

UK alum returns for renovation

By DEREK RICE

LEXINGTON, Ky. — When architect Drew Rogers of Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1991, he never imagined that he'd one day be back to help renovate the Big Blue course at the University Club of Kentucky.

"When you leave school, you never know where your career is going to take you," Rogers said. "Certainly, I didn't have any idea that I'd ever have an opportunity to come back and be in Lexington to do the kind of work that I do, so that was pretty rewarding."

The course, which is set to re-open May 18, has undergone what Rogers called a "typical facelift," including rebuilding greens to USGA specifications and renovating tee boxes, bunkers, drainage and cart paths. Along with these traditional items, Rogers was able to bring the course more in line with its Kentucky roots.

"A lot of vegetation that was on the site that was probably not selected to match the pastoral quality of the site, so we removed a lot of that to expose the more typical open Kentucky rolling horse farm-type of landscape," Rogers said.

The construction aspect of the project, which was handled by Landscapes Unlimited, included some work with the existing lakes on the property, Rogers said.

"We replaced the lake overflow structures and connection structures from what was a concrete gutter-type system, which was not the look we were trying to achieve," he said. "We extruded those and used a lot of the limestone on site. We had a water feature specialist, Horizon Golf, build more stream-



The 16th hole at the newly renovated University Club of Kentucky, which re-opens May 18.



Drew Rogers

like spillways that connected the ponds, which aesthetically was an improvement."

Because of the extensive drainage system renovation, Rogers said, the fairways are completely new.

"There was a lot of disturbance in the fairways necessitated by the drainage that we planned to install," he said. "As you can imagine, trying to save anything in the line of fairway turf was not a number that made any sense. We were kind of starting from scratch there."

"We did not alter the original routing to speak of. A few were lengthened, a few shortened, but the original corridors were maintained as they had existed."

Rogers said his affiliation with the University of Kentucky came in handy on this project, from both a personal and professional standpoint.

"Most people don't get a chance to give something back," he said. "I was already familiar with the property from years past and got to do some significantly exciting things. I played it a few times under its old name." ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

16 MAY 2002