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### front cover

Chad Ball, CGCS and his assistant Connor Healy hosted the BMW Championship this September. Many area superintendents, assistants, and vendors supported the event by volunteering and sponsoring.

PHOTO: Luke Cella



Conway Farms member Luke Donald commented on quasi-hosting the BMW at his home course, "It has been something to watch the progression of the set up the last few months. As a player, we rarely see all that goes into the event. Most of the time we just show up and play."

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### DATES

#### 2013-14 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 10/7 Midwest October Meeting, Chicago Highlands Club
- 10/17 Class C Golf Outing - Cog Hill Golf Club
- 11/14 61<sup>st</sup> Midwest Turf Clinic, Medinah Country Club
- 1/22/14 January Meeting & Wee One Fundraiser, Seven Bridges
- 2/5/14 Midwest Hospitality Reception, Orlando FL

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# Midwest Education



Matt Kregel  
*The Club at Strawberry Creek*



Kris Kvelland  
*Ridge Country Club*

Both Matt and Kris are  
Co-chairs of the  
Education Committee.

The Educational Committee would like to thank those who attended the 2013 monthly seminars. We look forward to the schedule of speakers for the winter months. We evaluated the MAGCS Membership Survey and focused on the types of education that our members valued the most. Turf science continues to be of highest importance, while there has been an increasing desire for info on current trends, technology, and communication methods.

According to the survey, the educational offering was the driving force for membership attendance at our monthly meetings. We will continue to seek speakers that meet those interests in future events.

Recap of the 2013 Educational Season:

## April

- Jeff Leuzinger, Healthy Grow, "Organics and Composting: Soil Health Composting Methods and Results."

## July

- Dr. Bruce Branham, University of Illinois, "What's the Deal with *Poa* Cure?" Update on *Poa* Cure trials and research findings.

## August

- Todd Quitno, Associate ASGCA, "What's Trending Now" Overview of master planning, renovation, and design perspectives.

## October

- Dr. Rob Golembiewski, Bayer, "Maximizing Turf Disease Control" Turfgrass disease insight and control through fungicide strategies.


Our lineup for the Midwest Turf Clinic, to be held at Medinah Country Club on November 7th, offers a wide arrangement of topics and speakers. Registration will be online at MAGCS.org

- Ed Nangle, PhD, CDGA Director of Turfgrass Programs Introduction and discussion of field observations with panel inclusion.
- Chava McKeel, GCSAA Associate Director of Government Relations Federal and state regulations reform, immigration bills, "Obamacare".
- Dr. Zac Reicher, University of Nebraska
- Panel discussion centered on labor issues impacting our work force and staffing.

## Keynote Address

- Pat Foley, Chicago Blackhawks Play-by-Play Announcer Musings from a passionate golfer.

We would also like to inform the membership that our January (22<sup>nd</sup>) meeting will host Dr. Thom Nikolai, of Michigan State University, and his extensive research into rolling methods and turfgrass health. Mark your calendars for this one and plan to stick around and support the Wee One Foundation through the Midwest's auction. (Contact Don Ferreri if you'd like to donate items.)

The Committee is always open to membership suggestions for topics. Our members also have a wide variety of experience. MAGCS would benefit from any member willing to share their knowledge. 

# Remodel Master Planning that Saves Money

Raymond Hearn, Raymond Hearn Golf Course Designs, Inc

PHOTO CREDITS:RAYMOND HEARN

Many people ask me if I believe that these are trying times for golf course architects. My reply is that times have never been more pressure-packed and more exciting for innovative golf course architects. Remodel Master Planning for golf courses has definitely advanced to a higher level in terms of the financial results demanded by clubs in today's market.

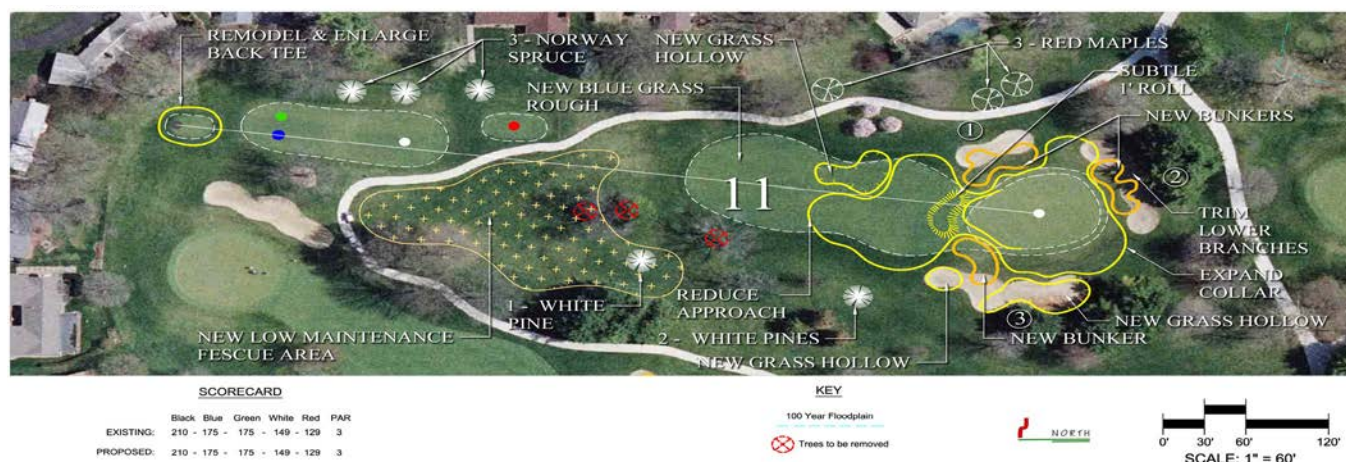
A lot is at stake and the pressure to produce is greater than ever when preparing a master plan.

Over the last four years, my office has seen a growing trend among clubs. They have common goals and objectives for their course. These common club goals are:

- Improve strategy and shot value on each hole.
- Decrease high-maintenance areas where possible throughout the course.
- Increase each hole's aesthetic appeal for existing and new members at private clubs.
- Increase each hole's aesthetic appeal for existing and new patrons at public and resort courses.

Put simply, clubs want to touch, feel, and smell the fruits of master planning. They want to increase annual revenue while lowering annual maintenance costs. I don't think any golf course architect will tell you that these are easy goals to achieve. But these goals definitely separate the average architects from the skilled and innovative ones. Architects who excel in meeting these demands will continue to remain busy through difficult times in a sluggish golf industry.

To help illustrate my point, I've put together a few examples from recent master planning contracts. In each, goals were mandated by the client. The priorities on each project were identical to the bulleted items cited above.



Master plan for hole #11 at the Lincolnshire Fields CC in Champaign, Illinois





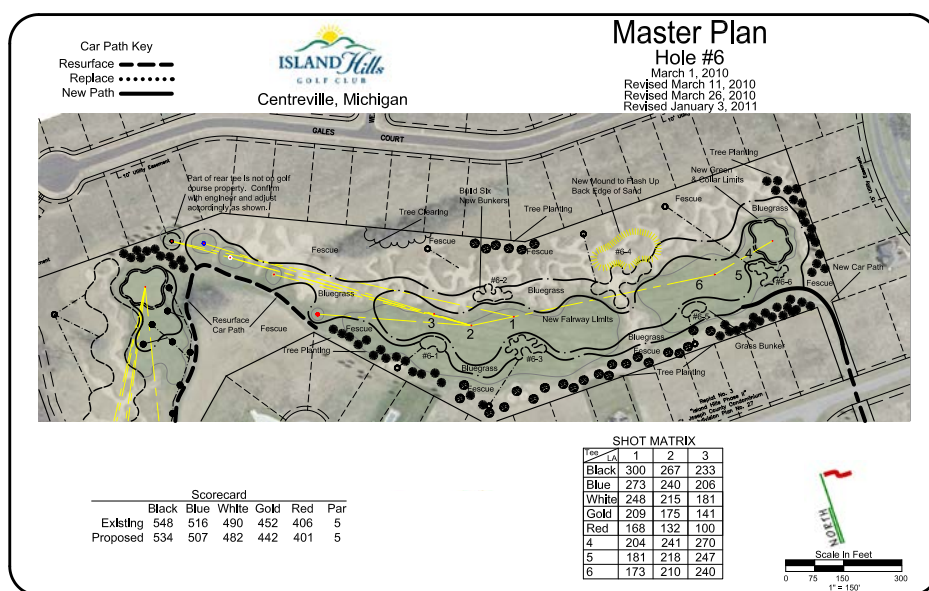
Before and after plans for hole #11 at the Lincolnshire Fields CC in Champaign, Illinois

Michigan club have compliments for the remodeled hole, while the owner and his superintendent, Joe Jehnsen, appreciate the reduced cost of maintaining the hole—a win-win-win for all three interested parties!

One of our primary goals at Flossmoor Country Club was to increase the amount of low-maintenance secondary rough (fescue and little bluestem) in order to help decrease the area of the higher-maintenance primary rough (Kentucky bluegrass). A glance at the two photos shown above illustrates the impact of the work performed. The members enjoy the dramatic new look of the hole, while superintendent Bob Lively appreciates the lower maintenance the secondary rough areas afford.

At Lincolnshire Fields Country Club, the three greenside bunkers on hole #11 were reduced in size by 50%, while the hole's strategy and shot value increased significantly, due to the new bunker locations. A significant area of low-maintenance fescue is planned for the front right of the tees, replacing the higher-maintenance Kentucky bluegrass rough. The amount of bentgrass approach was also reduced by 50%. The result is a more strategic golf hole that members will enjoy. An added benefit for the members, as well as for superintendent Scott Werner, is that the cost of maintaining this hole will be reduced significantly.

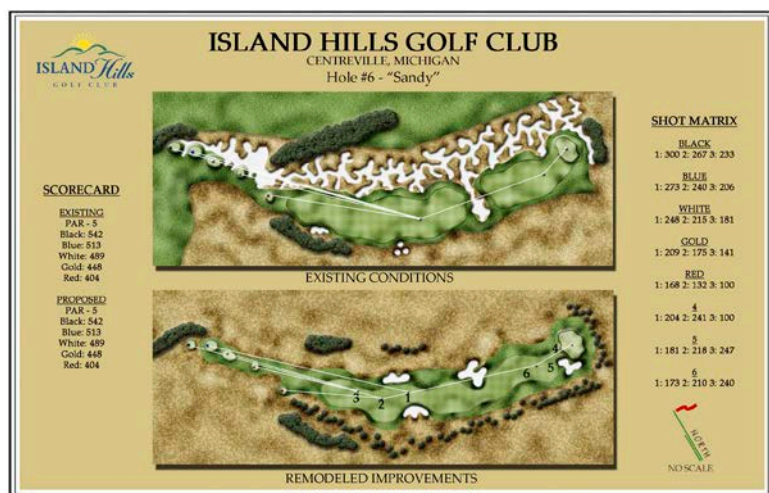
In this example, the strategy and shot value have increased, while the surface areas of the bentgrass fairways and sand bunkers have decreased significantly. Golfers at this Southwest



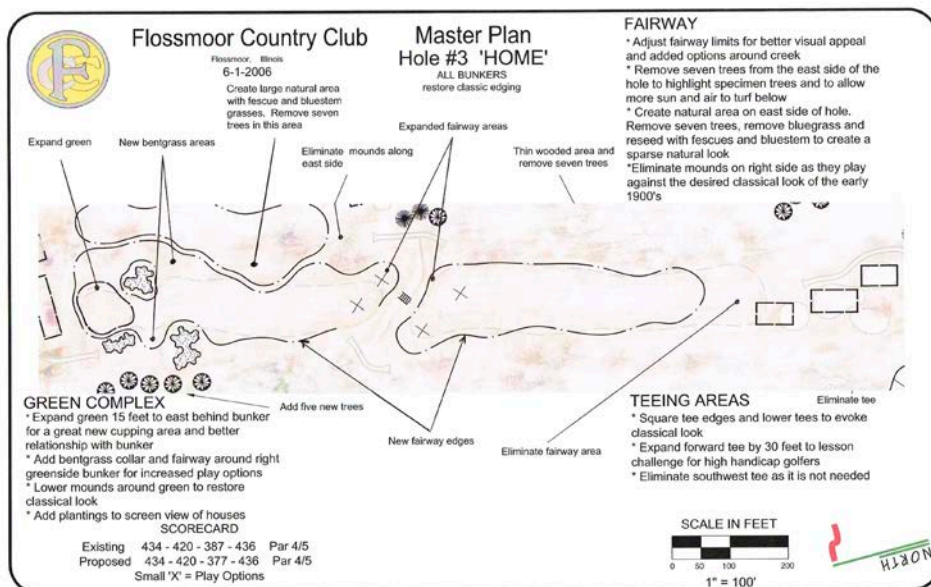
Master plan for hole #6 at the Island Hills GC in Centreville, Michigan

Many private club owners and public golf course owners ask me if their course needs a master plan. My answer is simple: if you plan on making any changes or improvements to the golf course, or if you think this could be a possibility (and it virtually always is), then you need a master plan.

A master planning document is a significant tool for the golf club's owner, president, greens committee chairman, general manager, superintendent, and golf professional. The plan ensures that everyone in the club is on the same page in terms of future improvements to the golf course. It's money in the bank from both a fiscal and a diplomatic point of view.



Before and after plans for hole #6 at Island Hills GC in Centreville, Michigan



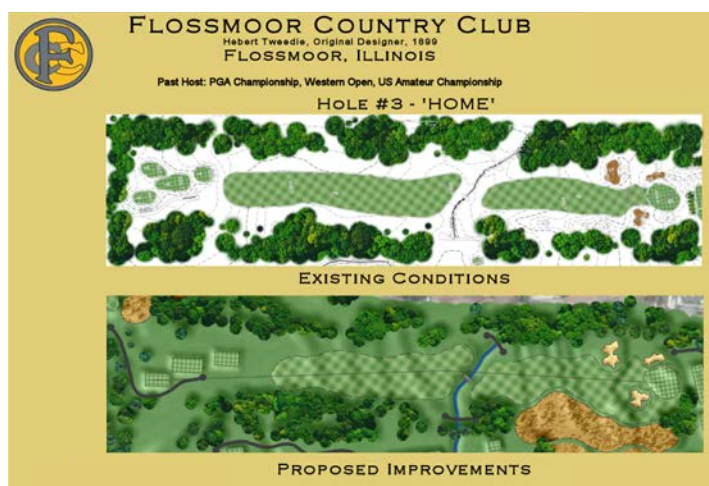
Left: Master Plan for hole #3 at the historic Flossmoor Country Club in Flossmoor, Illinois (Founded in 1899 and former host to PGA Championship)

Below:  
Before and after plans for hole #3 at Flossmoor Country Club

Each master plan solves unique problems in unique demographic markets. But a common theme is the need for today's master plan to address commonly sought goals, which I repeat for emphasis:

- Improve strategy and shot value on each hole
- Decrease high-maintenance areas, when possible, throughout the course.
- Increase the aesthetic appeal.

Put simply, clubs want master planning to increase annual revenue, while lowering annual maintenance costs. Today's innovative golf course architects need to accept and embrace these demands. When executed properly, these challenging yet exciting goals satisfy the club's objectives. The result will be financially sustainable clubs as well as happy members and board members, happy owners and paying patrons. @



Above (L) Hole #3 at the Flossmoor CC before improvements. Notice all the primary rough and trees on the right side of the hole.  
Above (R) New low-maintenance secondary rough area (fescue and little bluestem) on Hole #3.  
A "wispy" low-rate seed mix was used where golfers can easily find their errant shot.



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# Ball Rolls out the Carpet for BMW at Conway Farms



Luke Cella, MAGCS

PHOTOS: LUKE CELLA

Congratulations to Chad Ball, CGCS and Connor Healy, Assistant Superintendent, and the rest of the staff at Conway Farms for hosting and holding the BMW Championship this past September.

Thank you for keeping Chicago golf at the top – the course was immaculate and a huge success.

I was able to catch up with Chad and Connor shortly after hosting the BMW Championship and asked them a few questions.

Did you change any of your maintenance practices to prepare for the event? “Not much, we keep our golf course in pretty good shape every day, so the daily routines really didn’t change all that much. It gave us a chance to get things dialed in a little bit, to drive things down for the event and give the staff a little extra focus. We like to keep the course playable, not too tough and that was the same for the tournament. Golf is a spectator sport, people like to see good golf.” Chad told me.

The PGA Tour wants to make the best players in the world shine, and that they did. I asked Chad what he thought of Furyk’s 59 and he responded, “I think it was great, no one can buy that kind of recognition. There’ve only been six (59s), and it was mentioned on every major news report around the world and Conway Farms was in the same sentence each time.” Chad went on to explain, “it was all Furyk – the next score was a 65 and the overall scoring average that day was over par.” It certainly was Furyk’s day.

Other than the rain on Sunday, I asked Chad what was



*Chad Ball and Paul Vermeulen on Thursday morning of tournament week enjoy a moment of downtime as the players take the course.*

the biggest challenge he faced with the tournament. He explained it was dealing with the build (tents, trucks, media towers, etc.) out and now the clean up they were going through. He explained, “we were wrapping up some projects this spring and we had a lot of play this summer.” He told me the easiest days he’s had the past few months were actually the tournament days – they were much simpler once everything was in place and we only had to take care



of course set up. "Once the Pros were out playing, there was not much to do, just enjoy what everyone accomplished," Chad told me.

Though there is no contract in place for the 2015 BMW Championship, Chad implied it would be a little bit easier to host if it happened again. Most of the infrastructure they had to add for this year's event would already be in place, and once you've experienced something, the second time is always a little easier.

Chad expressed his thanks to all the staff at Conway, his assistant Connor, and all the volunteers and the sponsors that took care of the hospitality during the week. He was humbled by their willingness to step in and lend a hand throughout the whole event.

#### **Chad Ball, CGCS Life Experience:**

- Superintendent Meadowbrook Golf Club (Racine, WI), 8 Years
- Superintendent North Hills Country Club, (Menomonee Falls, WI) 5 Years
- Superintendent Conway Farms, 19 Years
- Certified with GCSAA Since 1987
- Michigan State Graduate 1982

Chad's mentors are other supers that he's worked with, Wayne Otto, CGCS, Ed Fischer, CGCS, Skip Wilms, Tim Davis and Wally Fuchs. One piece of advice to those starting out in the business: "Work hard, work smart and don't worry about the money, with success the money will follow."

Chad is a founding member of the Wee One Foundation, when asked what that meant to him, he explained, "it is great to be a part of something and it is very gratifying to be a part of, to be able to help others in need. It is something







that Wayne (Otto) would be so proud of, he was so passionate about this business and the people in it, it is a great extension of those principles."

I was also able to catch up with Connor Healy, Assistant Superintendent of Conway Farms.

What did you think the moment that you realized Conway Farms might be hosting the BMW Championship?

"I remember thinking that it would be really interesting to see how the golf course would hold up against the top 70 golfers in the world. I was interested in how they would play a few of our golf holes, we've reworked some of the holes and I thought it would make a good venue for an event."

Conway Farms is an old-fashioned golfing membership club. They take pride in having no tee times, they believe in walking, and playing quickly, and enjoying the fellowship of golf and all its traditions. The course opened for play in 1991, a Tom Fazio links style design on 209 acres of land that was purchased in 1956 with the intent of building a first rank golf club along Conway Road.

From Connor's perspective the event went really well. He knew there would be a learning curve associated with all the

parties involved with the event, the Western Golf Association, PGA, BMW and of course, Conway Farms. He was happy to be a part of it from the start.


We talked a little about the rain on Sunday, the only hiccup in the event. Connor was very grateful for all the volunteer support that day, at one point he wished he had a few more squeegees for all the available hands, but at the end of the day it wouldn't have made a difference. "Sunday was an awful day to work outside, but all the volunteers did everything and beyond to keep the course as playable for as long as possible. All of them worked 13 to 14 hour shifts without a break and that says a lot. The Tour wanted to keep trying to get as much of the golf in as possible and we did everything to accommodate them." Connor was very appreciative of the efforts of the staff and all the volunteers.

There's so much that goes into a scheduled event, it makes sense to try and complete it if it is possible.

For Connor it was a good experience, "it took a lot of work, but it was good opportunity to try something new at Conway." Connor has been Chad's Assistant for ten years and hosting the BMW created some new challenges and offered new opportunities that normally Connor would not have been privy to. "I've been here a long time and I was able to get involved in a few aspects at the club that normally not involved with." Connor told me, "I really liked tournament preparation, it is very exciting to be a part of."

#### Connor Healy: Life Experience

- Assistant Superintendent Conway Farms last ten years,
- Assistant Superintendent at Olympia Fields Country Club for two years (US Open)
- Experience at BelAir Country Club and Old Elm Club

Connor received his undergraduate horticulture degree from U of I and his MBA from DePaul. He lives in Chicago with his wife Jill and their two children Kaelyn (3) and Emmett (2). 



*I followed Furyk on Thursday for nine holes, he hit the ball well, but who knew the day to follow him would be Friday when he carded his historic 59.*