

# What to Do with Bunker Rakes?

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**I**N A WAY, the bunker rake is one of our most inefficient instruments. It is frequently in the way of golf course maintenance operations and rarely, it seems, near enough for a golfer to use it when his ball is in the bunker. By its presence, it adds to the problems and costs of mowing, and yet it is not heavily used for its purpose.

At Ranchland Hills Country Club, in Midland, Texas, we developed an idea. In fact, when Douglas Hawes, of the USGA Green Section, visited our course last year, he saw our unusual "Golden Ts" painted on the banks of our bunkers. He wondered what they were all about and, when he heard the story, encouraged this writing.

To explain the "Golden Ts," I took him to the golf shop and asked him to read the following letter on the bulletin board:

Dear Member:

Have you ever wondered where you should put a bunker rake when you have finished raking your foot-prints? Well, maybe these pictures will answer the question. In *Picture #1* you see how the rakes all managed to end up in one corner of the bunker but scattered all around. Some are in the sand, some on the fringe of the green, some standing or in the fairway upside down.

Maybe we here at Ranchland Hills Country Club can show the golfing world how to do it. First of all, *Picture #1* looks bad. It isn't very convenient to the next player, and it can be very expensive to the club operation. For instance, the man raking this bunker with a power rake has to stop, get off the machine, and move one or more rakes before he can complete his job. The same is true for the man who mows the roughs, likewise the fairway and fringe mowermen. Multiply this by 47 bunkers and you can readily see how much time is wasted in manhours.

Now, as in *Picture #2*, all rakes are placed in the slope of the grass, tines down, parallel with the edge of the sand — not in the sand, not in the rough or fairway or fringe of the green. They are very convenient to any player in any part of the bunker. Our desert bunkers have a deep, steep berm of grass all around them. It provides a perfect place for the rakes. If each player would use the rake nearest his ball and return the rake to the exact place he found it, our bunkers would always look neat, and the rakes would be convenient to all players. Also, the rakes will not be broken or run over

by golf carts or mowing equipment. No player ever moves the tee markers. The flagsticks are always placed back in the hole after putting out. Why not treat our rakes in the same manner? Let's all try this and maybe we will be followed by golfers all around the world!

Thank you.

M. H. Veal  
Ranchland Hills Country Club  
Golf Course Superintendent

P.S. Check with the golf professional for Rules governing your lie if your ball comes to rest against a rake.

We have had great success with this approach. As you will note in *Picture #2*, golfers are making a good effort here to replace the rakes near the gold painted rake outline. "The Golden Ts" have served as reminders and guides. They have worked very well for us during everyday play at Ranchland Hills.

#### Editors Note:

For tournaments and as a general policy, the USGA recommends that bunker rakes be placed outside the bunker, lying flat and to the rear of the bunker (or in a position least likely to affect play).

*Picture #1. Everyone has a different idea where the rake should be placed.*



*Picture #2. The "Golden Ts."*

