

Arthur Hills tackles UMichigan renovation, other projects

TOLEDO, Ohio — Arthur Hills, chosen restoration architect for the \$3.1 million University of Michigan Golf Course renovation project, has designed Dunes West, an 18-hole semi-private golf facility on the Wando River 10 miles northeast of Charleston, S.C.

Alister MacKenzie, in collaboration with Perry Maxwell, designed the university course in 1930. Owners plan to restore the course to its original style.

While studying for his degree in

landscape architecture at Michigan in the 1950s, frequent university course player Hills came to appreciate MacKenzie's style with its broad fairways, undulating sloped green and large visible bunkers.

"There will be no Arthur Hills mark on this course," Hills said, adding that consideration must be given the technical advances of modern clubs and balls. "The goal is to make the course better, not necessarily more difficult."

Renovation should be complete

by the spring of 1993. Objectives include renovating bunkers to original sizes, improving internal drainage and sand consistency; larger, stately tee areas; improving green drainage, keeping present surfaces intact, and installing a state-of-the-art double-row irrigation system.

The Dunes West property dates to pre-Civil War days, when it was an expansive working plantation with a mansion, formal gardens, old brick walls and reflecting ponds.

The opening holes have a Pinehurst flavor, playing through corridors of tall pines to slightly-elevated greens.

The longer back nine has a distinctive low country look, playing along marshland.

Its most talked-about feature is its two greens 90 yards apart. When Hills originally routed the course, he planned the 18th as a 370-yarder with a small green tucked against the salt marsh. During construction, he decided

to add a second green with Wagner Creek as the backdrop. This stretched the testing hole to nearly 460 yards.

Scratch Golf of Hilton Head Island owns and operates Dunes West.

Hills' The Golf Club of Georgia, near Atlanta, and Harbour Pointe Golf Course, which he co-designed with Keith Foster near Seattle, were named as Golf Digest's best new private and best new public courses of 1991.

Fox Brook

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from the fairways, and half the back nine will be ensconced in woods completely isolated from homes.

The developers have been meticulous in ensuring environmental compatibility.

Three ponds will be dug to serve a variety of purposes, including storm water buffering, irrigation, and as habitat for aquatic life and native plants. The quality of the on-site salmon spawning waters will be rigorously maintained.

A manual outlining the project's operating philosophy also details how both design and maintenance will use sustainable agriculture and integrated pest management to minimize reliance on pesticides and herbicides.

Construction plans already specify areas to be reserved for materials stockpiling.

Because of an important trout stream traversing the fairway on the 380-yard 13th hole, Lally has agreed that no construction equipment will be allowed to move the length of the fairway. Instead, bulldozers and equipment will approach only half of the fairway from the tee side, and then the construction crew will have to travel hundreds of yards around wetlands in order to build the greenside half of the fairway.

Besides the massive volumes of scientific documentation, the permitting application called for exhaustive engineering specifications.

Some 100 detailed blueprints were submitted, showing everything from the installation of culverts under surface roads to the joints of the wooden bridges to be built.

So far, Lally has carried costs of the project on his own. He figures he'll need about another \$3.5 million for course construction, \$2.5 million for the clubhouse and parking lots, and \$4 million for phasing in the housing lots.

Lally's recent progress through the approvals process has now brought Fox Brook Associates to the point where they wish to seek a partner or investor for the project.

And what will Ed Lally, civil engineer, do when Fox Brook is finally built?

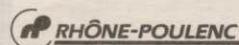
"Well," he said, with a boyish smile, "my mother's an avid golfer, and I promised her she could play the course for life. I also promised I'd play golf with her."

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