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## KEN'S KORNER

GREATE BAY COUNTRY CLUB

# More Greate Improvements

If you played golf at Greate Bay this fall or winter, you may have noticed that we have begun to renovate some of our tees as a part of our continuous effort to improve your experience on the golf course. Taking a worst-first approach, we are utilizing the off-season by stripping, leveling, and re-grassing some of the under-sized, yet commonly used tees. To date, we have completed the renovation of the yellow tee on number nine, and have begun the same process on both the white and yellow/green tees of number thirteen. We hope to meet several goals through this period of renovation, first and foremost being the enhancement of your round of golf.

The motivations behind these changes are numerous, beginning with the need for more tee space. It is a testament to the popularity of the game of golf that courses built some time ago must allow for expansion at their respective facilities. Willie Park Jr. probably never dreamed that his design would host upwards of 30,000 rounds per year! The reality is, this course was designed for a quarter of that volume, and the greens and tees were sized appropriately for 1923. As a result of increased play, we have decided to augment our available teeing space.



Building larger tees eliminates a lot of the issues we have experienced over the previous six years. Initially, it affords us the opportunity to level the tee, which has crowned over years of filling divots. Wider tees let us shift the areas you hit from, and prevents us from piling divot mix down the middle of the tee. Larger tees help reduce foot traffic wear by spreading it out, and decrease the collection of divots in one area. After all, it's much easier for one divot to fill in than it is for an entire patch of grass.

Another feature of older golf courses (or lack thereof) is adequate drainage. Tee renovation creates the opportunity to add internal and surface drainage. We use transit levels to shoot a grade, and slope the tee just enough to allow surface water to drain away (about 1 to 1.5%). Older courses also tend to evolve away from the initial grass types that were planted. When the time comes to plant sod on our newly renovated tee, we choose a type of bentgrass, L93, which grows very well in our local climate. This particular bentgrass grows aggressively, heals quickly, and is very tolerant to certain turf diseases. We order it "washed", which means that the soil it is grown on at the sod farm is rinsed off, leaving just the grass and some thatch. Washing sod allows it to establish its roots in soil native to our golf course.

So, to recap, we have stripped the sod, leveling the tee, in some cases adding drainage, pitching the slope for surface drainage, and planting sod. We hope you are pleased with the results, and if you ever have questions, please ask! While it is not always readily apparent, our department is also in the business of customer service!

*Chris Lare, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent*

*It's always a Greate day at Greate Bay! <sup>SM</sup>*