

The item appeared in *GolfWorld's* April 2 edition of "The Bunker." Coming so close to April Fool's Day, the editors had to be having a little fun, right?

Tom Doak and Jack Nicklaus were announced as co-designers of a planned private club situated on 312 acres of Southampton real estate near Shinnecock Hills Golf Club and literally next door to the fabled National Golf Links of America.

It's no hoax.

Long Island course developer Michael Pascucci is marrying this odd couple of architecture, believing two divergent minds can craft a design that will hold its own with the neighborhood's other masterpieces.

Doak is the headstrong visionary who has emerged as a design business star by building old-style, nature-inspired layouts. He lets the land dictate routings that he creates by walking the property himself.

Nicklaus, meanwhile, parlayed his status as the greatest golfer ever into a design empire. He builds big, radiant courses. His office churns out courses under an assortment of banners. The more you fork out, the more Jack you get. The less you pay, the more likely one of his sons Jackie, Gary, Steve or even a son-in-law will be the co-architect along with the family patriarch.

Plans are basically useless to Doak. His team approach embraces interesting ideas that evolve out of the construction process.

Nicklaus designs are done from the firm's 11780 U.S. Highway 1 location. Though he makes more site visits than most player architects, Nicklaus courses are still largely created on the office drawing board.

If they were in the hotel business, Team Doak would create quaint bed and breakfasts that you read about in a "hidden gems" sidebar.

Team Nicklaus is the Marriott of golf—solid, consistent and classy lodgings that lack a sense of place.

One can already imagine amusing scenarios when these two walk the holes, ranging from minor spats over bunker placement to outlandish squabbling straight out of *The War of the Roses*. That's the Danny DeVito-directed dark comedy where Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner

The Odd Couple of Architecture?

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



IT'S NO HOAX. DOAK
AND NICKLAUS
ARE CO-DESIGNERS
OF A PLANNED
PRIVATE CLUB ON
LONG ISLAND

divorce, yet stubbornly continue to live in the same house until they kill each other. The moral of that story was that dog people shouldn't marry cat people.

Doak's courses are rugged and spunky. He builds courses for dog people. Nicklaus designs are sleek and slightly detached. Cat people love his courses.

Since this Southampton course was approved on the basis of holistic maintenance practices, Doak will likely get his way and build something that melds into the native Long Island environment. But who is actually going to construct it? Will it be Doak's crew of creative co-designers, known for shaping features in a hands-on, site-specific way? Or will Nicklaus' construction team be there to make sure the Golden Bear's "signature" is felt?

Maybe it'll be a mix of both, like the Arnold Palmer-Nicklaus World Golf Village 18-hole where the giants co-designed the King and the Bear course. They even had a documentary film crew along to capture the opening round played by the two golfing greats.

Perhaps selling the documentary rights will be developer Pascucci's way of putting a dent in the property's \$45 million price tag. Doak and Nicklaus could be miked with hidden cameras planted all over the place. We could be inside Jack's Gulfstream, listening to what he really thinks of Doak's ideas as they await clearance from Islip air-traffic control. And we could hear what Doak says about Jack as he returns his Taurus rental to JFK.

Come to think of it, some lucky superintendent will get to witness the inner workings of this unprecedented design pairing. Just think of the stories he'll have for the grandchildren!

Get him a literary agent now.

Geoff Shackelford's latest book is The Future of Golf in America.