

# Hearn unveils Twin Lakes GC; solo work on a grand scale

By NORMAN SINCLAIR

**O**AKLAND TWP., Mich. — When golf architect Ray Hearn first walked the land here, he observed large open fields with long vistas similar to those he saw on some of Scotland's grand old courses.

With its wide-open, treeless, rolling fairways and huge undulated greens, the new Twin Lakes golf course in

suburban Detroit has much in common with those storied British layouts. In that vein, Hearn has produced a course that can be a challenge for beginners, low-handicap, or professional players.

"It's very hard to build a course that is suitable for the beginner as well as the very good player," Hearn said. "A course like St. Andrews can be set up to be played 100 different ways, and that was the challenge we had to meet at Twin Lakes."

To facilitate many different angles of attack, Hearn — a protoge of Jerry Matthews — has produced a massive design with tee complexes, fairways and greens on a grand scale. The elevated double green on the 1st hole accounts for 38,500 square feet or approximately one acre of putting surface that takes six hours to cut with walking mowers. Twin Lakes' greens, some of the largest in golf, average 12,000 square feet with the 18th measuring 64 yards front to back. The numerous pin placements available on each green should keep wear and tear from spikes at a minimum.

"We have as much acreage in our double green as some courses have on one of their fairways," said Carey Mitchelson, the former Country Club of Detroit superintendent who supervised the 14-month grow-in at Twin Lakes.

"As they do in Scotland, you have to think of three greens in one, and hit your approach shot to the correct one with the flag," Hearn said.

The course is the centerpiece of an upscale residential project developed by owner Sam Cottone and his company, Resco Inc., of Sterling Heights. The grand concept of the course fits into the housing profile Cottone



This green complex at Twin Lakes Golf Club in Oakland, Mich., exhibits the grand scale and native vegetation used by architect Ray Hearn.

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envisions for the development.

Cottone's love of the game made him underwrite the freedom Hearn enjoyed to be creative. Some sod used around the tees and greens was imported from Canada. The sparkling white sand in the bunkers is finely crushed quartz rock from Ohio. Another striking feature with a Scottish accent are the deep grass fairway and greenside bunkers, as well as shaggy collars on certain sand traps.

Other brush strokes that give Twin Lakes a special flavor are the patterns of grasses and wildflowers. The bentgrass fairways are defined by a primary rough of bluegrass, while a taller secondary rough of fescue and prairie grasses will add a tint of color as the grass changes with the season.

Wildflowers, including black-eyed susans and violet blazing star, cover waste areas with splashes of color. Leaving nothing to chance, the wild flower seeds were brought in from an Illinois company that guaranteed the purity of its product.

### MICHIGAN-BASED SMITH OPENS FLORIDA DESIGN OFFICE

JUPITER, Fla. — Rick Smith Signature Design, based in Gaylord, Mich., has opened an office here, manned by Warren Henderson and Mark Hardy. Henderson, the senior design associate, has worked with Smith for two years, overseeing day-to-day progress of all projects. He owns a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Arizona and has worked with Jack Nicklaus Design and Hurdzan Design Group. He is involved with two projects — a high-end, daily-fee facility in Vero Beach and an exclusive private club in West Olive, Mich. A design associate, Hardy has 11 years experience in master-planning, design and plan production of golf courses. He has worked with Hurdzan and Tom Fazio on more than 50 projects and has been with Smith for one year.



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