

Greystone finishing holes among best

Looking for a public golf course with all the amenities of a private country club and an up-north feeling, but within an hour's drive of most spots in the tri-county area?

Look no further than Greystone Golf Club, located on the border of Macomb and Oakland counties in Romeo on 67500 Mound Road, just off 32 Mile.

Billed as the "Best Finish in Michigan Golf," Greystone's 6,861-yard layout (from the black tees) doesn't disappoint. The slope rating is 132.

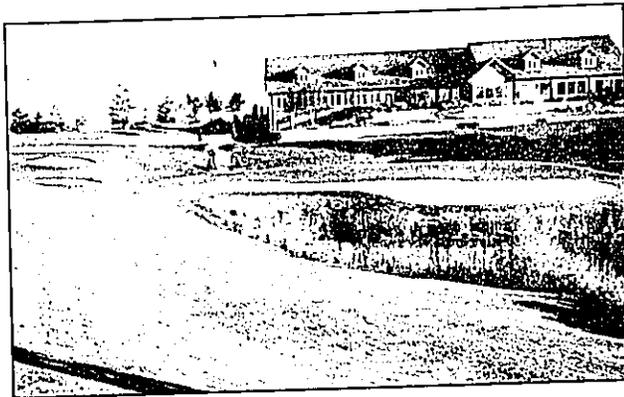
"We feel our finish — the 16th, 17th and 18th — are most unique and generates the most publicity," said Bob Breitmeyer, Greystone's general manager.

The scenic final three holes wrap around a man-made lake. Water becomes a factor on all three holes.

The par-3 16th, 209 yards (from the back tees), is straight downhill. Try to pay close attention because the prevailing wind makes club selection tricky.

The par-4 No. 17, 350 yards from the grey tees, is a long iron or fairway wood off another picturesque elevated tee. A longer shot will not get you closer to the green. Hit your 190-200 club at the fairway bunker (which doglegs right) or use your 240 club from the black tee (412 yards). The second shot requires one more club to an uphill green.

The 18th is Greystone's signature hole, which wraps around the lake, is 451 yards from the black and 378 from the grey. A shot played left will normally come back toward the fairway.



Signature hole: The 18th at Greystone, just in front of the clubhouse, is a challenge for any golfer.

A big drive on this hole is a must from the black, a 230 carry just to reach the fairway. Your drive must go over the trees and end up in the fairway. The approach to the green is scary with water and greystones lurking just in front.

Although the back nine is more challenging, the front side has its moments as well. The No. 8 par-5 is 548 from the back is the course's No. 1 handicap hole.

Greystone, opened in 1992, was designed by Lansing's Jerry Matthews, an architect to many of Michigan's well-known courses including The Natural, The Majestic at Lake Walden and Timber Ridge.

The course was contoured around an old gravel mining operation. "All we had to do was shape off the elevated areas," said Breitmeyer, whose family has been in the golf business for three generations. "There were piles of dirt, which is very unusual. But we also had to bring in a lot more top soil than normal because of the rocks."

"There were no sewers and very little development around when we came in." Thanks to the efforts of greenskeeper Dave Jones, Greystone is in magnificent shape despite an usually dry spring. The greens, fairways and tees are all bent grass, not typical of most public golf courses.

"Our greenskeeper prides his self on conditioning," Breitmeyer said. "It takes a good year to fine-tune a golf course before it dramatically improves."

The greens, many surrounded by bunkers and mounds, are quick, but firm and fair.

"It's a fun course, not your typical Michigan course up north which is tree-

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lined, you can spray it a little bit," said Jim Szilagyi, 1997 Michigan Public champion. "You hit from a lot of elevated areas to low greens. You can see 90 percent of the course."

"And it's very pretty in the evening."

Ex-Michigan Amateur champion Dave Graulau is Greystones's Head Golf Professional.

He and his staff offer lessons seven days per week. A half-hour individual lesson is \$35. Juniors (under-12) pay \$20 per half-hour.

Summer season (through October) rates (with cart) are \$45 (midweek), \$30 (midweek twilight after 3 p.m.), \$55 weekend (Friday through Sunday) and \$35 (weekend twilight).

Greystone also offers a range member program and a reserved pass for preferred tee times.

Besides "The Best Finish in Michigan Golf," Greystone caters to corporate and charity golf outings.

The Red Wing Alumni and Dick Puran events will be held at Greystone. The course will host the Golf Association of Michigan Junior Amateur Qualifier and the Ladies Publinx.

"We're primarily in the golf business, but we also cater to weddings because we have an upscale banquet facility," said Breitmeyer, who is also part owner of Patridge Creek. "It's a country club ambiance we're trying to create."

"We believe there's a niche for this kind of course. We charge a little more for greens fees, but we also offer every amenity you'd expect from a resort. We have bag service as you drive up. There are not a lot of others with the same concept in the immediate area."

Once you finish your round, Greystone also provides an full service bar and grill (try the chicken sandwich). The clubhouse, featuring an upscale service bar, has an enclosed porch which overlooks the beautiful No. 18. (Lockerroom and shower facilities are also part of the clubhouse.)

On a scale of one to 10, this upscale public course certainly rates at least an 9.9.

Not perfect, but pretty darn close.

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Great scenery: The picturesque holes at Greystone offer some great views.