

# *Jack Nicklaus*

June 2017

Dear Competitor:

Congratulations on qualifying for the 100th Florida State Amateur Championship, and welcome to two golf courses very special to me and the Nicklaus family. On behalf of the collective staffs at The Bear's Club and Lost Tree Club, we are delighted that the Florida State Golf Association and the best amateur players in the state will have the opportunity to play these two beautiful layouts. South Florida has been my home for the last 50-plus years, and my family and I have enjoyed many rounds of golf at both clubs. The facilities at each are among the finest you will find, and the staffs are both professional and committed to the best-possible service. So please do not hesitate to call on them if you need anything.

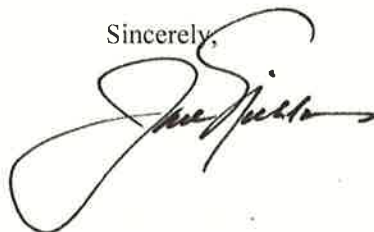
The Bear's Club is where I hang my hat in Florida. When the first tee shots were hit on New Year's Eve 1999, it became the realization of a decades-old vision of creating a golf club in South Florida that reflects my passion for the game. Lush in native vegetation, the course has a Carolinas' low-country feel to it, with gently rolling fairways and greens protected by steeply faced bunkers reminiscent of those I played at courses like Royal Melbourne in Australia.

If The Bear's Club could be called my home club, Lost Tree would be called, simply, my home. Barbara and I moved to the Lost Tree community in 1965 and we still reside in the same house we built in 1970. So when the club gave me the opportunity and honor over 15 years ago to redesign its original 1961 Mark Mahannah design, the project became a "labor of love." What began as a renovation, turned into a full redesign. There were aspects of the original look—such as the bunkering style, with its thumb-like fingers—that I simply wanted to enhance, but I like to believe that we were able to incorporate more strategy and better shot values. We expanded the water and were able to take the excess material and create more movement and personality within the course, along with some tremendous vistas. Many of the greens have collection areas, where the ball funnels into grass swales. Golfers are given options to play on to the gently contoured putting surfaces—from pitch shots to bump-and-runs, or simply putt it.

I look forward to being a part of the Wednesday reception at The Bear's Club and spending time with all of you. Perhaps I will be able to offer a few tips for playing each course, reflect on some of my experiences in this great game, and, most important, take the opportunity to meet and congratulate you.

Once again, we are privileged to have the opportunity to host 2017 Amateur Championship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Nicklaus", written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.