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RESORT AND SPA****Four Decades of Fierce Fairways: The Bear Celebrates 40th Anniversary**

ACME, Mich., June 9, 2025 – One of Michigan's most iconic golf courses is hitting a major milestone. On June 17, 2025, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa will celebrate the 40th anniversary of The Bear, a Jack Nicklaus-designed course known for both its beauty and its bite.

40 years later, The Bear is every bit the animal it was when Jack Nicklaus first unleashed his design on northern Michigan in 1985. Celebrated as one of the toughest courses in the Midwest and once ranked the 18th toughest course in America by *Golf Digest*, The Bear has carved out a fierce legacy among golf's boldest layouts.

"When Paul Nine came to me over 40 years ago and said he wanted the toughest golf course in Michigan, I tried very hard to convince him otherwise," said Jack Nicklaus. "For a resort course, I encouraged him to let me create something that was spectacular, yet playable for everyone who came to Grand Traverse. But Paul had a vision, so I designed what he wanted. In the end, it was a brilliant marketing decision, and it gave The Bear a unique identity."

The Bear's unmistakable character comes through in Scottish terraced fairways, tiered greens, deep pot bunkers, grassy moguls, and natural water features. With fruit orchards, rolling hills, and abundant wildlife, The Bear delivers a uniquely northern Michigan experience – equal parts rugged and refined.

"The land here in northern Michigan gave us something really special to work with," added Nicklaus. "I still remember the first time I walked the property and envisioned what we could do. It was a true pleasure being involved in the golf course, and 40 years later, I am still proud of what we created and what The Bear has meant to the region. It's a particular feather in my cap."

"The Bear is more than a golf course. It's part of the identity of the Resort and a true destination for golf lovers across the country," said Tim Norman, General Manager of Grand Traverse Resort and Spa. "Jack Nicklaus gave us a course that's both breathtaking and bold, and we're proud to celebrate 40 years of this legendary design."

To mark the 40th anniversary, the Resort is offering a special one-day celebration on Tuesday, June 17. Golfers can enjoy \$40 tee times on The Bear. This is a rare opportunity to play one of Michigan's premier golf courses at a commemorative rate. To reserve your golf tee time, call 231-534-6000.

Jack Nicklaus is golf's greatest champion with a record 18 professional majors. He is a member of the World Golf Hall of Fame and has designed more than 320 courses worldwide, with The Bear being among the first 30 courses he designed.

Media video and images are available [here](#), including historical photos with Jack Nicklaus.

About Grand Traverse Resort and Spa

Nestled among the freshwater beaches and hardwood forests of Traverse City, MI, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa has been creating Michigan vacation memories since 1980. Featuring nearly 550 guest rooms and 86,500 square feet of meeting space, the 900-acre property is Michigan's premier year-round resort destination. The Resort is also home to three championship golf courses, the renowned Spa Grand Traverse, and Aerie Restaurant & Lounge. Visit grandtraverseresort.com or call 800-236-1577 to learn more.

About Jack Nicklaus

No name is more synonymous with greatness in the sport of golf than the name Jack Nicklaus, and no single person has changed the face of the sport more than Jack Nicklaus – the player, the course designer, the philanthropist, and the global goodwill ambassador.

Jack was named “Golfer of the 20th Century” or “Golfer of the Millennium” by almost every major golf publication in the world. He was also named Individual Male Athlete of the 20th Century by *Sports Illustrated*, and one of the 10 Greatest Athletes of the Century by ESPN. The excellence associated with Jack Nicklaus transcends what he did on the golf course. He became the first athlete/sportsperson and just the fourth person in history to be honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2005), the Congressional Gold Medal (2015) and the Lincoln Medal (2018).

Jack's competitive career spanned five decades, and his legend has been built with 120 professional tournament victories worldwide, including a record 18 major-championship titles (six Masters, five PGA Championships, four U.S. Opens, three Open Championships) won over a 25-year period (1962-1986). He is one of only six golfers who have won all of golf's modern majors—referred to as the career “Grand Slam.”

For a record six consecutive years, *Golf Inc.* magazine ranked Jack “The Most Powerful Person in Golf,” due to his impact on various aspects of the industry through his course design work, his ambassadorial role in promoting and growing the game worldwide, and his involvement on a national and global level with various charitable causes. Jack has designed close to 325 golf courses over a career that has touched parts of seven decades. He is still very active today, with courses under development in and outside the United States. Among his more recent work, Jack has donated his design services to a number of courses that impact charities.

For more on Jack Nicklaus golf career, legacy, and philanthropic endeavors, click [here](#).