Augusta National, with its famed Eisenhower tree, as well as Number 18 at Pebble Beach are just two classic examples of this methodology.

Conversely, could anyone imagine these golf holes without the aesthetically pleasing and often intimidating structures that have made them renowned? Unfortunately, such disasters have been known to occur due to the whims of Mother Nature: disease, insects or injury.

With golf holes missing the vital design trees, shot values are greatly reduced.

Nothing can replace grandfather trees that have perished once a golf hole has been designed around them. Thus the interest level and course rating of the golf course would suffer.

Should you be lucky enough to find an existing (or grandfather) tree where you want to design your hole, by all means make use of it. However, incorporating a contour feature, such as a sand trap or a berm, will save the aesthetic value of the hole should you later lose the tree.

Furthermore, you should avoid planting a new tree solely as the main focal point to turn the hole. Again, making use of a contour feature as well as a permanent aesthetic highlight will redeem the

hole should the tree die. As we are all well aware, it is primarily the responsibility of the golf course superintendent to maintain the aesthetic quality of the golf course.

Jim Larner

11. Fun with flowering trees

Alaqua Country Club is a very wooded site to begin with. My tree program is specifically designed with aesthetics in mind.

Salix babylonica (weeping willow) are used along lake edges for the majestic draping effect. As the willow matures, this effect becomes very dramatic.

Pinuselliotti (slash pine) *Ilex opaca E.P.* (East Palatka holly) and *Gordonia Lasianthus* (loblolly bay) are used in all natural areas, where no turf is present. These trees create an important understory look to complement the large mature trees on property.

Truly, we have the most fun with our flowering tree programs. Throughout the golf course, many variations can be found.

Red bottlebrush (*callistemon viminalis*) are extensively used at the clubhouse. Pink and yellow tabebuissas (*tabebuia argentea* and *pallida*) enhance the boulevard and teeing areas. Dogwoods (*cornus Florida* only) are planted in natural and formal areas, and many different colors of crepe myrtles (*lagerstromia indica*) are planted throughout the property for their multi-color effect.

Steve Wright, CGCS

12. Atlantis G.C.

Flowers and flowering trees: We plant annuals around the clubhouse. We also have annual beds on most tee areas. We use mostly begonias, geraniums and impatiens. We use 4,000 to 5,000 plants.

We have incorporated some flowering trees: yellow and pink tabs, white and pink orchid trees, jacaranda, magnolia, bridal veil and tibouchina. Most of these are used in existing tree stands to add some seasonal color.

Strategic shotmaking: Any key trees that are vital to the play of a shot are given extra care. Any lost trees due to lightning or decline are usually replaced with a quality tree. Other trees are actually a joy to lose if they happen to be a shade problem.



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We try to never create any new shade problems by avoiding planting large trees to the east or south of a green or tee or even a fairway.

To enhance turf: By never creating a shade situation with a east or south exposure, we usually enhance turf growth. We also root prune all problem trees like ficus regularly.

Mark Henderson

13. Aquascaping for water enhancement

Tampa Palms Golf and Country Club is constructed within the flood plain of the Hillsborough River in Hillsborough County and the property features many wetland areas. Many of these wetland environments border the golf course and extreme measures are taken to ensure that these areas remain pristine and free from any types of pollutants.

The lakes and ponds at Tampa Palms are all man-made impoundments. Over the past several years, these bodies of water have been planted with aquatic plants native to Florida. These plant com-

munities not only provide beauty to the golfers, but are also providing food sources for wildlife as well as cover and nesting sites for the many species of birds that inhabit the course.

The extensive coverage of the aquatic plants in our aquatic environments fits in well with our goal of preserving the natural beauty of the golf course. Other added benefits of these plants are shoreline erosion control and nutrient runoff absorption.

As these plant communities evolve, less and less lake management has been needed. We still continue to contract out the management of our lakes though, to remove such nuisance invaders as torpedograss, cattails, and ludwigia. We have found that with such a removal program, the desirable native plants can compete with these nuisance species and propagate through both seed and vegetative reproduction.

As one can see, our water enhancement program at Tampa Palms is quite intensive, but at the same time well worth the effort when one considers how ben-

eficial these plant communities are to the golf course. The added beauty and the importance of these plants to the wildlife that abounds on the course are just a couple of the benefits one will receive from such a program.

*Greg Plotner, CGCS
Tampa Palms G&CC*

14. Contrasting landscapes

Quail West Golf and Country Club is a 36-hole development located in Naples. The first 18 holes meander through 540 acres of pines, cypress and cabbage palms, while nine new holes have been built on a former tomato field, which also will be the site of nine more holes.

The original 18 holes did not require a lot of additional landscaping after the golf course was completed. Most of the color and texture differences seen on the course come from mitigation areas.

Mitigation areas are required, “created wetlands” because nine of the 18 holes border protected cypress preserves. Subtle hints of white, yellow, red, purple, and green arise from aquatic plants lo-

cated within 19 mitigation areas. To round out the landscaping, bougainvillea, coco plum, ferns, wildflowers and ornamental grasses were planted to give hints of color and texture in desired areas.

The nine holes built over the tomato field have provided more of a landscaping challenge. To set apart each hole, over 5,000 trees comprised of oaks, pines and five different types of palms were planted. Around many of the trees, beds were created for additional plantings of color and texture. Bougainvillea, coco plum, firecracker, oleander, plumbago, thryallis, annuals, and ornamental grasses were installed for bursts of color to add to the golfers' enjoyment.

While the landscaping on the first 18 holes almost maintains itself, the landscaping on the other 18 holes requires a more regimented maintenance schedule.

Kevin D. Selsor

*Assistant Golf Course Superintendent
Quail West G&CC, Naples*

If the above-mentioned writers indicate anything, it would be the wide array of varied programs in use around the state.

Certainly one of the up-and-coming programs is that of providing for the natural environment. We are seeing that the use of indigenous species is becoming increasingly popular for a variety of reasons.

It is encouraging to note that our industry as a whole is demonstrating to the outside world that we are environmentally conscious. That we are taking steps in the design, construction and maintenance of golf courses to ensure the viability and health of the native ecosystem.

As more attention is focused on our industry we can be proud of our efforts to protect and preserve our native environment and at the same time provide golfing facilities our members can be proud of.

At the same time, however, we have within us a feeling for the beauty and

attributes which flowering annuals can add to the enhancement of the golfing experience.

Not only from an aesthetic point of view, but also by creating environmental conditions conducive to the attraction and reproduction of beautiful butterflies, protective bees and other insects which delight their taste buds with the sweet nectar of our beautiful flowers.

I guess the most important and least-appreciated aspect of our landscaping programs is our contribution to the micro-ecosystems which flourish from our labor.

I am proud to be associated with an association which cares deeply about the environment they live and work in. We represent the "true environmentalists."

Not only do we have our convictions and beliefs, but we work diligently to put these beliefs into reality, we practice what we preach and our message is that we can coexist with the "natural" world.

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*Golf/Landscape Manager
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How many times have you heard a golfer in Florida make a direct comparison between their course “up North” and how it is always better than the course they play on in Florida?

I think that most of us in the turf

business who have had the opportunity to visit courses in the cool season belt would agree that the texture and color of the bentgrasses and bluegrasses sometimes have an edge on the bermuda strains.

Ten years ago, a golfer would most likely prefer a bentgrass putting surface over a bermudagrass green, but because of new technology and better management by superintendents in our state, we

have made major strides in equalizing this comparison.

So what is it? Why do golfers still think that the courses up North outshine our Florida courses with all their majestic water hazards and sculptured bunkers?

My answer to this question was answered a number of years ago after I had the chance to travel and play some famous courses in the Northeast.

The beauty and aura of spots like



The use of native plants and understory provide excellent backdrop and definition to the hole, aiding the golfer's depth perception.

Winged Foot, Baltusrol, Soucon Valley, Ridgewood and even Pine Valley had one similar characteristic in the fact that they had trees and, more importantly, they had *mature* trees. Utilizing the existing foliage or enhancing with additional landscape material has created some strong features that provide backdrops and framing for these great courses.

A lot of our courses in Florida depend entirely on mounding or bunkers for

Why do golfers still think that the courses up North outshine our Florida courses with all their majestic water hazards and sculptured bunkers?

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these same design components. Some of our courses scattered throughout the state have been blessed with great natural vegetation but, for the most part, the courses end up on a site of piney flatwoods with a strong emphasis on barrel-tiled rooflines.

The enhancement of our courses can be positively influenced if clubs and superintendents make a conscious effort to implement an ongoing landscape program.

I think the Pine Valley Golf Club in New Jersey represents a classic example of a nice, sandy site that possessed good design characteristics, but its beauty and stature in today's golf circles might have been shaped by the efforts on the golf superintendent Ed Steinger and club president, Mr. Brown.

Photo documentation clearly shows that tree planting programs that were started in the 1930s and 1940s in order to compliment the existing course, have dramatically helped this top-ranked course attain its lofty position.

So what's the point? Another northern course with great trees? The important point is for us to look up from the turf for awhile and study the course from a player's viewpoint looking down a fairway or peering into a greens complex.

Establishing a concept

Many superintendents are geared to turf management and might not have the proper training or experience to initiate a long-range landscape plan. If you think that you are not skilled enough, then it is probably worth your while to interact your club officials with either a landscape architect or designer to help you through the review and planning processes.

The predominant reason for initiating a long-term plan is because the changing individual concerns of committees might have a tendency to alter good concepts. Usually a landscape program might take five to 10 years to implement which sometimes would outlast the tenure of the superintendent.

One pitfall to avoid is make sure that

your landscape adviser is familiar with the game of golf and educate him or her on the positive and negative effects that trees have on turf operations.

Key components.

Playability of the course should always be the key factor in your plan. Studying how each hole is played or perceived influences the decision on trees or underplanting locations.

Understanding the growth rate and maturity of each material used is a key component to the success of the project. Good golf holes become great when the framing or backdrop quality is enhanced by proper planting.

Always take the time to stake out planned tree or landscape bed sites a few days before actual installation so you can take the time and imagine how they will appear from a variety of different angles.

Spacing is an art form, since you are always worried about the look of initial installation but must be prepared to deal with the effects of overcrowding down

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Homes, a shopping center, or even a landfill or a phosphate mine could lurk undetected behind the native vegetation, which makes a very effective buffer.

Saving our native areas adds instant credibility and maturity, but the costs of keeping these areas “natural” in a maintained-turf environment can be overwhelming.

the road. I have always used the philosophy of “plant to transplant.” Today five trees might look perfect in a planting but at a later date, the same site will appear more attractive if you transplant out two or three of the specimens to allow for adequate tree maturity.

Spacing for equipment maneuverability is important and don't overlook the concern of planting too close to main playing areas.

Staggering of heights can enable a site to take on a mature look just a little bit sooner. There are certain situations where the best alternative would be to introduce mature trees that initially cost more but obviously make an immediate impact on a void area.

Along with this type of solution, it would sometimes make perfect sense to introduce similar varieties that are smaller in height to give the project scale and depth.

In some tree plantings, it is beneficial to introduce lower shrub planting that will make the whole landscape seem complete and might balance the seasonality of the trees. Care needs to be taken when using this base planting of shrubbery to not adversely affect the playability of the course by unduly penalizing the errant golf shot.

Selection of the proper material for your course is another component of a landscape plan that stands the test of time. Mother nature has always been the best landscape designer so it only makes sense to copy some of her skills by utilizing landscape material that is indigenous to your area.

Using selections that are found within 100 miles of your course minimizes the risk of unsuccessful plant establishment. Take time to travel to other courses in your area so you can visualize the plants in existing situations, but don't necessar-

ily limit your selections to what you see because experimenting with other varieties can be worthwhile.

The use of xeriscape plants will save you a lot of time and money in the after-care process. Simply stated, the xeriscape process is not only the emphasis of water conservation, but making sure that you place the right tree, plant or vine into a situation which will enhance its survival and accomplish your goal. So much can be said about this concept but probably it is the basis for another article.

In my observations, one of the biggest mistakes made in landscaping courses is the over-use of too many varieties that end up looking like a fire-sale project. I think a course should not utilize more than 12 to 18 varieties with no more than four to six on a given hole.

To emphasize my point, I have never seen an attractive natural setting that had more than these quantities of

groundcover or canopy trees.

Natural design has been the trend in the last few years because of environmental concerns and legislative pressure, but I disagree with a recent *Golf Digest* article that totally ruled out the suggestion of flowers on the course. Proper use of high visibility flowers whether perennial or annual adds a finishing touch to a course.

Saving our native areas adds instant credibility and maturity to the golf course, but let's be honest in recognizing that the costs of keeping these areas "natural" in a maintained-turf environment can be overwhelming. Be selective in what you try to retain and maintain because the vines and exotics can cause more problems than the pine or myrtle that you are striving to save.

When our company started working on the Willoughby Golf Club project, one of the first things we adopted after the golf course corridors were cleared, was the establishment of a landscape concept. We also carried this theme into the interaction of the course landscape plan with the eventual landscape design of the housing units.

Because of this initial planning, we have been able to continue to build out the community with the golf course character still intact. A good landscape plan at your club can introduce this design character and will help the facility mature gracefully.



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