

Teethrax outbreak!

The time has come for superintendents to get in touch with their subversive side. Only the future of the game is at stake. Let me explain.

Golfers are a sadistic lot and water cooler discussions during the last year have turned to making the game more fun. For any number of reasons, most efforts to return fun to the sport die on the operating room table.

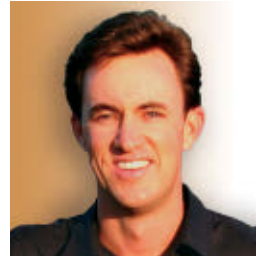
Maybe it's the effete nature of our sport compared to football or even tennis. Perhaps the problem stems from our origins from stiff-upper-lip Scotland, where they pride themselves in only playing real golf in wind and rain. Or maybe golfers just like to be punished. Either way, in the face of modern distance advances the game is constantly trying to man-up and run from anything which might make matters a little more enjoyable. We grow up the rough, add in new back tees and plant more trees. But nowhere is the self-torture more evident than in the tees golfers choose to play.

We all know that an unusually excessive number of golfers insist on playing a course from as far back as possible even as modern designers have offered them more options than ever. And plenty more golfers would never think of going to the red tees, especially older men who think any association with the dreaded red will have them strapping on ballerina dresses and rushing home to watch Oprah.

Female golfers are just as neurotic about their tees, often howling in agony at the thought of architects retrofitting older designs to give them the experience of playing shots into greens

THE SCIENTISTS SAYS THIS INVISIBLE FUNGUS
ONLY OVERTAKES TEEING GROUNDS ON GOLF
COURSES OVER 6,500 YARDS.

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



with clubs that reflect the architectural intent. This is why it's time to forget about the tees altogether.

In the January *Golf Digest* "Fun" issue, writer Ron Kapriske details how he set his manhood aside, first playing a set of 5,301-yard tees and posting an 81. The next day he created his own teeing grounds, moving twenty or so yards in front of the forward tees to get a course at about 4,941 yards. He fired 78 and wrote, "this was the first time I felt a round of golf was truly fun from start to finish."

Kapriske took his fun antics to a public course where, as a single joining a group, he introduced himself on the first tee, then revealed to his new buds that he would be playing the forward tees. After the first three golfers teed off in front of a mini gallery, Kapriske swallowed his pride and walked forward. He didn't look back but you can imagine the snickering that took place when a young, healthy 12 handicapper went so far forward.

So this is where you, the superintendent come in. Because — bare with me here — it's been revealed on various password-protected online discussion boards devoted to turf care that there is a very strange turf disease making its way around

the golf world. It's called Teethrax. The scientists says this invisible fungus only overtakes teeing grounds on golf courses over 6,500 yards. Golfers on these afflicted layouts must not get within 30 yards of any teeing ground until the appropriate chemical compound can be found to combat a perplexing virus known to induce the common cold, as well as the yips, on unsuspecting golfers.

So while the labcoats are hard at work solving this frightening mystery, your job will be to protect your golfers by placing all tees up at the start of fairways for two weeks so that golfers can continue to enjoy their course, even though that's obviously not as fun as slugging it out from the tips. But hey, safety first.

Then just sit back and watch what happens.

Oh sure, there'll be a few traffic jams and maybe even a few safety concerns to monitor with new landing zones. Mostly you'll hear a few laughs, some cheers and most of all, seeing the smiles coming off the 18th green will tell you all you need to know.

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