

MICHIGAN

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# GOLF

Michigan's Best

# Golf & Gaming

**Two New  
Devries Designs:**  
Greywalls and The Mines

**Live Life on  
the Links**

**Michigan's Best Golf Course Directory...**

Over 600 Courses You Can Play



Golf course construction has cooled off considerably from the heydays of the '90s. But those that have gone beyond the drawing board to reality are some of the best design work this state has seen.

Greywalls, gracing the cover of this issue, has to qualify as Mike Devries' best work to date. If you've played the Kingsley Club or Pilgrim's Run or Diamond Springs you're familiar with Devries' craftsmanship.



On the cover: Greywalls, photographed by Kevin Frisch, Resort Golf

Greywalls is worth the nine-hour trip if you're traveling from points south like Detroit or Kalamazoo. The 6,800-yard layout is in Marquette, adjacent the Marquette County Club. While some may condemn developers for scarring natural landscape with three to four miles of tee stations, fairways and greens, Greywalls opens up the natural beauty of the region to magnificent views of Lake Superior and rock formations unlike any you'll see on a golf course anywhere in this state or any other, for that matter.

Devries is a multi-tasker. While Greywalls was blossoming, he managed

to find time to spend in Grand Rapids, pushing around dirt over the old gypsum mines. Todd Loughin, general manager of The Mines, says his course offers a round of golf unlike any you've played. He could be right. I will say you'll be glad they routed each nine as they did, otherwise you'd finish the front side on holes averaging 490-yards with nine as par, and open the back side on three holes that average 440-yards with eight as par. I, for one, don't have the game to shoot 5 par 4s and one par 5, in consecutive order—measuring a mile and a-half—in 17 strokes or less. But then, that's why they call them the championship tees. Yes Todd, The Mines offers a different kind of challenge. And to Devries' credit, the courses of his I've played are not cookie cutter designs or routed over questionable land formations. The Mines, literally on the outskirts of downtown Grand Rapids, will get ample play and the practice facility is second to none.

Readers of this publication aren't surprised that I have news of Raymond Hearn. He took a sabbatical of sorts from his full-time golf course design work to head the management team at Macatawa Legends in Holland, Mich., a course he designed. This private club is the largest golf course development in the state, touching four townships and offering over 700 residential units. Ray says his work at Macatawa is done as he prepares to travel to Beijing, China for a new project.

I haven't seen studies on how gaming has improved rounds and revenues at Michigan golf courses and resorts, but I trust those taking in both activities are enjoying themselves. Don VanderVeen was as he reports on the myriad options for those wishing to combine slots with shots.

Be sure to visit Michigan Golf on the Web at [www.michigangolfmagazine.com](http://www.michigangolfmagazine.com).

Swing Easy,

Randy Prichard

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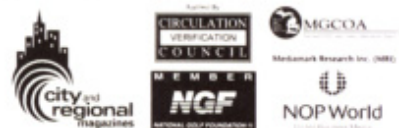
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# New Mines Opens

The new Mines Golf Club just minutes west of downtown Grand Rapids, Mich. opened in July. It's a short course by today's standards. But you need only play the first and last three holes to get a different impression.

The Mines is a bit quirky; it is definitely unique; and probably unlike any course you've played. To quote General Manager and PGA Professional Todd Loughin, "this is not going to be an easy course to play." He qualified that comment by adding, "The Mines is playable, but scoring low will be challenging."

From the tips, the 18-hole Mike Devries design measures 6,744 yards, but 20% of that distance is in the first three holes, averaging 440 yards in length, and they're each par 4s. Then on the inward side, the last three holes measure 473 yards, 535 yards (par 5) and 460 yards, respectively. Let's see. That accounts for 41% of the total length of the golf course.

Aside from the aforementioned holes, you'll play back-to-back par 3s on holes 7 and 8. The course plays to a

35/35 Par 70, with only two par 5s. If you step down one tee station you reduce the overall length to 6,146-yards, but holes one, two, three, seventeen and eighteen still average 414 yards. Depending on what day you play, the par 3 eleventh hole can be either 215 yards or 160 yards from the back tees because the hole employs two different tee stations.

Devries designed only 24 bunkers for The Mines, but "they're hardy," said Loughin. "Big and deep."

Hole four, a 453-yard par 4, has no bunkers, however. And not much sand needed to be designed into holes five and nine. They oppose each other. Five takes you east while nine brings you back to the clubhouse on your left. They share a common sand dune, which acts as a natural hazard. It's really not in play, though. It's too far to reach from the fifth tee, a par 5. And it's not in the direct flight path off number nine tee.

The Mines gets its name from the abandoned gypsum mines that lie 140 feet below the surface of the course. The

terrain is gently rolling and wooded. Many majestic, hundred-year old-plus hardwood trees dot the course and were intentionally incorporated into the layout. Several areas of the course offer treetop views of the Grand Rapids skyline. Tee stations and greens are bentgrass. Fairways are sown in bluegrass.

A par 3 short course with a variety of holes measuring anywhere from 93 yards to 228 yards is scheduled to open in spring 2006.

The Mines Learning Center takes a back seat to none. Loughin regards it as "the best practice facility in Grand Rapids," complete with driving range, bunkers for long iron practice, a short game area with contoured turf for chips, pitches and putting, and a large, multi-level putting green.

Greens fees for 18-holes are \$35 Monday through Thursday and \$40 Friday and Saturday. The course will not be open Sundays.

Learn more by visiting [www.mines-golfcourse.com](http://www.mines-golfcourse.com) on the Internet. Or call (616) 791-7544.