

## Hills & Son: Art, Joe team

BALTIMORE, Md. — It's a father-son project of a type that may have never been done before. Waverly Woods Golf Course here is being designed by Arthur Hills and developed by his son Joe.

"There is a real commitment on everyone's part — my father, myself, Tom [partner Thomas Healy], NationsBank, Wadsworth Golf Construction — everyone, to create a successful golf course, one of which everyone will be proud," said Joe Hills. "Given the development and management team, the location, the market and other such factors, it is likely that that will happen."

The 7,000-yard, par-72 Waverly Woods Golf Course is in Howard County, 10 minutes west of the city. It will target the upscale daily-fee market. The first nine holes are scheduled for completion in the fall of 1997, with the second nine opening in the summer of 1998.

The course is part of a 650-acre mixed-use development known as Waverly Woods. A golf course on the 650-acre site had been under consideration by the owners of the property since 1983. In August 1990, Joe Hills secured the design contract for the golf course on behalf of his father's firm; and, after several years of negotiations, the younger Hills formed



Developers Thomas Healy (left) and Joe Hill.

his own golf course development company, Shiva Golf, Inc., and secured control of the property through a long-term lease arrangement.

Hills and Healy secured financing for the project through a combination of private investors and a loan from NationsBank.

Hills has worked for Wadsworth Golf Construction on two Arizona projects, and also worked for his father in the West before setting up an Arthur Hills and Associates office in Maryland in 1990.

## Q&A Kavanaugh

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always think of how we could have done something different or better. Now that Dell Ulrich is done, I've never been happier. And I believe the reason is that I didn't compromise the game for the look.

GCN: That is your philosophy, then?

KK: That, for me, is an evolving thing. I hope to never stagnate. I think you can blindfold a lot of people, drop them on a course and they can make a pretty good guess about who designed it. People develop a design philosophy and stick with it. I hope I never develop a style, that you can never walk onto a site of mine and guess that I did it. Also, I believe greatness in golf is rooted in memorability. Memorability is a function of variety, in terms of everything — the look, the scale, the hard and easy holes, variety on every level.

GCN: What do you foresee for golf course design in the future? Have we gone to the outer limits?

KK: I don't take myself that seriously to think I'm going to change the face of the game and be a pioneer in the industry. That's why my design philosophy is evolving. It's like when you play competitive golf. You don't want to dwell on the past or get too far ahead of yourself. You want to play in the present tense and hit the correct shot. That's the way I want to design, too.

I go to all these shows and see plastic grass. I hope we're not headed for plastic

golf courses. I know I'm not. I don't particularly care where the industry is going. I just want to do good golf courses. If the industry goes that way, it will be strong forever.

I'm not sure golf course architects determine where the industry goes as much as their clients do. The clients are generating criteria and the designers are generating solutions. As the criteria changes, so do the solutions.

One way it is going ... is to environmentally sensitive planning. We're all sure that's where it's going and where it's going to stay, because it's right. Part of the golf experience is getting out of the urban setting and taking a walk in the park. That may be the soul of the game anyway. We're never going to play golf in a dome. And I hope not on artificial grass. The game will always exist in a natural setting.

GCN: Your wife Lori is a landscape architecture graduate, and with turfgrass management studies, as well as a photo-journalist. Has she added anything different to your operation?

KK: She's a 6-handicap, and although we're not Pete and Alice Dye, we talk about design a lot. Just as there is no way a bad golfer can know what a good golfer thinks and plays, there is no way for a male golfer to understand what a female golfer knows and thinks. Lori is our resident female golfing expert. She tells me when holes are getting too long, and when women she plays with can't execute a certain shot. That brings a lot to the table.

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