

Private Matters - The Peninsula on Indian River Bay

Low Tides, High Rewards

By Bill Kamenjar

It's only appropriate that Jack Nicklaus' first official visit to the land now known as The Peninsula was in a helicopter. If clarity is indeed a catalyst for success, then from that vantage point he knew what he had to do with the open field mixed with marsh that lay below. The game's greatest player and certainly one of its greatest designers recognized it as a true, natural peninsula protected on the qualifying three sides by water and just aching to be turned into a pristine waterfront golf course.



On that day, in the minds of its owners, the Jack Nicklaus signature course at The Peninsula was officially born.

"If you give Jack Nicklaus an open slate and let him work his magic, he'll take what's available to him and give an owner his best possible product," says Monte Schisler, the director of membership sales for The Peninsula on Indian River Bay. "He wants to create. He's an artist. He's a legend. You can't take the paint brush out of his hands."

From the very beginning, Nicklaus was given that freedom in Millsboro, Delaware. The par-5 seventh hole is proof of this flexible arrangement. It embraces the Indian River Bay so warmly it is as if every aspect of the hole had been there forever. Back up a few holes and you'll find an equally dramatic par 3 with its own view of the bay. The final four

offerings, meanwhile, finish strong alongside Lingo Creek. The 18th presents a challenge around marshland that reminds the Golden Bear of the finishing hole at Pebble Beach.



The interior holes flow nicely from one to the next, and at least two of them serve as small reminders of the greater peninsula you are playing on. No. 13 has its own peninsula green and No. 9 plays with water on three sides. Only No. 12 at The Peninsula is landlocked, but it makes up for it with some fairly memorable

bunkering.

"No matter where you are on the property," says Nicklaus, "you'll know you are on a peninsula. This was an opportunity to relate man to nature."

The Peninsula, in its very essence, is a water-themed private golf community. Your first splash of it comes from a fountain located in front of the Discovery Center, the project's

information and welcoming headquarters. Then at the front entrance there is a large waterfall, the resort community's most identifiable image. Half way down the 15-miles-per-hour road to the golf shop there is another water feature, a fountain located between the Veranda and Marina Bay neighborhoods. In addition, there are 30 ponds or waterways throughout the property, each in some way visible from at least one hole. The entire 775 acres are bordered on the east by Lingo Creek, on the south by the Indian River Bay and on the west by a smaller tributary affectionately known by few as Emily Gut.

By allowing Nicklaus to free-flow the course where and how he wanted it, the course turned out to be a spectacular achievement. Throw in some national award-winning home designs based on seashore architecture, several first-class amenities and a state-of-the-art recreation center, and you come away with a gated community superior to most anything you'll find so close to the Atlantic Ocean.

"The Peninsula is unique in the fact that it was given such a great view that wasn't manufactured," says Schisler. "Mr. Nicklaus designed a course that Mother Nature handed him. You can go up and down the East Coast and find great golf courses and you can go up and down the East Coast and find great communities, but you'll be hard pressed to find both together in one place. The Peninsula is that combination."

Developer Larry Goldstein shares in Schisler's excitement.

"It all gelled and came together here," he says. "Like the turn of the century resorts that have left their mark on history, The Peninsula is nestled within nature and shimmering waterscapes, exuding a nostalgic ambiance that is unprecedented in today's luxury resort destinations."

When complete, The Peninsula on the Indian River Bay will include 1,404 residences, town homes, villas, condominiums and custom homes. It is a joint venture between Odyssey Development and LM Sandler & Sons. It also will boast a man-made wave lagoon with a sandy beach (opening Memorial Day 2007) and a Nature and Exploration Center (opening 2008) with kayaks, canoes, permanent nature displays, ongoing educational seminars, trails and observation

points and a view of the Indian River Bay. In addition, The Peninsula will include a volleyball court, basketball court and eight lighted tennis courts, an indoor pool, an adults-only pool, a fitness center, a group exercise room, a day spa, hot tubs, a kids lounge, a juice bar, a gourmet village market and the Terrace Grille restaurant. The golf course's practice facilities include a driving range, putting green and a practice bunker.

Still, it's the touch of the Golden Bear that people who visit The Peninsula will remember most.

"It's all about natural playability," says Schisler. "When the course fully matures, you'll never know what actually was here and what Mr. Nicklaus put here. I don't know where you can go and find it any better."



THE PENINSULA ON INDIAN RIVER

Millsboro, Delaware

302.947.4717

peninsuladelaware.com

Par 72 7,303 yards NA NA

Par 72 6,601 yards NA NA

Par 72 6,254 yards NA NA

Par 72 5,259 yards NA NA

Opened: 2006

Designer: Jack Nicklaus

Community amenities: Beach and wave pool; kayaking, canoeing, nature center, beach club, swimming, tennis, restaurant, village market. ♦