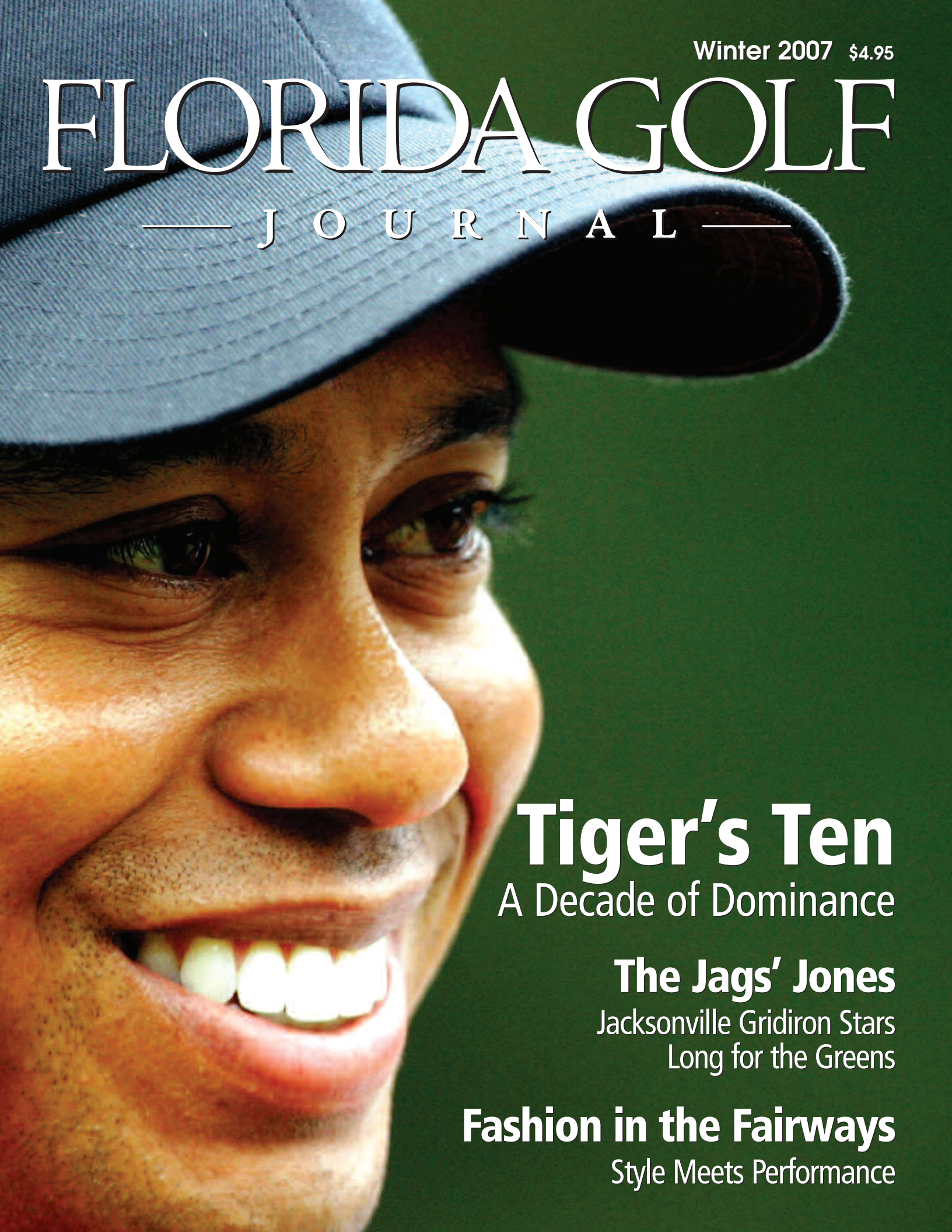


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FLORIDA GOLF

— JOURNAL —



Tiger's Ten
A Decade of Dominance

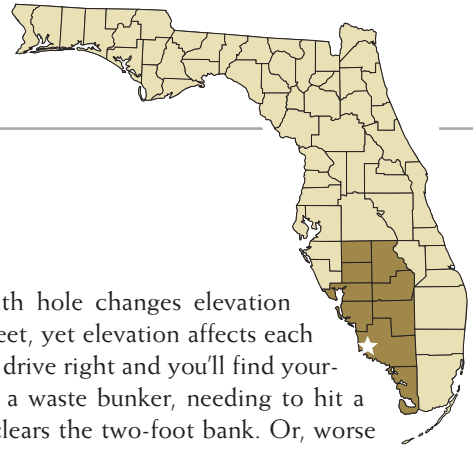
The Jags' Jones
Jacksonville Gridiron Stars
Long for the Greens

Fashion in the Fairways
Style Meets Performance

Course Review

Fiddler's Creek ~ The Creek Course

Naples



Noble. That's the word you're looking for. The word that describes the atmosphere as you stand astride the first tee, gazing out at the peninsular fairway, glassy lake, and august stone bridge.

This is the Creek Course, the first of three planned 18-hole layouts within the Golf Club at Fiddler's Creek. It is also one of Arthur Hills' finest works: A Naples delight featuring bunkers, both waste and pot, as well as greens that rise from the earth like bread rising in an oven — all supported by one of the largest, best-equipped and most talented course maintenance teams this side of Augusta National.

Aubrey J. Ferrao, president of Gulf Bay Group of Companies, which owns Fiddler's Creek, has aimed with this club and community not so much for outright opulence, but rather for a slightly more subdued effort to sate every appetite without reaching gluttony. Instead of ostentatious marbles, Ferrao has infused a classic Tuscan charisma through stone, stucco and tile.

From the halfway house, to the stone bridges and tunnels, to the iron benches beside the tee boxes, to the pro shop, spa and gym — there is a genuine comfort here. Each need is met, softly and completely.

But it's clear that every amenity at Fiddler's Creek is meant to enhance Mr. Hills' design, the centerpiece of the community. This course is a testament to what innovation can do for a golf course. Each hill, mound and slope has been placed for a reason. Some define the borders of play, while others intentionally interrupt it. Nearly every green is raised, a few significantly and a few quite understated.

The par-5 eighth hole changes elevation by only a few feet, yet elevation affects each shot. Lose your drive right and you'll find yourself beached in a waste bunker, needing to hit a long iron that clears the two-foot bank. Or, worse yet, your Callaway may nestle into the thick rough on the embankment itself. Either way, this slight elevation no longer seems slight. But the true genius of number 8 is the large trap fronting the green. Clear it, and you're putting for birdie, right? Not so fast, Seve! Between the trap and the green lies a 20-foot trough. Visual deception impels you to pull up short on your approach, which leaves a 30-foot pitch off a tight lie to a flat green. If the pin is up front, par is unachievable now.

Director of Golf Jeff Raimer could not be forced to choose a favorite among his 18 children, but said the 2nd and 7th holes stand out. A long par 3, the second hole "requires a very accurate mid to long iron to a green that drifts away from you front to back, surrounded by a large bunker on the left and hazard to the right. Green slope makes it extremely difficult to hold your tee shot."

The 379-yard 12th hole is another of those significant ones, which Director of Golf Membership John Calabria calls *The Volcano*; somewhat like a bowl sitting on top of a mesa. Even though it stands 8 feet above, the surface of the green is hidden by another 18-inch rim. This design puts immense pressure on your precision and mental toughness.

Fiddler's Creek epitomizes the master-planned upscale golf community. This private club has a limited number of memberships currently available.



The 440-yard par-4 9th hole.

PRIVATE

Designed by Arthur Hills

	Yardage	Rating	Slope
Tournament	7157	75.2	143
Championship	6804	73.4	140
Back	6508	72.2	133
Creek	6271	71.1	131
Middle	6072	70.3	124
Forward	5185	65.5	113

Rates

Peak Season	N/A
Off Season	N/A

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