

CCF Historical and Architectural Series Volume X

By Geoffrey L. Manton

Size matters. Bring a guest to play golf at The Country Club of



Example of how green creep can occur as a result of poor turf conditions. The dashed white line marks the new green cut. (Goodwin Park GC)

Farmington and chances are good that one of his/her first comments when playing the course will be in reference to the small size of our greens. Often an illusive target, our green complexes are the single strongest defense of our golf course. However, our greens were not always this small. Yes, CCF suffers from shrinkage - an ailment that afflicts many other golf courses of the classic era.

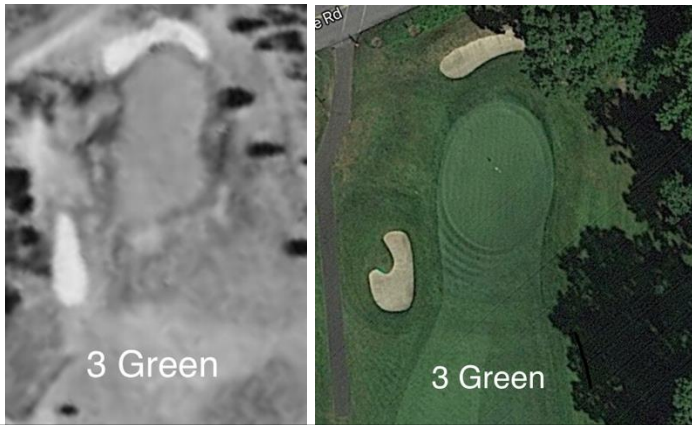
The putting surfaces at CC Farmington have contracted inwards several paces from their original green pad over the years. Although this condition has been brought on by decades of gradually altered mowing patterns and changing turf conditions created by green shading, it is curable.

Look at virtually any of our green complexes and notice bluegrass rough on the same plane as the putting surface. A few paces beyond this rough will be a sharp edge to where the turf abruptly descends to the green surrounds. This transition of the landscape marks the boundary of the original green pad. A round of golf at low evening light will magnify these transitions and our progressive tree removal program has further illuminated these areas that are ripe for recapture.



Putting surfaces taken to the edge of the green pad at Shuttle Meadow CC (above) and Westchester CC (below).





Where the back edge of the green on the 3rd hole abutted the rear bunker in 1934 (left photo), there are now several paces of rough between this back bunker and the green surface (right photo)

Some may be content with the status quo, but fully expanded greens reap benefits. Small putting surfaces tend to concentrate foot traffic on the green, creating more wear and tear. Green expansions will help to spread out that traffic and limit the stress to our greens. The number of pin locations also increases with putting surfaces expanded to the full extent of the green pad. This not only aids in the dispersion of foot traffic but also creates more interest in shot making. A pin set in a reclaimed corner of a green will demand the correct angle of attack from the fairway for the highest likelihood of success. Increased drama on the golf course also comes as a

result of putting surfaces taken to the edge.

A narrow transition zone will define the difference between a birdie putt or a difficult pitch to try to save par.



In 1934, the 13th green was squarish in shape with a back right tongue that wrapped behind the bunkers making for a devilish pin location. Today, the green is round with less real estate.

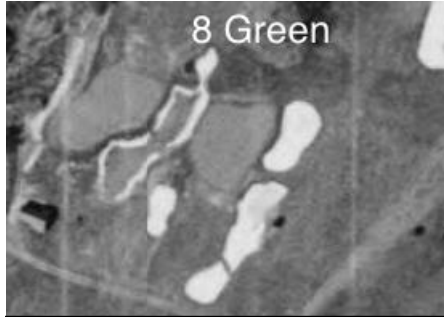
Furthermore, an examination of the size and shape of our greens at the time of the 1934 aerial photograph demonstrates how significantly our greens have gone from unique interesting shapes to bland oval putting surfaces.



Once hexagonal and encased by bunkers, the 4th green is now round and shaded by trees.



The 5th green was long and slender in 1934 but is now squat and shorted.



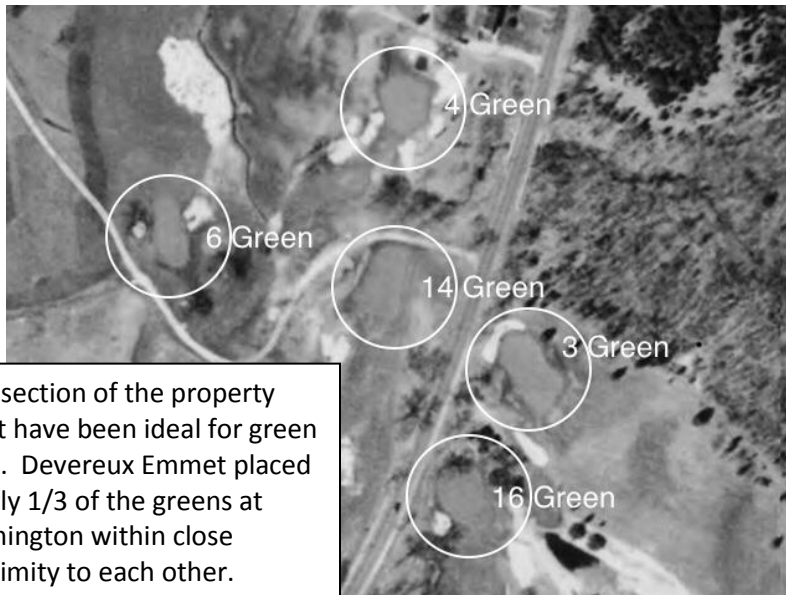
The shape of the 8th green today hardly resembles its 1934 predecessor due to four corners of shrinkage.

Different techniques can be used to expand green surfaces, but the most effective solution resides with ensuring that both the subsoil and turf grass of the expanded green segment matches that of the remainder of the green. Golf

courses that have an on-site turf nursery containing turf grass of the same variety hold the prescription to the most efficient and cost-effective solution for

green expansions. Turf harvested from those nurseries will seamlessly match the remainder of the greens and have already been cultivated to thrive in local conditions.

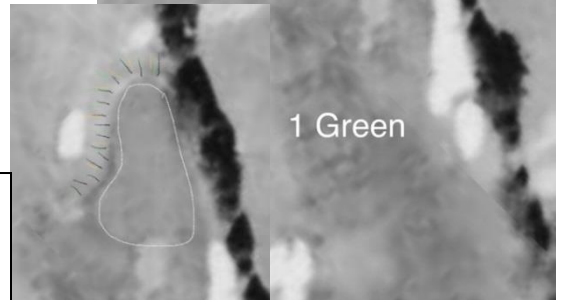
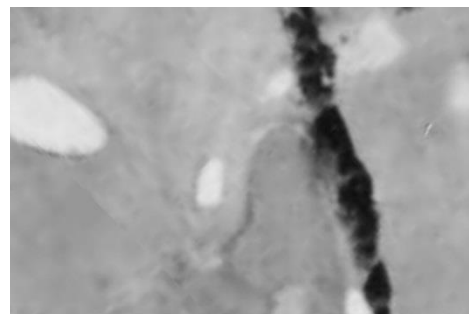
Devereux Emmet built a golf course with unique and interesting green complexes. In form with classic era



architecture, he selected the best locations on the property for his green sites and often clustered more than one green in those locations. However, no green site is more dramatic than that of our opening hole.

This section of the property must have been ideal for green sites. Devereux Emmet placed nearly 1/3 of the greens at Farmington within close proximity to each other.

Imagine if the first green were expanded to the original green pad, with the putting surface stretched to the edge of the cliff back and left and if a single step separated the right edge of the green from the O.B. stake? Now, I'd call that the kind of shot drama that commands an encore.



The boundaries of the 1st green abutted the cliff's edge and the property line in 1934.

Supplement to Volume 10.

As mentioned by President Kevin Ray, the Board of Governors has selected the architecture firm of Dusenberry Design to lead our effort in restoring the classic features of The Country Club of Farmington. Led by Matt Dusenberry, the Dusenberry Design team is responsible for the award-winning renovation of Keney Park in Hartford. Through that work, Mr. Dusenberry has heavily researched Devereux Emmet and his portfolio of courses. As such, Dusenberry is well equipped with the knowledge necessary for a successful restoration effort at CCF. Furthermore, as a design-build firm, Dusenberry is on-site for their projects, often performing the construction work themselves. Dusenberry is sensitive to the costs related to renovation and believes in allocating expenses more to golf course work rather than documentation of that work. Dusenberry Design will be at CCF in mid-September for field review and planning. A membership introduction and education event will be held at the clubhouse on Thursday September 19. Please join us for what is sure to be an enlightening evening.

<https://www.dusenberrydesign.com/>