

Do the greens at Cottonwood and Palo Verde Country Clubs have volcanoes around the hole because of poorly set cups?

Why do I keep missing short putts – who can I blame?

The topic of the “volcano effect” around cups continue to come up within the Golf Community at Sun Lakes. This Turf Talk is an attempt to squash the sentiment that the golf maintenance team is not handling this daily job responsibility correctly.

What are “volcano holes” or otherwise called “The Lumpy Donut”.

A volcano hole is the phenomenon of the depressed area around the flag location from foot traffic. During the high season, over 350 rounds a day might be played each day at Cottonwood or Palo Verde. This high foot traffic will cause a slightly lower depression area around the cup. Golfers may think that the ground immediately around the cup has lifted, like a volcano – when, in fact – it hasn't lifted – it has sunk slightly around the hole. This small depression may have influence over a putt that wasn't stroked at a desirable speed late in the day.

Please click on this You Tube video to learn more about The Lumpy Donut effect.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mF-6cbT3iIM>.

Due to the early morning start times at CWPV, golf maintenance staff changes hole locations in the dark. This can cause minor errors at times, but these errors typically have to do with the replacement of an old hole plug or the actual location of the hole. The team does have the proper equipment and uses the proper technique to set the cups. The link below will show this technique used by our team.

The USGA has done research and education on this topic through their Green Section program. I hope the link below brings some perspective and understanding.

<https://www.usga.org/videos/2013/06/21/usga-green-section-webcast--volcanoed-holes-2498921839001.html>

Happy Golfing.