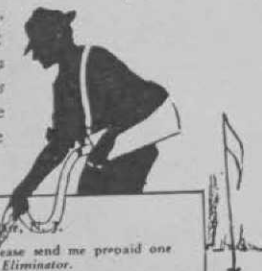


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Building Tees That Improve Courses

By GUY C. WEST

Supt., Fall River (Mass.) G. C.

ON MANY courses green committees and greenkeepers are trying hard, and often with success, to get and maintain good greens, and yet are neglecting their tees. The courses with good tees, adequate for their play, and always in good condition, are few and far between! The tees are the starting points for the holes, and impressions gathered on them often are carried all the way to the greens. A player starting on a good tee is impressed with its size, its good condition, its levelness, its comfort, in direct contrast to the player who starts from the poor tee, possibly dubbing his shot while noting its smallness, its poor condition, its bare spots, its unevenness, and its lack of comfort.

In building tees, most golf architects and contractors make the mistake of making the tees too small. There are few courses where all the tees are large enough for the play on them. The evident solution for these courses with inadequate tees is for them to enlarge the present tees or build new ones. Whichever is to be done must be determined by the topography and by the playing conditions on that particular hole. In other words, each hole has a particular problem in regard to the location, shape, size, and number of tees. Many times two or more tees can be used to advantage, especially on short holes; in many other cases one large tee is better under the existing conditions. If the prevailing wind is with or against the line of play on a particular hole, and there is a desired length for the hole, a long narrow tee is often the best, if topography permits, so that the markers can be set to make the hole play the desired length under any wind conditions.

If then, the tees are too small, it is necessary to study the prevailing conditions, and enlarge or build anew, as the conditions demand.

It is a desire on many courses to get extreme length, and good holes are often ruined by lengthening them too much, with so-called “championship tees.” If a course is to be used a great deal by very good players for championships of various kinds, it is often desirable to have “championship tees” on some holes; but for the aver-

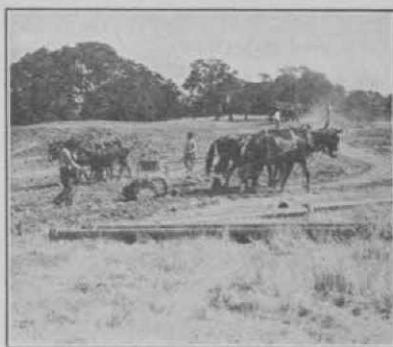
age course with average players, it is nearly always best to build the tees for the majority, and possibly have long narrow tees, the back ends of which can be used for championship events. In this case, however, the markers should never be placed so far back that the players appear to be addressing the ball with one leg down over the back of the tee, as I have sometimes seen done!

Plenty of Room

The size of tees is governed by the amount of play, and by the type of hole; naturally the short holes where irons are used, will in general require larger tees. I believe that the first tee should be of generous size, and the tenth, if near the clubhouse, because these get hard usage, and give a good impression if large and in good condition. Such tees should be of three thousand square feet at least on most courses.

In building tees, the areas should not be raised except enough to bring to a level, allowing a slight pitch for drainage. On soils with a sandy foundation, tees can be built level with no resultant damage from water, but with clay subsoil there should be a slight pitch. The surface should be smooth, with no hollows or rises. In some cases tees must of necessity be raised to gain visibility, but it never should be done except where absolutely necessary. Tees built like "warts" on the landscape are eyesores, and usually unnecessary.

Many of the so-called "experts" have advised building tees the level of the fairway so that they may be cut with the fairway units, and thus much time and money saved! This idea must have come originally from a cost expert who never saw a golf course, for on how many golf courses could it be done. Tees are usually separated from the fairways by stretches of rough, and the fairway mowers do not go within a hundred yards of many tees. In addition, who has a fairway mower which will cut tees the way players are now demanding? The average height of cut on the fairways is much higher than the average on the tees. Shall we stop and adjust our fairway mowers to cut lower for the tees? On such courses as do cut from tee to green, the constant turning at the tee end would soon ruin the tee, and the spuds in the tractor wheels would make it look poorly. On some summer course with little money and a low standard of maintenance, maybe—on the good course, no!



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Keep the tees low wherever possible, but not with the idea of cutting them with your fairway outfit! A low tee doesn't dry out as fast as a high one. On a low tee there is less cutting necessary around the edges with scythes. Most important, keep low for beauty!

Tees can be played much more quickly if sodded. An area of tee sod should always be kept in the nursery. Often times it is very advantageous to rough out new tees in the late fall, let them settle thruout the winter, and grade and sod in the spring. Such tees can usually be played two weeks after sodding.

The grasses to be used for tees depend on the locality, soil conditions, etc. I have used with success seaside bent and Chewings fescue, the bent planted vegetatively, and the fescue seeded in at time of planting. The fescue makes a bent tee "harder" and more durable, and the bent in the sod knits the divots quickly. I am now experimenting with various strains of bent with Chewings fescue.

In this locality poa annua seeds itself quite extensively, and it is often said that it would make a good tee alone. Due to its characteristics, I believe that it would be much better to use it as an aid to the other grasses than to try to use it alone. Poa trivialis is being used with success on some courses.

As the locality often governs what grows best, and what proves best for the tees, it is best for each greenkeeper to experiment as to what grasses are best for his tees.

The standards of tee maintenance are now higher than formerly, due to several factors. Players demand more. Courses in general are receiving a better standard of maintenance. Sand has almost ceased to be used for teeing up the ball, and we seldom see now the ugly blotches of sand all over the tees. Players using now the small patented tees, demand better, evenner, more closely cut tees.

Tee Maintenance

Tees should be given almost as good treatment as the greens. They should be cut whenever necessary, usually two or three times a week. They should be fertilized, composted, watered, whenever needed. The divots should be patched daily if time permits. The tee markers should be changed daily.

The grass on tees should be kept in

good condition at all times, growing a strong growth (not a weak growth from too much nitrogen), to cause the divots to heal as soon as possible. Some seed of the varieties used on the tees, can be used mixed with the compost or loam used for patching divots, if so desired; but, it has been my experience that if a tee is in good condition the divots will heal from the edges inwards more quickly than the seed will produce good grass.

Have your tees large enough, large enough so that the markers can be changed daily, and to have plenty of divotless space at all times. It is cheaper to maintain normally a larger tee than it is to repeatedly resod a smaller one.

Use the grasses best fitted for your locality, and maintain your tees to a high standard of maintenance. Remember that your tees are the starting points for those who play your course. Do they reflect your course and its condition? It's an old saying that "greens show the course," but it is getting more and more true that "by their tees shall you know them"!

Loam Baker Kills Weeds

By ELLIOTT D. PIERCE

Greenkeeper, Kittansett Club, Marion, Mass.

THE loam and compost baker at Kittansett is twelve feet long by six feet wide. There are side walls on one side and both ends, about eighteen inches high; the other side is left open to feed the wood to the fire. On one end there is a small stack for smoke; this can be made of brick or some old iron pipe. I have three pieces of railroad iron running lengthwise to hold up sheet iron where the loam is baked.

The loam is placed on this sheet iron about four to six inches deep, and is kept turned so as to bake thoroughly. When the loam is too hot to hold in the hand, it is shoveled from the baker into a rotary screen. With a good fire it generally takes from 20 minutes to a half hour for one baking.

Fifteen dollars will cover the cost of constructing the baker. Two men in a day's time can bake from four to five cubic yards a day.

I have taken a sample box of loam that was not baked and a sample that was, both from the same pile, and kept both samples moist; the sample that was not baked produced weeds, while the baked one did not.

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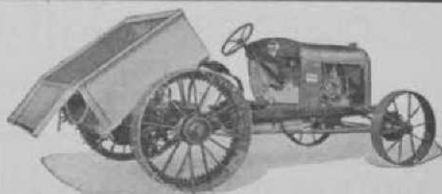
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