

Based on 1,000 Rounds

Use Traffic Formula to Determine Size of Tees

By Bill Lyons

Supt., Firestone CC,
Akron, Ohio



Are the course supt., professional and members proud when a guest comes out to the club's first tee? Or are the hosts (and every superintendent and pro is, in a way, a host of every guest at the course) hoping the guest won't notice the tee's "golfed out" appearance.

Of course you would delight at having your guests exclaim "This really is a tee!" Your guests get their first impression of your course at the first tee. It is either love at first sight or there is a selling job that has to be done later.

Limit to Traffic

The supt. can't be blamed for unpleasant appearance of the first tee if it is one of those postage-stamp affairs from which 20 to 50 thousand rounds are played a year. There is a limit to the traffic that even a tough grass such as U-3 Bermuda will tolerate. There is no set guide on the size of tees with relation to the number of rounds. The type of play has something to do with it. A private club tee, even with considerable play by high-handicap women players, takes less of a beating than a daily fee or public course tee. You have to remember, too, that no other area of the course takes more abuse than the tee. It suffers practice divots, twisting of feet, pounding and hacking after missed shots and heavy concentration of traf-

fic even though tee markers are changed quite often.

In our case at Firestone, we have a general rule that on par 4 and 5 holes the tee area needs to be 100 sq. ft. per 1000 rounds per year. On par 3 iron shot holes the ratio is 150 sq. ft. to 200 sq. ft. per 1000 rounds per year.

The Degenerative Cycle

Years ago, course builders bulldozed a level area, used no tile drains, just a couple inches of top soil, seeded it to bluegrass and fescue or cheap bent; and considered the job done. A couple of years later, the grass roots died either because of close mowing, traffic, or root suffocation. Then, poa annua comes in; and when it couldn't hold up, clover and knotweed took over.

If this happens to you, don't waste the club's money on seed fertilizer and wasted labor. Face up to the problem and sell a tee rebuilding job.

Determine tee size first. Second, establish a subgrade. Next, lay tile lines 10 feet apart to an outlet. Cover subgrade and tile with 3 ins of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. gravel. Actually, the gravel will hold the capillary water up in the soil mixture and allow the free water to drain out quickly, thus preventing soil puddling, the enemy of

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Traffic Formula for Tees

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grass roots.

The 8 to 12 ins. of root growth medium (I did not say soil) should be 7 to 8 parts No. 1 concrete sand — 1 part fiber humus, 1 part refined clay (available at most brick yards). This mixture has grown bent grass roots all summer down to the gravel for us.

Selection of Grass

What grass to use? The present demand is for tees cut to ¼ in. At Firestone CC, a new strain of vigorous bent has shown pleasing results, Nimisila. In other areas perhaps one of the fine leafed Bermudas would do well. Bermudas do not winter for us consistently so we have to use a good bent. During the 1960 PGA Championship, players were permitted to practice putt on these tees into which we set cups and markers.

Sure, members, guests and duffers take divots, and their caddy carts won't replace them. So, as labor permits, we use West Point magazine-type pluggers, taking plugs from along the unused edges of the tee and topdress them into the divots. The old divots are used to fill the plug

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holes on the edges. If we fail to patch our tees Nimisila will heal itself. The result is a set of tees to give every golfer a lift. Every tee tells him, "We are proud of our course and we take care of it!"

As one member has said, "I'm getting so I can't hit a tee shot off of any other kind of a tee."

Tee management: Move markers and benches twice daily during heavy play. Mow at least every other day at 3/4 in. with a putting green mower. Feed and fungicide along with the greens. Verticut top dress and aerify as needed.

Following this program, we now have a nursery near every green from which we can steal a little bent now and then to do patchwork as needed. This maintenance idea prompted Victor East and other visitors to the PGA last year to comment that it was a very interesting and useful development, one of the smartest they had seen.

Third annual All-Golf clinic, sponsored by physical education instructors and the National Golf Fdn., will be held at San Jose State College, Monterey, Calif., June 19 to 22.