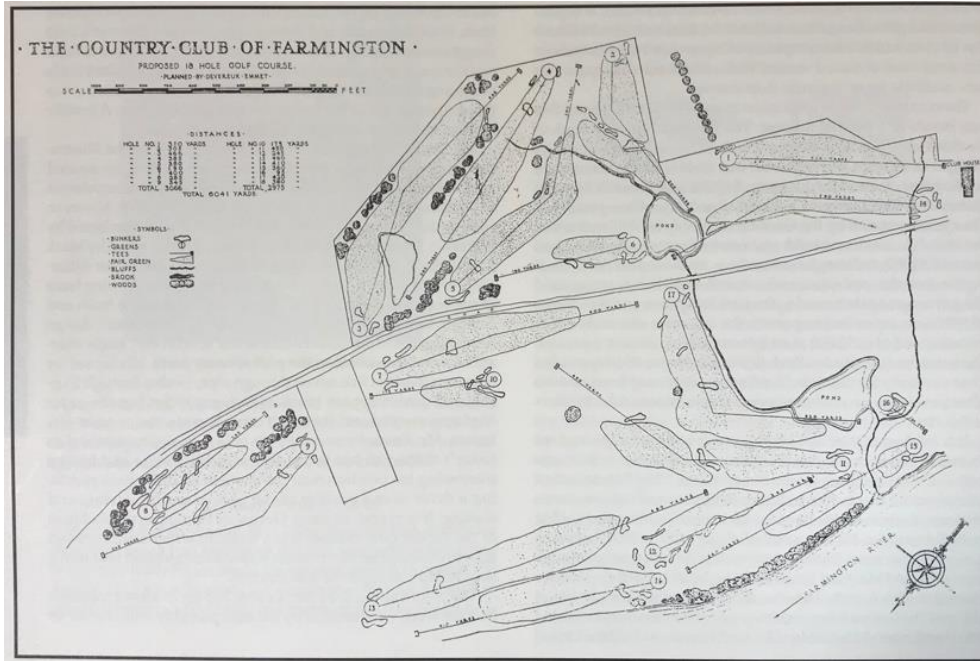


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The line of intent vs. the line of charm. What does that



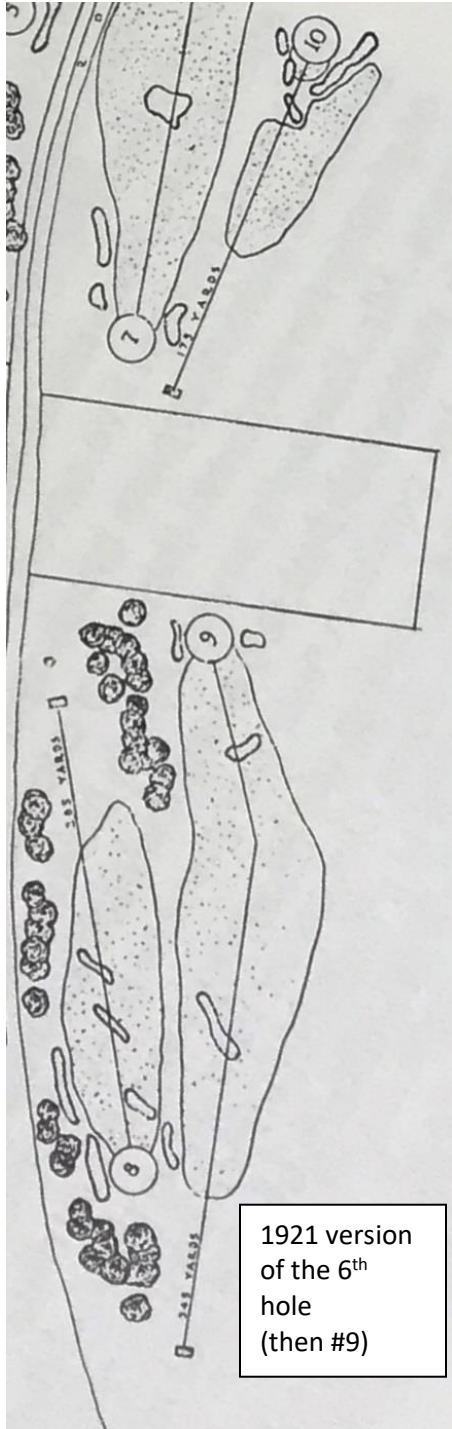
mean? Our 6th hole exemplifies this concept of strategic golf course architecture, but before I explain, let's look at the evolution of the 6th hole from its inception to today.

When Devereux Emmet created his routing plan for The Country Club, Farmington in 1921, our current 6th hole was to be a soft dog-leg left par 4. Although the teeing area was in its present location, the green was planned for just short of Pope Brook.



However, based on the recollected version of CCF circa 1926 that

hangs in our Founders Room, the 6th hole that was constructed ended up as a sharp dog-leg right par 4 that crossed Pope Brook at the right side of the fairway with the green located near our current entrance to the practice range parking lot. The following hole, labeled as the 10th, no longer exists. On Emmet's 1921 course diagram, this mid-length par 3 was in the general area of our present 7th tee. However, the recollected routing of CCF as it existed in 1926 demonstrates the green for this lost hole at the site of our present 6th green. The



1921 version of the 6th hole (then #9)

teeing area for the 1926 "10th" resided near the swale along 9 fairway, creating a 1-shot hole that played towards Route 10. In fact, close inspection of the landscape at the eastern edge of this swale will reveal that the remnants of this tee box remain today.

There is no documentation of the precise when or why this par 3 "10th" was taken out of play, but it's logical to deduct that this "10th hole" was obviated by the creation of our current 4th hole. It's also



1926 version of the 6th hole (then also #9)

possible that perennial flooding of the 1926 version of the 6th green necessitated a search for higher ground. No matter the reason, what is certain is that all these changes were complete by 1934.

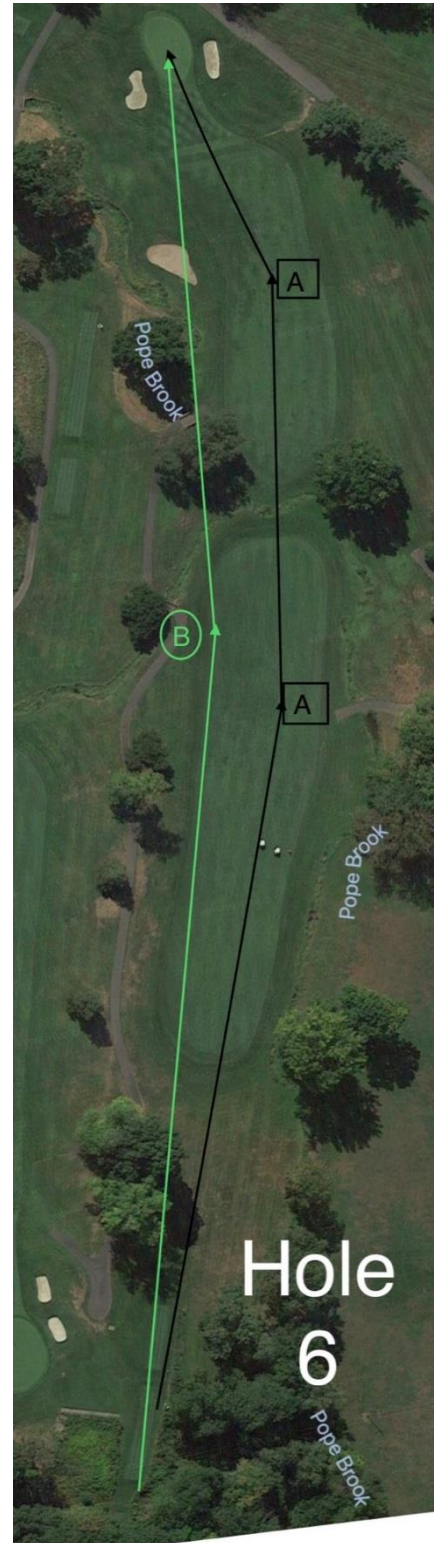
The aerial photograph of CCF in 1934 shows the 6th hole in a similar configuration to the hole we enjoy today, albeit with two distinct differences - a paucity of

trees and an expansive bunker on the approach. It's these two features that enable the strategic concept of intent vs. charm.



Up until recently, the tree-lined nature of the 6th hole forced the golfer to take the intended route to green. A cluster of large willow trees located left of the creek prevented an approach toward the green from the left side of the fairway. All second shots from the left had to cross the creek at an angle to the right, eliminating any possibility of going for the green in 2. The option of an aggressive play to the green only existed for those with a tee ball played to the right half of the fairway. While some may argue that these willow trees "protected" the integrity of the golf hole, strategic architecture purists would beg to differ.

The line of charm is when a player feels compelled to attack a golf hole on a direct route, despite intervening hazards or undue risk. When the final willow tree fell during a storm over the winter of 2018, the line of charm on our 6th hole was restored [B].





The shortest distance from the 6th tee to the 6th green is down the left. In prior years, the target off the tee was always the right half of the fairway. With the absence of a vertical hazard, however, the temptation of a short-cut is revealed. Although the danger of the creek that flanks the right side of the fairway is taken out of play by choosing a left-side target, the tributary to Pope Brook that crosses the 5th hole comes closer into play the further left one goes, particularly for the longer hitter. However, it's the second shot on the 6th hole where the line of charm is most alluring.

A tee ball that successfully finds the left side of the fairway in range of the green will greet the player with a siren song. A cool head is required to resist the enticement of aiming for the putting surface on the second shot. Not only is a forced carry over the creek and left fairway bunker required, but the slender elevated green pad is an illusive target, one that demands considerable skill to successfully recover from a wayward approach shot.

It's true that in 2019, the risk of succumbing to temptation is marginalized by short rough and a fairway bunker that has been taken out of play. However, for those that remember the first half of 2018, when the rough was gnarly from the fairway bunker to the creek, any poorly played second shot on the line of charm often resulted in a penalty. From the author's perspective, the line of charm played a devilish tune when that left-side rough was high, so much so that the line of intent became an angelic lullaby.

When Gil Hanse created a Master Plan for The Country Club, Farmington almost 2 decades ago, his recommendations for the 6th hole illuminated the strategic nature of intent vs. charm. Hanse called for a widening of the fairway to the left which would bring the Pope Brook tributary by the 5th hole directly into play,

particularly for those electing to play down the line of charm. Hanse's call for the removal of all the willow trees next to the creek cleared a path to the green along the same provocative line. Then, to simulate the hazard created by the large fairway bunker seen crossing much of the fairway on the 1934 aerial view of the 6th hole, Hanse made plans to route Pope Brook directly against the fairway along the approach [blue line]. Accordingly, Hanse also suggested expanding the fairway on the right side of the approach which further highlights the value of electing to play the hole by way of the line of intent [A].

With the resurrection of the line of charm, our 6th hole now has more options of play and more angles from which to ponder the benefits of risk vs. reward. In its current

state, the punishment for a poor play when taking on the line of charm resides mostly around the green. However, if we were to restore some sort of penalty area (F.K.A. "Hazard") along the left side of the hole, as utilized by Devereux Emmet in 1934 and then reinforced in a different form by Gil Hanse, do you think this hole would be improved? Would you be able to resist the line of charm?

