

Special Edition | April 2017

BY DESIGN



Excellence in Golf Design from the American Society of Golf Course Architects

Moving forward

How the ASGCA Foundation's
Longleaf Tee Initiative can help
to improve your golf course



A Special Edition of *By Design* devoted to the Longleaf Tee Initiative

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Welcome to this special edition of *By Design*, focused entirely on the Longleaf Tee Initiative, a new program that has been developed by the ASGCA Foundation with the support of the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation. The program's aim is to make golf more fun and appealing to the widest possible range of players.

The premise of the Longleaf Tee Initiative is very simple. By reviewing your tee locations and, in most cases, adding tees at scientifically-selected distances, you can significantly improve the playability of your golf course, and increase the enjoyment of golfers. In addition to getting your tee locations right, the initiative also covers the extremely important need to provide golfers with simple and effective guidelines on which tees they should use.

In practice, implementing Longleaf or a similar system successfully at your course requires some expertise. You'll have individual circumstances, related to the topography and existing design of your course, as well as your target market, that will mean you'll need to adapt the system to work for you.

ASGCA members have the experience and education to devise a tee location project that is right for your club. You can find your nearest ASGCA member via www.asgca.org, and they will work with you on making sure such a project delivers the results you want.

I hope you enjoy this issue.



Greg Martin, ASGCA
President
American Society of Golf Course Architects

BY DESIGN

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Cover photograph by istockphoto.com/willard

Moving forward



By Design speaks with a panel of golf course architects about the Longleaf Tee Initiative.

THE PANEL

Clyde Johnston, ASGCA, is based in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and is President of the ASGCA Foundation.



Greg Muirhead, ASGCA, is based in New Jersey and is Vice President of the ASGCA Foundation.



John LaFoy, ASGCA, is based in South Carolina and is a former President of the ASGCA Foundation.



The ASGCA Foundation has teamed up with the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation on an initiative to encourage more clubs to adopt teeing systems like the one introduced at the Longleaf Golf & Family Club in Pinehurst, North Carolina. By providing data and guidance on how golf clubs can introduce an improved range of teeing options at their facilities, the aim of the Longleaf Tee Initiative is to give every golfer, regardless of their skill level, the ability to play at a good pace, shoot lower scores and have more fun.

By Design spoke with three ASGCA Past Presidents who have been instrumental in the development of the Longleaf Tee Initiative—Clyde Johnston, ASGCA; John LaFoy, ASGCA and Greg Muirhead, ASGCA—each of whom believes that many more golf clubs could benefit from introducing similar teeing systems on their courses.

Why should golf clubs think about introducing the Longleaf Tee System, or similar, on their golf courses?

Johnston: The Longleaf Tee System is a completely new and different way of thinking about setting up a golf course so that people of all ages and abilities can have more fun playing golf. The tee you play from is based on how far you hit your tee shot. Every tee is gender neutral and should be USGA rated for men and women. The system also breaks the mold of the tee marker color system that has stifled many players from playing from a tee more suited to their game.

While this system increases the number of tee areas on a golf hole, it also increases the ability of the golf facility to attract new players and retain current players by providing a tee suited to their skill level. This system allows young players to start playing from shorter yardages, then



Photo: iStockphoto/Dean Mitchell

As players age and lose distance, they can still have fun by moving forward to an appropriate tee

move back to longer tees as their skill and distances increase. Then as players age and lose distance, they can move forward to an appropriate tee and still have fun playing golf.

Muirhead: This system will help create a more enjoyable experience for all golfers. It will retain aging players, as well as welcome and accommodate new players of all ages. The system is gender neutral and helps keep the game fun and exciting by allowing all golfers, regardless of skill, a more realistic opportunity to reach greens in regulation, make pars and experience some level of success, which will encourage them to stay with the game. All of that translates to more golfers playing more rounds, which improves the overall health of the game. It will also help boost the operational success of individual facilities, both public and private.

LaFoy: Firstly, we must acknowledge that many of our golfers who were responsible for the ‘golf boom’ of the

“ This system will help create a more enjoyable experience for all golfers

Greg Muirhead,
ASGCA Past President

1990s are getting older. Some have left the game because courses have just become too difficult for them to negotiate in terms of yardage. Many of the male players are reluctant to move to the most forward set of tees

that may have always been considered ‘ladies tees.’ For some reason, we also seem to have a mindset that all ladies play from the same set of tees, which is as ridiculous as thinking all men should play from the same set. By using the Longleaf Tee System, we are merely acknowledging what we have known all along—that golf is a lot more fun when played from a distance that aligns with our physical ability and skill level.

One of the reasons I am excited about it is that three of the last clubs that have contacted me were all calling about adding tees to their course because of their older members. None of them had heard about the Longleaf Tee System, so this is something that was coming from them, and not prompted by anything they had read. I have always thought that ‘real’ movements start at the grass roots—the bottom of the pyramid so to speak, and not

at the top. Programs such as this work when clubs are demanding it, not when they are being told it is something they need to do.

Is there not a concern that adopting the system may be expensive and disruptive?

Muirhead: Although the cost of adding new tees and properly implementing the system is subject to a variety of site-specific variables, including the desired construction methodology, I think in most cases, the answer is ‘no’. Many courses, especially those built during the past 20 years, already have multiple teeing grounds that can easily accommodate the majority of recommended tee marker locations. Sometimes, simply extending the front or rear of an existing tee is all that’s required. Where additional forward tees are necessary, they can often be easily sculpted into existing fairways and roughs at a very low cost. Sometimes those tees can even be added on existing grades, with no actual ‘construction’ required. Compared to other course improvements, the cost and inconvenience associated with adding tees is minimal, while the potential benefits and ‘bang for the buck’ are significant.

Johnston: Building new tees is one of the least expensive construction items on golf courses, but this system may work on some courses without any new tees. It all depends on the topography of the golf course and the imagination of the person laying out the tees. The most forward tees are often a flat part of the fairway and defined with a plaque mounted flush with the ground for ease of maintenance. If new tees are added, they are generally smaller in scope and perhaps slightly off to one side of the golf hole. Every golf course will be different in terms of where and how new tee areas are created or located. An ASGCA member can layout the tee system, provide a cost estimate and even get competitive prices for the work.

Why use an ASGCA member to do this type of work?

Muirhead: One of the reasons Dan Van Horn and his team at the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation reached out to the ASGCA Foundation to partner on this initiative was because they realized ASGCA members have the skill set and experience required to properly evaluate each site and determine the most beneficial tee locations, both in terms of playability and cost effective construction, to best adapt and implement the system to a given property. Achieving that is paramount to creating the desired golfer experience and the overall success of the program and facility. Our members are also best equipped to introduce the Longleaf Tee System and educate decision-makers

regarding its scope and benefits, as well as helping to develop associated construction costs and schedules. I believe the participation of ASGCA members is critical to the success of the program.

LaFoy: ASGCA members are engaged in the design of golf courses on a full-time basis and, as professional designers, they have been fully vetted by their peers. The ASGCA has gone to great lengths to explain and educate our members about the Longleaf Tee System. We share information not only about this, but all phases of golf course design, as we understand that the more our members know, the better we can serve the golfing community. Continuing education is and always has been a major facet of the ASGCA. ●



Photo: iStockphoto/ImagineGolf

Positive reception

We asked Greg Muirhead, ASGCA, how the Longleaf Tee Initiative has been received in discussions with clients.

The response has been very positive. Similar to the experience of our ASGCA Foundation Board, when we visited Longleaf for a first-hand tour and program presentation by ASGCA member Bill Bergin, people are typically surprised by the simplicity of the system. After a short presentation, it’s easy for most to understand the considerable research and data that supported the development of the system and appreciate the potential benefits.

As with any proposed course improvement, many of the questions relate to cost. I always emphasize the methods available to manage costs, while still implementing the program. I also stress the need for each facility to consider how implementing the program can help increase participation and positively impact a facility’s bottom line. There’s certainly a return on investment, not only with revenue from the increased rounds played, but also with increased cart rentals, food and beverage sales, merchandise sales and lessons.

If you aren't following ASGCA on social media, here's some of what you're missing:



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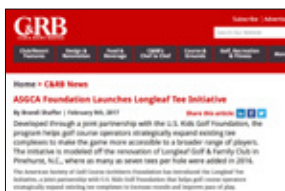
Henry Wallmeyer, @NatlClubAssn, talks Longleaf Tee System w/John Crowder, @USKidsGolfFDN at #pgashow2017. @ASGCA



Longleaf Golf & Family Club



The Longleaf Tee System is going to bring more people into the game and help grow the game!! It is supposed to be fun and it is OK to have Par and Birdie putts.



Debbie Schmidt
@Golfsoftwarecom



#Golf infographic of the new Longleaf Tee System from @USKidsGolfFDN. More #golfing fun for #golfers of all ages. <http://longleafgfc.com/longleaf-tee-system>



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R. Jones, @ASGCA, restores Bendelow design, brings Longleaf Tee System to Medinah No. 2. <http://tinyurl.com/kugas34> @gcamagazine @USKidsGolfFDN



Golf Oman



The Longleaf Tee System is growing in popularity across all golfing communities—it gives players of all levels the opportunity to get more enjoyment from their game. Hit the 'Like' button if this is something you want to see on our courses in Oman. #golfinoman #golf #muscat#juniordevelopment



bergingolf



Bergin Golf Designs is pleased to be at the center of a new initiative between the ASGCA and U.S. Kids Golf Foundations. The Longleaf Tee System helps players select the proper tee based on how far they carry a driver and we will reduce irrelevant golf shots and make the game more fun! #bergingolfdesigns#asgca #uskidsgolf



Erik Matuszewski
@ematuszewski



How one Pinehurst-area club is thinking outside the tee box to properly scale #golf courses. #Longleafteesystem <http://ngfdashboard.clubnewsmaker.org/Newsletter/17mqojthOve?a=1&p=2412369&t=410827>



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Any course interested in learning more about the Longleaf Tee Initiative can contact @ASGCA directly, 262-786-5960.

To stay up to date with the latest news and updates from ASGCA, visit the following pages:



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A ‘living laboratory’ for growing golf

The Longleaf Tee Initiative was borne from a redesign project completed by Bill Bergin, ASGCA, at the Longleaf Golf & Family Club in Pinehurst, North Carolina. *By Design* finds out more.

In 1987, Dan Maples, ASGCA Past President, took 170 acres of North Carolina land and designed and developed a golf facility that included a clubhouse, driving range, tennis courts and more. Longleaf Golf & Country Club held its grand opening in November 1998.

By 2015, U.S. Kids Golf Foundation (USKGF)—maker of golf equipment for kids—was looking for what their president Dan Van Horn describes as “a living laboratory for growing kids and family golf in a club environment, implementing best practices in a



real-life situation.” They found this laboratory at Longleaf, buying the property and working with Bill Bergin, ASGCA, (read our interview with him on page 12) to bring their vision to reality. They renamed the facility Longleaf Golf & Family Club.

A key feature of the redesign was the conversion of the club’s traditional four tee pads per hole to a new system developed by USKGF.

Following extensive data analysis, it was determined that on any given course there would ideally be a total of 600 yards of separation over a typical 18-hole layout between each tee marker option. Beginning with 3,200 yards from the forward tees, most golf courses can be fit with six, seven or even eight yardage options to choose from. The gap between markers on each hole is about 30 yards, but that decreases on par threes and increases on par fives.

With a broader range of tee locations, every golfer, regardless of skill, can play at a good pace, shoot lower scores, and have more fun.

At Longleaf, they settled on a seven-tee system, following the principles set out above but also factoring in the course’s topography, choosing locations that facilitated ease of construction.

Forty tee pads were constructed, mostly related to size or conditioning rather than location. 29 tees were cut into existing fairways, of which four had to be shaped and a few more may be modestly levelled in future. Because of the increased number of tees, size-per-tee could be reduced, and many existing tees could be reduced by simply adjusting mowing lines.

The back tees and more heavily-used middle tees may hold more than one set of markers each, and are respectively about 800 sq. ft. and between 900-1,200 sq. ft. each. The forward two-to-three sets of tees are smaller, approximately 400 sq. ft. each.




Extensive data analysis has determined the ideal separation between tees to ensure that golfers of varying abilities have a similar level of challenge on each hole



Photos: Longleaf Golf & Family Club

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With the tees in place, the next challenge for Longleaf was to communicate the system effectively to golfers. A crucial part of this is clear signage. “The charts and illustrations elevate this over other tee initiatives. From the pro shop and range to the first tee and scorecard, it is all packaged in a way that encourages more players to play from the correct tees,” says Bergin. On the practice range, there is a guide for golfers that shows which tees they should use, which is determined by the distance they hit their drives.

“The beauty of the Longleaf Tee System is that you don’t lose the integrity of the design,” says Jeff Cowell, General Manager of Longleaf Golf & Family Club. “It’s not just an

From the pro shop and range to the first tee and scorecard, it is all packaged in a way that encourages more players to play from the correct tees

arbitrary layout of the tees to make a hole shorter. So most importantly, the players still feel a sense of great accomplishment and fun as they play. Since Bill’s work here at Longleaf, our total rounds are up nearly 20 percent over a year ago and I’m hearing from a lot of happy members and guests.”

“This tee system has given me a completely different confidence about playing,” says Longleaf Golf & Family Club member Emily Simeon. “I can go out and play with many people who are much better golfers than I am—and I can compete.” ●

A guide on the practice range shows golfers which tees they should use, determined by the distance they hit their drives

LONGLEAF Golf & Family Club | U.S. Kids Golf ACADEMY

1.5 Play our blended tees to create a new experience each visit. Use the arrows to select the correct tee during the round.

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TOTAL
BLUE 1 (1.5)	228	156	76	90	300	83	185	265	177	1560	174	83	212	223	280	187	251	76	195	1681	3241
GOLD 2 (2.5)	257	190	102	97	326	95	220	296	203	1786	216	96	242	260	312	223	282	87	215	1933	3719
GREEN 3 (3.5)	283	260	135	118	369	120	240	343	220	2088	247	107	275	298	391	247	325	103	239	2232	4320
ORANGE 4 (4.5)	317	290	153	143	390	132	269	388	244	2326	287	130	300	339	420	291	377	135	270	2549	4875
WHITE 5 (5.5)	342	322	171	153	400	138	301	448	280	2555	304	145	328	377	451	325	421	169	304	2824	5379
PURPLE 6 (6.5)	381	363	187	177	483	166	340	500	310	2907	352	184	360	387	483	353	464	200	342	3125	6032
RED 7	409	404	201	185	534	177	370	532	335	3147	392	208	388	423	525	391	507	233	388	3455	6602
PAR	4	4	3	3	5	3	4	5	4	35	4	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	4	36	71
HANDICAP	11	1	7	15	13	9	3	5	17		8	10	14	2	6	16	18	12	4		HCP NET

DATE _____ SCORER _____ ATTEST _____

All distance markers including sprinkler heads are measured to the center of the green. Flag color indicates hole location. FRONT CENTER BACK



Photos: Longleaf Golf & Family Club

Making golf more accessible

Bill Bergin, ASGCA, highlights how his implementation of the new tee system at Longleaf Golf & Family Club is paving the way for golf clubs to make courses more enjoyable for any golfer.

As the architect responsible for the renovation project at Longleaf Golf & Family Club in Pinehurst, North Carolina, Bill Bergin, ASGCA, delivered the teeing system that became the template for the Longleaf Tee Initiative. *By Design* asked him about the project and how the teeing system gives players of any age and skill level the opportunity to get more enjoyment from golf.

How did the Longleaf project come about?

Dan Van Horn, founder and owner of U.S. Kids Golf, gave rise to the Longleaf Tee System with his belief that if golfers are to achieve excellence at any age, they should be able to shoot par. For that to be possible, the course must be scaled to allow players to reach greens in regulation. It was clear to us that this

concept is applicable to all golfers, particularly as older players and beginners typically play on courses that are too long for their abilities. When you examine the distances people can actually hit a ball, you realize that most are playing from a yardage that demands a more challenging approach than that of a touring professional on the most difficult course.

Golfing ability can also be likened to a bell curve. We start by being able to hit a ball a certain distance, then gradually become capable of hitting longer shots and playing longer courses. However, everyone reaches a yardage pinnacle before slowly beginning to descend the other side of the bell curve. We have a tremendous number of golfers on both sides of the bell curve, and we believed that the Longleaf Tee System would allow players of any age and skill level to enjoy the game.

What were the main challenges you faced, and how did you overcome them?

The distance concept is based on how far a player carries a driver. If players only carry a driver 100 yards then a 3,200-yard course will be an appropriate length, but if they carry a driver 275 yards, a 7,400-yard course would be more suitable. Our courses are separated by 600



/// We've created a model that each golf club can tailor to fit their course and membership

yards per teeing area. The math and positioning is relatively simple to implement on a flat property, but we often need to make physical adjustments to fit the system to existing courses like Longleaf.

Longleaf had a typical four-tee spread and we wanted to use those tees as efficiently as possible. Keeping those fixed locations as a base point, we added new tees to satisfy our general goals of 3,200, 3,800, 4,400, 5,000, 5,600, 6,200 and 6,800 yards. Using a purely mathematical approach often leads to some tees being placed in undesirable positions, so my role was to balance out our goals while fitting the necessary tee additions to the course and the land. Factors to consider when choosing a tee location include the position of bunkers, water hazards, doglegs and cart paths. In addition, the topography of the land can make a huge difference in the amount of disturbed area and dirt we need when adding a tee to a course. Operating efficiently allowed us to implement the system at a low to moderate cost.

Has the system delivered the desired results for Longleaf?

We are delighted with the results. However, Longleaf provides an interesting case study for several reasons. The course was in poor physical and financial condition when the U.S. Kids Golf Foundation bought it, but we're in the middle of a multi-phase renovation. First, we redeveloped the practice area and added the U.S. Kids Golf Academy, and then we implemented 95% of



the Longleaf Tee System. In 2016, we created Bottlebrush, a six-hole short course featuring holes ranging from 50-to-100 yards and this year, we're resurfacing all greens with a MiniVerde bermudagrass.

What we do know is that we're getting great usage on our forward tees—the most popular are those at 4,400, 5,000 and 5,600 yards—and players want to take our scorecards home to see if they can play from our yardages at other courses. Plus, rounds have increased and the club is gaining momentum.

Did you start the project intending to create a template that could be applied to other courses?

The Longleaf Tee System is good for the game and will benefit most golf clubs, but I don't think they should all use exactly the same set-up. Rather

than a template, we've created a model that each golf club can tailor to fit their course and membership. The beauty of this system is that it is based on objective data, so we have a recommended length course based on how far players carry a driver. If golfers follow that guide, they will have more fun, shoot lower scores and play faster with less fatigue. This system is designed to eliminate irrelevant golf shots—if every shot matters, then the game is much more interesting and enjoyable.

Are other clients now wanting similar work done at their clubs?

I am currently working with several clubs. Typically, we start by adding a set of tees in the 4,400-to-4,500-yard range, and once this is in place, we focus on the existing tees and adding tees very close to, or in, the fairway. ●

Mixing it up

Multiple tee location initiatives are proving a great way for clubs to appeal to players of all abilities and ages. It's why many leading courses are forging ahead with their own plans to introduce them. We report on some of the most prominent developments.

“When a new golf course is designed, it's usually done with the excellent player in mind, players who have faster swing speeds, thus can hit the ball further,” said golf course architect Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA, in an interview in the Spring 2016 issue of *By Design*.

But what about the players that can't hit the ball as far? Why should they miss out? It's a question more architects and golf clubs are asking themselves, and it's why many are looking to introduce multiple tee location initiatives, like the Longleaf Tee System, to existing golf courses.

As demonstrated at Longleaf Golf & Family Club, offering players a broader range of tee locations presents multiple benefits. Not only does it open up access to more golfers, regardless of their ability, but it is also proving an innovative, practical and affordable catalyst for growth. In general, it helps courses to increase the number of rounds played

and improve pace of play. These factors combine to help golf courses improve their operating results.

When it worked with the Longleaf Golf & Family Club to bring in the seven-tee system, U.S. Kids Golf Foundation believed that ASGCA could make its model even better and help it to be implemented at golf courses, in a way that properly considers the club's individual circumstances.

ASGCA members have long been working with their clients to provide teeing solutions that can help golf facilities attract and retain golfers. They are uniquely qualified to design and oversee construction of tee complexes at golf courses in North America and around the world. And it's why many have already been employed by clubs to help introduce multiple tee systems.

“ASGCA members must help clients determine what is best,” says Bruce Charlton, ASGCA. “Many courses

will not be able to afford to build so many tees and that's fine. Others may combine formal teeing grounds with thoughtful cut-outs in the fairway. And still others may use these ideas for better operations.”

Like the Longleaf Golf & Family Club, many other courses have employed the services of ASGCA members to introduce their own multiple tee initiatives. They include Medinah No. 2 in Medinah, Illinois (with Rees Jones, ASGCA Fellow, and Steve Weisser, ASGCA), Sugar Creek Country Club in Sugar Land, Texas (with Jeff Blume, ASGCA), Simsbury Farms Golf Course in Simsbury, Connecticut (with John Harvey, ASGCA), and Pelican's Nest Golf Club at Pelican Landing in Bonita Springs, Florida (with Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA). ●

If you would like to introduce Longleaf Tees at your club, contact your local ASGCA architect. You can find their details at asgca.org/architects.

Photo: Hunter PR





CASE STUDY: MEDINAH NO. 2

A program for success

This summer, a project to restore the No. 2 Course at Medinah Country Club is set to reach completion.

Work at the course is being led by Rees Jones, ASGCA Fellow, and Steve Weisser, ASGCA, under the guidance of Medinah's director of golf course operations Curtis Tyrrell. Their aim is to restore the course to the original design of Tom Bendelow, but they're also introducing some exciting new features to make it more attractive to players of all abilities.

The No. 2 course is the club's shorter course, and has always been popular with higher handicappers, ladies and juniors. Recognizing that it needs to stay relevant and do what it can to make the course more fun to play, the club has gone ahead with plans to introduce its 'Golf For Life' program – a unique set up, which involves multiple sets of tees per hole to appeal to golfers of all skill levels.

"This type of program is being incorporated at a number of golf courses around the country to help the game grow and keep people in the game," Jones said in an interview with *Golf Course Architecture*. "Medinah wanted to take a leadership role in introducing this program. There are seven sets of tees. When a beginner takes up the game, they can play the forward tee and as they get better they keep moving back. Then, as you get older and you can't

hit it as far, you start moving forward again. I think this is going to be a golf course that every caliber of player, from the entry level player to the young player to the older player, can play and enjoy if they play the proper tees."

According to Robert Sereci, the club's general manager and COO, this development reflects the need to move the needle on the game and cater to all. "We have more members coming in than we have had in eight years," he says. "You can have all the gimmicks and payment plans, but ultimately you have to give them something to show up for. We believe that our new 'Golf For Life' program does exactly that."

What makes 'Golf For Life' unique is that it offers up a comprehensive program designed to help players build up the skills they need to improve their game. Each member meets with professional staff for a game evaluation, is assigned one of seven tee boxes as starting point, and then begins a structured system for improvement.

Sereci says that the club has already begun explaining the program to its membership, and they have embraced it. "All of the measures we are putting in place are designed to make playing golf at Medinah more vibrant and fun," he explains.

CASE STUDY: SUGAR CREEK

Golf for all

Members at Sugar Creek Country Club will soon be able to play on the newly renovated Robert Course (one of the three sets of nine holes at the club), which not only includes new golf holes, tees, greens and fairways, but a new set of short tees designed to accommodate players of all skill level.

The club's general manager, Gordon Wagner, says that the renovation with Jeff Blume, ASGCA, has proved an ideal opportunity to take the club's oldest—and, previously, least desirable—nine holes of golf, and turn them into something fun.

"The plan has been to make the course more appealing to everyone—children, families and older players, particularly those that are considering downgrading their membership," he explains.

Wagner first came across the concept of multiple tees after reading an article in *Club and Resort Business* in 2015 by Bill Donohue, which talked about kids' tees, short tees, quicker tees and so on. "The article mentioned a successful initiative at a club in Michigan, which not only built in new short tees, but changed its program so that for three to four days a week, the course was designated for short tees," Wagner explains. "It was committed to growing participation, and the club's board and membership really got behind the initiative. I looked at what they had achieved and thought it was genius!"

While he is hopeful about the appeal of the new short tees at Robert Course, Wagner recognizes the importance of communicating changes to members, and encouraging them to get behind it. "Members needs to know what it is all about," he says. "The club has to be completely committed, which means programming, programming, programming—nine hole night competitions, nine hole par three events and more. Ultimately, it's about giving players a sense of freedom that they've never experienced before."



Photo: Jeff Blume



CASE STUDY: SIMSBURY FARMS

Fun for everyone

Simsbury Farms was one of the golf courses selected to receive a pro bono consultation from the United States Golf Association and the ASGCA Foundation.

One of its goals is to make the golf course become more inclusive to all skill levels and groups.

Golf course architect A. John Harvey, ASGCA, was part of the USGA/ASGCA Site Evaluation Program for Simsbury Farms. He confirmed that the club is already doing some work with forward tees (as reflected by its scorecards) and has cut out teeing areas alongside the fairways on a few holes at the edge of the rough where it can place simple tee markers. "I feel teeing areas such as forward tees promoted by the ASGCA's Longleaf Tee System Initiative can appropriately cater to an enhanced variety of players to promote enjoyment of the game," he says. "It's an initiative that in my opinion helps to make the game more fun for everyone. Under the guise of an experienced golf course architect and working together with course management professionals, a plan for tasteful and appropriate teeing areas can be incorporated into the flow of the course that carefully balances playability, costs, benefits and maintenance considerations."



Photo: Istockphoto/stevecolimages

CASE STUDY: PELICAN'S NEST

A course within a course

Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA, introduced the concept of 'scoring tees' in 2011, when she worked on a project at Green Valley Country Club in Greenville, South Carolina, to open up the game to more players than ever. She has since expanded the concept at Pelican's Nest Golf Club in Bonita Springs, Florida, by using on-site fill generated during the renovation of the Club's Hurricane Course to add scoring tees.

The concept is based on locating scoring tees forward of existing tees in such a way that penal hazards are either eliminated or can be managed more easily.

At Pelican's Nest there are seven different sets of tee markers, which are indicated with Roman numerals. Scoring tees have their own designation, the 'S' tee, with their own scorecard and ratings for men and women.

"The fact that the club honors the Scoring Course with its own name and scorecard emphasizes that

this is an official 'course within a course', that it provides an alternative challenge, and that it is age, gender and skill neutral," says Bel Jan. "By creating these formal teeing grounds, the club proclaims 'we want you here' whether you are a junior, super-senior or scratch player."

Immediate advantages of using scoring tees are that golfers have more fun and enjoy faster play. "Scoring tees allow more players to follow the USGA/PGA's encouragement to 'tee it forward,'" says Bel Jan. "We've seen that once players experience better scores because they can more often reach the greens in regulation, they are less interested in going back to a longer course. Enthusiastic participation will almost surely result in increased pace of play and rounds played as well as in greater satisfaction by the members."

Find out more about Pelican's Nest by reading the full article in the *Spring 2016 issue of By Design*



Why should out of bounds penalize the golfer more than a water hazard?

Arthur Little

A self-confessed golf addict since 1959, Arthur Little graduated from Stanford University in 1966 and entered the venture capital world. In 1996, Little and his wife Jann Leeming bought Province Lake Golf in Parsonfield, Maine, taking various steps to ensure the course would suit as many players as possible.

Although Little sold the course in 2005, he continues to push for inclusive golfing and varied tee placement as senior trustee of the Royal Little Family Foundation.

How is your game?

At the age of 73, my game is definitely on the back nine. I'm a weak 8.1 index, although I did shoot my age last year.

Which three people would make up your dream fourball?

That's easy. My wife, who is my favorite golf champion, my late father Royal Little, who introduced me to the sport and took me to courses as a teenager, and Chi-Chi Rodriguez, who I played many times. My father was one of Chi-Chi's original tour sponsors—something he told me five years after my father's death.

What is your favorite hole in golf?

I've played 526 courses, so I have a lot to choose from, but hole eight at Pebble Beach, California and hole 16 at Bandon Trails in Oregon quickly

come to mind. It took me six rounds to figure out how golf course architects Bill Coore, ASGCA, and Ben Crenshaw wanted golfers to play the latter. My favorite is hole 16 at Province Lake Golf, where Jann and I really started thinking about tee positioning. Our son Cameron designed the hole so that the pond on the left is reachable with a well-hit drive, but the speed slot on the right leaves the player with short iron. Playing short of the pond leaves the player with a long iron or hybrid. It's a very good risk/reward hole.

If you could change or add one rule, what would it be?

The rules governing stroke and distance for balls that go out of bounds—drop a ball two club lengths from the spot it went out. Why should out of bounds penalize the golfer more than a water hazard?

What project are you currently working on?

Since 1998, Jann and I have been trying to convince the industry that there need to be golf courses with two forward sets of tees at approximately 4,000 and 4,700 yards to suit players with slower swings (60-75mph). I've recently worked with Coore and architect Andy Staples, ASGCA, to set tees at those yardages. During our visit to play Coore and Crenshaw's course at the new Sand Valley Golf Resort in Wisconsin this May, we'll begin marking the two forward sets of tees on the upcoming second course, designed by David McLay Kidd.

We are thrilled with the ASGCA Foundation's new Lingleaf Tee Initiative, so our family foundation has pledged US\$75,000 to support the project. ●



The eighth at Pebble Beach is one of Little's favorite holes

Photo: Pebble Beach Company



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