

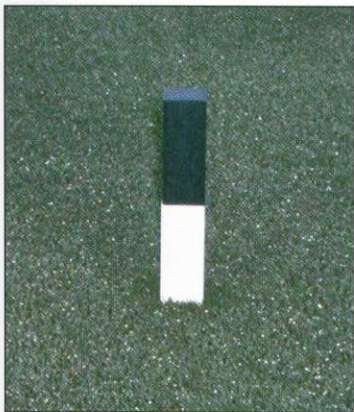
Green and Whites and Extended "Js"

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Gosh how I hate ropes on a golf course. Besides being unsightly, they are a royal bummer to move and adjust for mowing and to keep straight. Also players have no regard for the appearance of a tightly strung rope and often step them down, defeating their purpose. But then again, they do help in the direction of traffic. After much consideration we have done away with ropes and rope stakes forever here at North Oaks Golf Club, and you can too on your course.

Several years ago my staff spent a good portion of a cold week in January cutting two inch by two inch treated pine to eight-inch lengths. Into predrilled set holes they drove six-inch pole barn nails and using a bolt cutter cut off the exposed heads. Then they carefully painted the stakes Essex green on the top four inches and white on the bottom four inches. The following summer these simply created posts were placed strategically upon the course at five-foot intervals wherever ropes used to be set.

Not only did they deter traffic, but also the posts were very easy to remove and replace for both players and staff alike. No more miles of brightly colored cord to drive through and step on. No more tangles or nylon rope slivers to mess with. Unfortunately, the posts had to be painted annually and occasionally wiped down to maintain a great look. They also deteriorated over time.



To remedy this problem I contacted By The Yard, a plastic deck and furniture company. The owner, Roger Anderson sent out some green and white two by two samples for me to mess around with. After a bit of gray matter application I devised upon a plan to cut the two colors into four-inch lengths and affix them together using a headless four-inch sheet rock screw place in the center

of the pieces. Pounding a six inch pole barn nail into the center of the white half produced a beautifully finished and never to be painted "green and white".

I was so pleased with the results that I ordered up many yards of yellow and red plastic as well for my hazard stakes. The cost per post ran from \$1.28 cents per green and white to under a buck for the solid colors. Also, using longer white posts and green caps we created stakes for use around ground under repair, flowerbeds and environmentally sensitive areas. Coated with a dab of Armor All, they look great and last a long time. No rotting out or painting! And the "green and white" concept fits in nicely with the "extended J" cart path ends we have created to disperse wear and tear from vehicle traffic

Ah yes, what to do about those unsightly, dangerous and rough cart path ends. Ten years ago we began ending our off tee cart path ends in an "extended J" fashion. Understanding that people are like sheep and follow each other in one direction, we would alter the egress from the black top using a piece of rope extended beyond the "J." We were however continually moving the aesthetically unappealing barrier to reduce end and side wear. What a pain!

Since doing away with the rope, we have begun placing "green and whites" along the outside edge of the paths. We do not border the whole path, but rather only enough to control traffic. Remember that people tend to follow the leader. Using the extended "J" cart path end and up to nine posts (use odd numbers as they are architecturally more pleasing to the eye) we can modify behavior and wear patterns on a daily basis.

When planning your "Js," drive the route several times and observe



where you go. Typically this will be an easy comfortable curve without sharp edges at the end exit. Anticipate egress along the whole perimeter so you can alter the traffic patterns. And use the green and whites on five-foot centers to redirect the flow.

North Oaks Golf Club no longer uses any ropes, except for marking the center of the fairway contests our women enjoy on their guest days. And we have incorporated green and white posts for the direction of play. Not only do they look better than miles of cord, they are so easy to adjust and move that wear patterns are a cinch to control. Heck, even I can manipulate them at a moments notice as I tour the course.

Without you, who knows where we'd be.

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