Cement factory, gravel quarry transformed in Mich.

By NORMAN SINCLAIR

PETOSKEY, Mich. — Golf critics are running out of superlatives to describe Bay Harbor Golf Club, taking shape on a five-mile stretch of Lake Michigan shoreline in northern Michigan where once stood a cement factory and sand and gravel quarry. The 27 holes, 18 of which are open this season and nine of which will be ready for limited play in the fall, "shreds every adjective in the book," said golf writer Jack Berry. Architect Arthur Hills had high praise for the site, describing it as the opportunity of a lifetime. The golf course is the centerpiece of a mega-million-dollar Victorian-theme development that includes a yacht club, condominium-suites hotel, and shopping and restaurant village.

Seven holes play along the water, some on bluffs 170 feet above Little Traverse Bay. Hills routed the 27 holes over and through four diverse geological formations — sand dunes, a quarry, lakeshore and wooded uplands. The Links Course holes flow along the top of the rocky bluffs above the water, with fairways and some greens perched on the edge of those bluffs. Four of the

Kay gaining design stature

Stephen Kay entered golf course architect in 1977, joining William Newcomb's firm. He was made an associate in 1980, then started his own practice in 1983 in Bronxville, N.Y. He was voted into the American Society of Golf Course Architects two years ago.

Golf Course News: You've been called a new, up-and-coming architect, but you have quite a history. What was your foundation in golf course architecture?

Stephen Kay: Besides my academic education of a degree in landscape architecture from Syracuse and a turfgrass management degree from Michigan State, I was a superintendent for a couple of years and worked in construction a couple of years. But when I left Michigan and came back to New York to start my own practice renovating the old classic architects (Donald Ross, A.W. Tillinghast, Devereau Emmet, Seth Raynor) and trying to duplicate what the masters did, that's been a great foundation for me to then leap into new golf courses.

GCN: You have quite a reputation. Was the golf course a starting point for you?

SK: Yes. I did a couple of new courses in the '80s, but my bread and butter was renovation work. Then, Blue Heron Pines

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The 534-yard, 1st hole at New York Country Club, a new 18-hole private course designed by Stephen Kay, which opened June 14 in Rochland County. It was really the start of getting a lot of work. The golf course has gotten a lot of nice press... That had snowballed into basically doing one or two new courses every year since 1992.

GCN: It seems that The Links at North Dakota has put you up another echelon.

SK: Thank you. It probably has in the fact that Golf Digest named it second-best

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The soil is perfect. We did not
build green. We did the old
pushup method. In fact, on six
of the greens the contour was so
perfect that after I shot grade, I
told the contractor, “That’s it.
Don’t touch it.” We sprayed
Roundup twice, rototilled it and
seeded it. We only moved liter-
ally 7,900 yards of earth...
GCN: Sandhills [in Nebraska,
designed by Ben Crenshaw and
Bill Coore] and The Links at
North Dakota were both getting
a lot of national press when they
opened, and they came along
when there was a lot of talk about
“minimalism” in design. Do you
think the big splash those two
courses made an impact on the
golf world?
SK: I think it has. Minimalism
is just a catchword. But I think it
is getting developers to start
thinking that these big-budget
golf courses perhaps could be
built less expensively if they
don’t move as much dirt.
GCN: You’ve studied the clas-
sic designers. Ross, at the end of
his life when dynamite started to
be used, said this was great stuff.
SK: He also became aware of
bulldozers.
GCN: Do you think he might
not have been the minimalist, as
we think of him today?
SK: The last few golf courses
he designed, in 1946 and ’47, in
the construction drawings show
that he was moving more earth,
cutting hills down more and rais-
ing greens more to get rid of more
blind shots than he used to. After
World War II, the factories that
were building the tanks started
building bulldozers en masse and
earthmoving became easier.
GCN: So has there perhaps
been a greater emphasis in trying
to keep Donald Ross designs as
they originally were, and should
there be more emphasis on how he
might change them if he were
alive today?
SK: I do try to put myself in his
shoes and think what he would
do.
GCN: If there were a Stephen
Kay fingerprint on a course, what
would it be?
SK: I don’t think there would
be. The only thing I do on all my
new courses is a Redan par-3.
But I do them differently. Some-
times I flash the sand. Some-
times I bring the grass down.
Sometimes I do a Redan just like
at North Berwick. Other times I
do a reverse Redan and have it
go from left to right rather than
from right to left. I just think it’s
a great par-3. And it’s fun to do
every time. Maybe I’ll get tired
of it, but right now I’m still enjoy-
ing doing it every time.
I try to change and be differ-
cent from course to course so that
you wouldn’t know.
GCN: What would be your
dream workload?
SK: I’d like to do two to three
new courses each year. I would
like to do a municipal executive
course, so that beginners and
the new people I think will come
into this game ... would have a
place to learn and not be frus-
trated with a long, hard golf
course. I would like to do two
nice 18s and one executive
course a year, plus five nice reno-
vations, where the clubs want to
do some quality work and a good
amount of work, say, six holes.
I’d obviously love to do some-
ting in Scotland or Ireland. But I
question if it would be a better
piece of property than the one in
North Dakota. I could work until
I’m 95 and I don’t know if I’ll have
a better piece of property.
GCN: Who do you think is the
greatest architect of all time?
SK: From the old guys, you’d
have to pick from one of three:
Tillinghast, Ross or Mackenzie.
Ross might have had the best
putting surfaces; Oyster Harbor
in Cape Cod has the best putting
surfaces I’ve seen anywhere —
better than Pinehurst #2. The
best bunkers are Mackenzie’s
and Tillinghast’s. Tillinghast also
set up some great strategic, risk-
and-reward holes. Ross did some
very good routing. Lots of times
you see the quality of an archi-
tect with the routing. A lot of
times you’ll go to a golf course
and there are 15 nice holes and
three or four that are just hor-
rible. They are squeezed in to
try to make it 18. All the archi-
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Kay team busy on Indian course

By MARK LESLIE

DELHI, India — Public golf in India is about to become a reality. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA), in charge of beautifying this city of 6 million, has started the clearing and large earth-moving for its Public Golf Course Lado Sarai situated in the third city of Delhi called Tuglaqabad.

"They're very excited about this project," said Doug Smith, lead architect with Stephen Kay Golf Course Architects in Bronxville, N.Y. "They want to teach people to play golf. "It's the talk of the town because they have three private courses, but no public golf courses. The number of golfers is growing. They have long waiting lists to join Delhi Golf Club and The Army Golf Course."

An extensive 30-tee practice range, with a chipping area and putting greens, has already been completed at Public Golf Course Lado Sarai. It may be lighted at night. A full restaurant will be built for the facility. Plans are to complete construction of the course by next March and open it late in the year.

The famous Qutub Minar monument, a 72.5-meter-high tower built by Qutub-din-Aibak in 1199, is visible from every hole, and the dominant feature of the course will be an ancient, 18-foot-high wall that borders one side of the property.

Kay may be familiar to some Indian golfers. He designed the nine-hole Aravalli Golf Course in Faridabad near here in 1988 and nine-hole Royal Bhutan Golf Club in the Kingdom of Bhutan in 1986.

Q&A with Kay

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...Kay and Player team on New York project

WEST NYACK, N.Y. — A new 18-hole private facility, Manhattan Woods, is under construction here. Constructed on 220 acres, this course will measure 6,800 yards and play to par 72. Golf course architect Stephen Kay and Gary Player Design Group teamed up on the design.

Construction began in February and the facility is expected to be open for play by July 1998. The construction contractor is Turco Renovations from New York.