



The 8th hole grows in at the Mike DeVries-designed Kingsley Club.

Great site, great soils at Kingsley Club

By MARK LESLIE

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — "Wild land" and "phenomenal soils" have provided course architect Michael DeVries with a property here on which he will move only 25,000 square feet of dirt in producing the 18-hole Kingsley Club for developers Art Preston and Ed Walker.

The golf club will restore land that had been virtually blitzed by a clearcutting operation a dozen years ago, DeVries said, adding, "It was a mess."

Set at the edge of one of glacial starting or stopping points, The Kingsley Club is so perfect for a golf course, he said, that "there are only a couple of spots

where we had to make a cut for playability or visibility on a hole.

"The land is severe in some places, but the routing works out so it will be walkable and very playable," he added. "All I have to do is flatten out teeing areas and shape greens and bunkers into the existing contours."

Wide fairways will be dry and firm "to allow the ground game to be an elemental part of the play, as the wind blows constantly," DeVries said.

The property boasts generous views in all directions because it is higher than the land around it.

And the soils? The weather can be "bone dry with no rain for three weeks," DeVries said, "and an inch deep the soil is moist. It's unbelievable."

The course is also marked by a number of large depressions that drain freely, he added.

DeVries, who worked at Crystal Downs while growing up and for about three years with architect Tom Doak, does all his own shaping and is handling the course construction in-house.

Preston and Walker, business associates who worked together for 25 years on oil and gas projects, bought the property 12 miles south of the city to create "a golf club exclusively for people who love golf ... a place with few rules and no starting times."

They brought in superintendent Dan Lucas from the beginning, and he is overseeing growth of the fescue fairways and bentgrass greens and tees.

They expect to open the front nine this summer and the back nine in the fall.

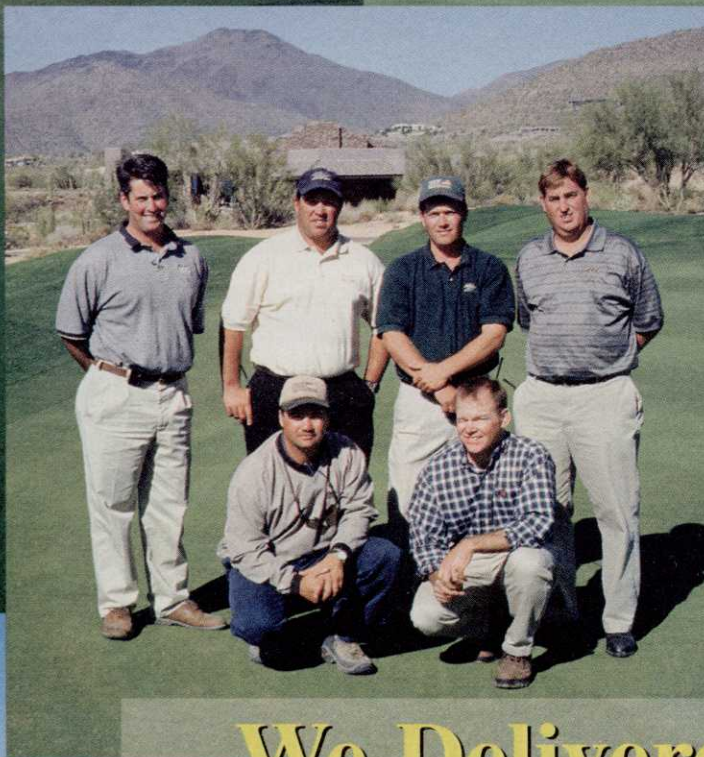
Childs signs 27-hole project

FLINT, Mich. — Don Childs Associates (DCA) has been awarded a contract to develop a 27-hole golf course here.

Childs was awarded the opportunity on county-owned land through a formal Request for Proposal process issued in January. The project will occur under a long-term concession agreement with the Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission. Negotiations have continued for a year with the park officials, and final approval was granted by the Genesee County Board of Commissioners on Dec. 14.

Initial phases of construction are planned to begin in February. The budget is approximately \$8.5 million. In addition to the 27-hole golf course and 8,500-square-foot clubhouse, the site will feature a state-of-the-art training center. The city of Flint maintains the nation's largest junior golf program.

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