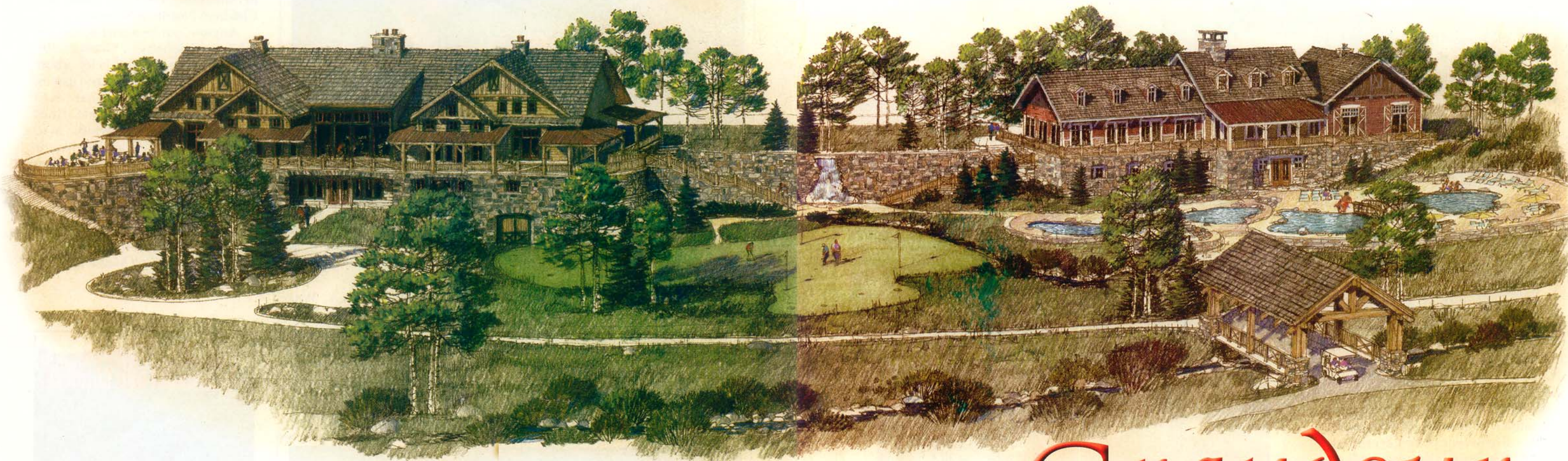


# High Country

UNIQUE TOPOGRAPHY AND COURSE DESIGN SCORES A HOLE-IN-ONE FOR THE GRAND ELK GOLF CLUB



## Grandeur

BY KIM MCHUGH

**J**erry Jones, Larry Martin, Donald Heller and Rich Barnes must have found an Aladdin's lamp when they arrived upon the majestic parcel of high country ranchland that is emerging as Grand Elk, the residential community and golf club in Granby. The three wishes of these partners?

My guess is that they asked for 1) A mountain landscape that has remained largely unchanged since it was homesteaded 125 years ago. And is punctuated by views of the Continental Divide. 2) That Tripp Davis and Craig Stadler would pair up to design the golf course. 3) That this foursome would create a private club concept that would include three incredible venues uncommon to most clubs.

Well, shazzam, all of their wishes are coming true and the Grand Elk Club is becoming a reality. And, oh, what a club concept and golfing experience! At the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park this emerging, 440-acre

resort community is just 79 miles from metropolitan Denver but a world away.

Distinguished from any other private club in the mountains, Grand Elk provides its members with three outdoor activity oriented venues; the Grand Elk Golf Club, the Alpine Club, and the Marina and Beach Club. Property owners, club members and guests who are skiers and snowboarders enjoy the comfort and convenience of the Alpine Club, which is located at the base of Winter Park Resort and literally 40 strides away from the slopes that are served by the Zephyr Express high speed lift.

With its two-sided fireplace and oversized, cushy furnishings set up living room style, it's a welcoming place to meet for a continental breakfast or apres-ski relaxation. The Alpine Club also boasts a ski storage valet who expedites members' journey to and from the mountain.

Three other ski areas are also easily accessible from Grand Elk including Mary Jane, SolVista, and Berthoud

Pass. Soon to stand poised on the shore of Lake Granby, the Grand Elk Marina and Beach Club promises a host of aquatic adventure from sailing and canoeing to water skiing and windsurfing.

"My husband and I grew up on the East Coast so we're used to having water in our lives," said Barbara Goldy, who with her husband Bill, are Grand Elk property owners from the Front

Range. "The water and the beach are part of our world, so we are very much excited about the Marina and Beach Club." Club members can also look forward to the use of pontoon boats and excursions to Grand Lake and Shadow Mountain Lake. This picturesque spot features covered and uncovered slips, mooring buoys, and a grill room.

Designed by PGA great Craig "The Walrus" Stadler and premier

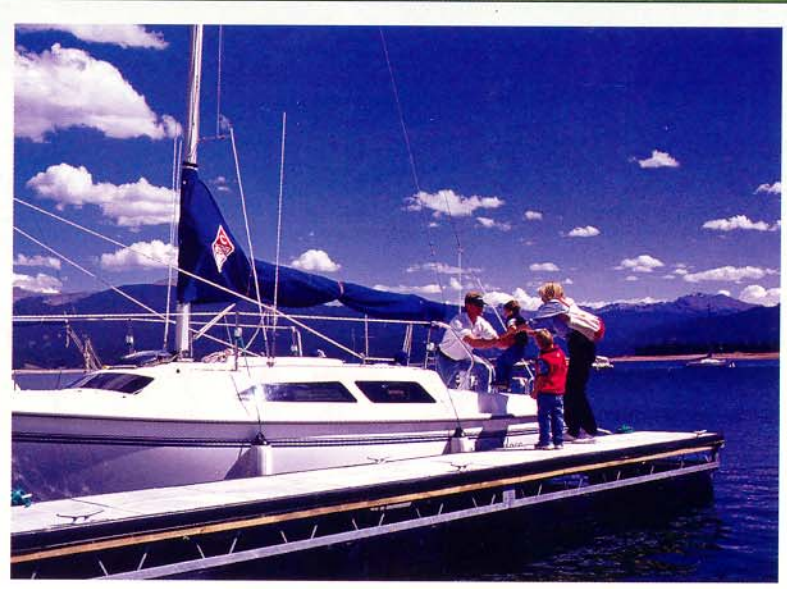
golf course architect Tripp Davis, The Grand Elk Golf Course marks Colorado's first foray into Heathland-style golf course design. The Heathland style is characterized by a very natural, sometimes rugged, landscape with a more strategic eye toward bunker placement. This style has its roots in the second-generation British courses that sprang up when land became scarce for the original links-style courses.



"When I first saw the land for Grand Elk, I was immediately reminded of Gleneagles, a historic and beautiful golf resort in the mountain highlands of Scotland," writes Tripp Davis. "Like Gleneagles, Grand Elk lies in the gentle roll of mountain foothills and down among the valley of mountain rivers and streams."

A more free flowing bunker style arises out of the original Heathland designers' freedom, due to different soil and wind conditions, to create a greater variety of bunker shapes than was possible on links courses. The best of these designs were characterized by bunkers that took creative and strategic advantage of the natural landscape.

"Our golf course designs consider not only the strategy of the course, but the beauty of it as well," notes Davis. "In many cases we have to search for what is inherently attractive. The pleasure in designing Grand Elk was that we were able to fully concentrate on the strategic



elements of the course without having to create the beauty as well. The beauty is everywhere we look."

Playing 7200 yards from the back tees, this signature par 71 course is identified by Davis by its curious hole names that include; Wee Bit, Grouse Run, Surprise, Beauty and Scot on the front nine, and Faith, Let it Ride, First Glimpse, Run With It, and Heroic on Characterized by the typical collection of par 3s, 4s and 5s, there is

nothing typical about the course layout, which is distinguished by holes 6 (arguably the most beautiful par 3 in the state), 7, which plays the longest, 11, which brings 10 Mile Creek into the picture, and 17, a par 5 that, though short in yardage, is devilishly tricky.

Teeing off at, not surprisingly, Beginnings, and finishing with Home, golfers will begin to appreciate the unusual and rewarding golf



CRAIG STADLER PGA PROFESSIONAL, GRAND ELK MEMBER AND DESIGNER

experience that Davis and Stadler have created when the course opens later this summer.

"Grand Elk's seventeenth and eighteenth holes may be the two finest finishing holes in Colorado," said Craig Stadler, PGA great and Grand Elk property owner.

Of course, like Fred Astaire needed Ginger Rogers to make a dance a dance, the golf course needs a gathering place to make it a club and the Grand Elk Club is obliging.

Soon to be under construction the Grand Elk's Golf Course Clubhouse and Trailhead Activities Center will represent one of the most impressive recreation venues in the high country.

The buildings, designed by Avon-based VAG Architects and Planners, will be within a chip shot of holes 1 and 18, and will feature rugged timber and stone construction.

Members and guests can convene in the Great Room, which will have dramatic appeal, thanks to its high ceilings, massive timbers, towering stone fireplace and generous collection of picture windows.

In addition to a pro shop, the Trailhead will also boast a year-round outdoor swimming pool, slide pool, wading pool and hot tubs. Clubhouse construction is scheduled for summer 2003, with completion slated for 2004.

With its unique golf course, "three-in-one" club experience and rambling ranchland location there is no doubt for Grand Elk that dreams, or in this case wishes, do come true.

For information call 866-227-4268 or 970-887-3223.

Kim McHugh is a Lowell Thomas award winner and staff writer with Colorado Golf Magazine.