

Oak Hill's Memorial Trees

By JOHN B. WILLIAMS, M.D.
OAK HILL COUNTRY CLUB, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

*In the Garden of Eden planted by God,
There were goodly trees in the spring sod.*

Landscaping at golf clubs, as a rule, is confined to the area about the clubhouse and its approaches. Many clubs do not extend their landscaping to the course because they believe the costs would be high and golfers are apt to be more concerned with the flight of the ball than the beauties of nature.

Experience at the Oak Hill Country Club over the last 20 years indicates that landscaping the course is both feasible and popular. High cost is a questionable assumption, unless a club uses mature stock and undertakes the venture as a capital expenditure. Our experience is that golfers do derive more enjoyment in playing a beautiful course.

Indifference, or a lack of appreciation of the beauties of nature, militates against the more general landscaping of golf courses. How this was overcome at Oak Hill through the use of trees as memorials is the theme of this presentation. This problem obviously is one of concern to boards of governors since courses vary in size from 70 to 350 or more acres. The treatments employed and the results achieved will vary directly with the foresight and skill of the planning committee. The use of trees should be considered from two viewpoints, aesthetic and utilitarian. In this article, the discussion will be confined to the aesthetic aspect.

For centuries the tree has been admired, often worshipped, by man. It was true in the oriental civilizations of 4,000 years ago, as it was in the later European cultures. Trees have been used as memorials to man since the dawn of history.

Taking a cue from history, about 20 years ago we began planting and naming trees on the clubhouse lawn for members who had rendered distinguished service to the club. In the beginning ornamental cast-stone benches were used in which

were inset bronze tablets, each bearing the name of the individual, the date and the reason for the honor. The bench was placed beneath the selected tree. Later the bench plan gave way to a specially designed bronze plaque which is attached to the tree.

Dedication ceremonies are simple and impressive. They usually are held on Decoration Day when a large part of the membership is present. In a typical program there is music by a brass quartet, the playing of Joyce Kilmer's "Trees," a brief dedication statement, a salute to the flag and the playing of the National Anthem. The impressiveness can hardly be overstated. The expenses are defrayed by voluntary donations.

The scope of the tree-dedication plan in recent years has been increased. Trees have been dedicated to members and sons who lost their lives in the world wars and to the surviving founders of the club, which was organized in 1901. Interest in the memorials by both members and visitors has grown apace.

Club Nursery Utilized

Our Board of Governors realized that the idea had further possibilities. Accordingly, it was provided that members of either sex who have loyally supported the club over a period of 15 years should be suitably honored with a tree.

For this purpose young trees from the club nursery, which contains upwards of 8,000 saplings mostly grown from seed, are employed. They are located about the tees and greens and at strategic sites along the fairways. The planting at each tee includes at least one rare ornamental specimen. All are labeled with the common and the botanical names of the tree, as well as with that of the member being honored.

Oaks predominate in the planting because of the name of the club. However, we have on the grounds more than 100 varieties of trees. In honoring the ladies we have used conifers and evergreens in

An Oak Is Dedicated to British Walker Cup Team



In a simple ceremony, the Oak Hill Country Club memorialized the visit of the 1949 British Walker Cup Team by dedicating a pin oak. Dr. John R. Williams (left) is shaking hands with John Dawson of the British Embassy. The others from left to right are Arthur Robinson, Fred Allen, Otto A. Shults, Club President, Elmer Michael, and L. B. Cartwright, City Manager.

a small, attractive pinetum near the clubhouse in which there are more than 50 specimen varieties. Thus far 230 trees have been designated as memorials to members.

The results of our planting have been so gratifying that it has been further extended. For his high service to amateur golf and his fine sportsmanship, a specimen pin oak was named for Francis Ouimet. Another tree was named for Dr. Hugh Glasgow, scientist from the Geneva Experiment Station who for years and until his death was our advisor on tree infestations. At the conclusion of the USGA Amateur Championship held at Oak Hill in 1949, a pin oak was named in honor of the winner, Charles R. Coe.

Members of the British Walker Cup Team were present at the ceremony and were so impressed that the wish was expressed that their visit could be similarly memorialized. On November 8, 1949, this

was done with appropriate ceremonies in which John Dawson, representing the British Ambassador, accepted the honor for Great Britain. The tree is a beautiful pin oak grown in our own nursery. It bears a bronze plaque on which appear the names of the British golfers and that of Commander J. A. S. Carson, Secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland.

Curiously, this tree fruited for the first time in the fall of 1949. Accordingly, a supply of acorns was gathered and through the British Embassy was sent to the various clubs represented on the team. Letters have been received from the officers of each of these clubs in England, Scotland and Ireland stating that the acorns have been received and planted according to instructions. They were warm in their praise of this gesture

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Ties in Handicap Matches

How to play off a tie in a handicap match has been, apparently, a puzzler ever since the idea of granting an artificial advantage to a weaker player was introduced.

It is the custom of the game, when no handicap strokes are involved, to settle a match play tie by a hole-by-hole, or "sudden death," play-off and to resolve a stroke play tie by an 18-hole play-off.

If time does not permit an 18-hole play-off at stroke play, it can be shortened to nine holes or less.

New Recommendations

The use of handicaps in play-offs injects an element which can upset the equity of these customs. The USGA, which receives numerous requests for advice on this subject, has given the matter considerable thought. It has evolved the following recommendations which it endorses from the viewpoints of equity and practicability:

MATCH PLAY: A handicap match which ends all even should be played off hole by hole until one side wins a hole. The play-off should start on the hole where the match began. Strokes should be allowed as in the prescribed round.

STROKE PLAY: A handicap stroke competition which ends in a tie should be played off at 18 holes with handicaps. If that be inexpedient, the play-off should permit the competitors to use an equitable percentage of their handicaps. For example, if in an individual competition A's handicap is 10 and B's is 8, it would be equitable to conduct a nine-hole play-off with A receiving 5 strokes and B 4 strokes. Rule 3(2) empowers the Committee to determine how and when a tie shall be decided.

Methods of deciding halved matches and stroke play ties should be published in advance.

These supersede all previous recommendations on this subject.

Stroke Allowances

Handicaps produced under the USGA Golf Handicap System are individual

stroke play handicaps. In other types of competitions a lesser number of strokes is allowed, the players receiving the strokes to use them as allocated on the club's score card. The recommended allowances are:

SINGLES MATCH PLAY: Allow 85% of the full difference between stroke play handicaps.

FOUR-BALL STROKE PLAY (better-ball basis): Allow each player 75% of his individual stroke play handicap, the strokes to be taken as they come on the card.

FOUR-BALL MATCH PLAY: Reduce the stroke play handicaps of all four players by the handicap of the low handicap player, the low handicap player then to play from scratch. Allow each of the three other players two-thirds (66⅔%) of the resulting difference, strokes to be taken by each player as they come on the card.

FOURSOMES (not four-ball) **STROKE PLAY:** Allow one-half of the partners' combined stroke play handicaps. (When selected drives are permitted, allow 35% only.)

FOURSOMES MATCH PLAY: Allow 40% of the full difference between the combined stroke play handicaps of each side. (When selected drives are permitted, allow 30% only.)

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of friendship and international good will.

The progress of the growth of these acorns is to be reported to Commander Carson and at some time in the future, when they have reached a size suitable for permanent location and planting, it shall be done with a ceremony at which it is hoped United States golfers will be present.

At Oak Hill, this has been a work of supreme satisfaction and pride to the members. In a succeeding article the utilitarian value of trees to a golf course will be discussed. This phase of the subject is of the highest importance.