



Besides traffic problems, the walkway between Brynwood's 14th and 15th holes suffered from bad drainage.

ARCHITECTS AS PROBLEM-SOLVERS

Brynwood Country Club needed a solution. Where did they go? To a local landscape architect. Today, club members are glad they did.

By the summer of 1986, the terms "muddy and unattractive" were the best anyone could apply to the route between Brynwood Country Club's 14th green and 15th tee. There was no defined cart path—just a mess where golfers had trekked.

The area also had drainage problems after rainfalls, which eventually led to a rutted path on this Milwaukee-area golf course. That's when Lied Buettner & Associates was called in.

"We realized we had to do something," remembers Steve Blendell,

course superintendent, "and we knew we wanted to do it right. That is, in the most attractive way possible."

The in-house crew decided not to tackle the project itself.

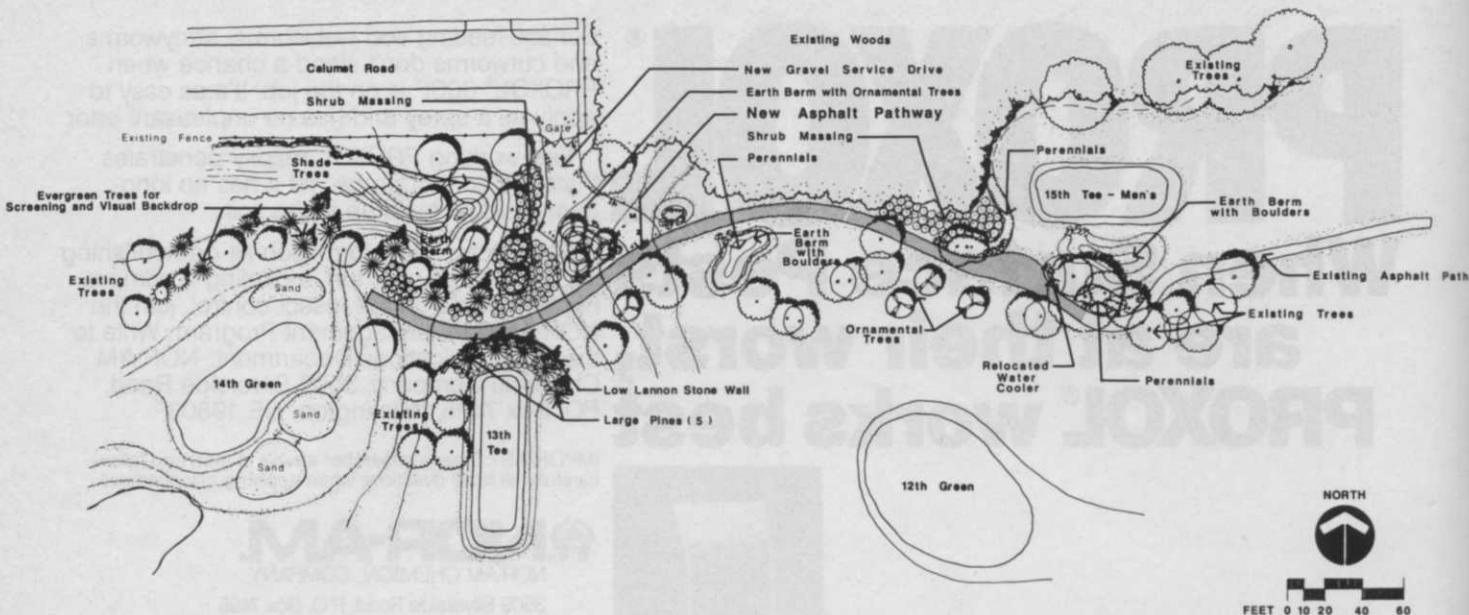
"The job was just a bit more complex than it initially seemed," Blendell says. "We were looking at an overall distance of approximately 500 feet between the periphery of the green and the next hole.

"We felt this wasn't just a matter of planting a couple of shrubs. We envisioned changes in the terrain and integration of different types of landscaping ideas and knew the different

grades would also present a problem," he remembers.

Additionally, Blendell points out, drainage problems would need tile work and grading problems required retaining walls.

Although the Brynwood staff's decision to seek outside help wasn't made lightly, there was yet another important factor to consider. The timing was extremely tight. Following their request for assistance from Lied Buettner in late October 1986, only a little more than a month remained in which to develop a plan and prepare a budget for the club's capital improve-



The landscape plan used logs and boulders to prevent carts from wandering onto other parts of the course.

ment budget meeting.

Enter Buettner

Blendell, who was familiar with the work and reputation of Dennis Buettner, called in the principal planner and landscape architect for Lied Buettner & Associates Land Planning of nearby Sussex, Wis.

Why a landscape architect or even a land planner for a project like this?

"A landscape architect frequently gets involved when a presentation must be made to an approval body," Buettner explains. "Implementation can usually be accomplished by the grounds staff, but the professionally-developed landscape plan provides the budgetary rationale required to get the project approved in the first place."

Buettner says using an outside consultant often helps diffuse internal politics and enhances the acceptability of a project when a committee has to justify expenditures to the membership. These recommendations to the budget committee are also backed by the reputation and experience of the professional landscape architect, who may even serve as a mediator of sorts. When called on, he or she can act as a facilitator between different points of view on budget committees or boards of directors.

Blendell, Buettner and Brynwood general manager Norman Eckstaedt made the initial presentation. The landscape committee in turn presented it to the capital budget committee. Both groups approved the plan.

The solution

Buettner's recommendations began with drawings showing a curvi-linear

paved cart path, the use of which would be reinforced by berms and plantings designed to keep carts on the path and prevent shortcuts.

"What we wanted to do," Buettner says, "was to create an attractive 'obstacle course,' so to speak. We intended to channel golfers along the path through the use of landscaping."

The landscape plan (see diagram) used logs and boulders to prevent carts from wandering onto other parts

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—Steve Blendell

of the course. Where the path curved in two points, small hills or berms would contain golfers and prevent shortcuts from those points.

"Lied Buettner succeeded very well in focusing attention on the different landscape techniques we used," Blendell says. "Especially considering the length involved, we wanted the cart path to be a pleasant experience that would keep people's interests and entertain them rather than just being a straight walk from one green to the next tee."

"There's no doubt that this project also added to the overall beauty of the course," he adds.

In addition, Lied Buettner's plan provided for widening the cart path at the men's 15th tee and suggested re-

location of the water cooler station there to make it more accessible to golfers.

Who does what?

While Lied's did a lot of the actual work once the ground was workable, the Brynwood staff also did part of it.

"Prior to taking this to the landscaping committee, we had already discussed with Dennis just what portions of the project Lied Buettner would handle and what could be done by our staff," Blendell explains. "We knew before we made the budget portion of our presentation approximately who would handle what."

The entire project, including Lied Buettner's planning fees, was in the neighborhood of \$20,000, Blendell reports. That encompassed everything from asphalt and heavy equipment costs to the cost of tall landscaping materials and their planting.

Both Buettner and Blendell were pleased to find there were no major problems implementing the design, other than what Blendell calls the "usual weather problems—either it's too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry."

If anything, he recalled, what required the most effort was the need to carefully coordinate the work of the asphalt crew, the wall and drainage people, and those doing the planting work.

"Overall," Blendell says now, "I'd have to say we were generally very pleased with the project. What's most important to us is what our members' think and their reactions were very favorable."

"The feedback we got was that the new path was not only thoughtful and well-conceived, but equally well executed."

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