



Photo courtesy of HIGH DEFINITION GOLF™



Photo courtesy of JENKINS CUSTOM HOMES

# TEEING UP INDOORS

By SUE-ELLA MUELLER

The great American golfer Arnold Palmer once said, “It’s a funny thing, the more I practice, the luckier I get.” Knowing that luck has nothing to do with a low handicap, the makers of High Definition Golf™ are bringing a whole new way to practice the game directly to the media room of your own home.

High Definition Golf (HD GOLF™) is the product of Interactive Sports Technologies, Inc, a manufacturer of golf simulators. It may sound like a video game, but HD Golf™ is nothing like your kids’ Tiger Woods PGA Tour® game. With a Linux operating system, sophisticated computer vision (smart cameras) for ball and club tracking and simulations of the top golf courses in the world, HD Golf™ combines the best of the best to produce a simulated indoor golf experience that will have you swearing you just finished playing Pebble Beach®.

“This is unlike anything else out there,” says Bob Beecroft, vice president of sales for HD Golf™. “Some of the best minds in computer technology have built this from the ground up. With

one swing of the golf club, the system can give you a detailed shot analysis and provide you with information on just about everything – distance, ball speed, club speed, launch angle, club face angle, ball spin and spin axis at high accuracy and more.”

Using a massive, “quiet technology” screen that reaches from ceiling to floor and is anywhere from 12 to 15 feet wide, golfers are able to hit their own ball with their own set of clubs. Golfers can then follow the virtual path of their ball on the screen.

“The accuracy of the system is superior. And in the game of golf, where just changing something like your swing path by one degree can make the difference in your handicap, accuracy is vital,” says Beecroft.

In addition to breath-taking imagery, the system also employs realistic sounds such as the waves crashing at Pebble Beach® or the birds nestled in the trees at Pinehurst®. The HD Golf™ simulator engineers have taken every effort to make sure players feel like they are actually playing on some of the most famous courses in the world.

“It takes a large team of photographers weeks to capture just one course,” explains Beecroft. “We get the course from every conceivable angle using a unique proprietary process, so even if you’re shanking every shot, you’ll know exactly what it feels like and looks like at Torrey Pines® or any of the other 20 plus courses we feature.”

Once a shot has been taken, the golfer may choose to pull up a complete analysis on the shot, including a video of the swing. The video, including the detailed analysis data, can then be saved and sent to a golf pro for further instruction.

“This is an incredible tool for both the golfer and the teaching pro. While our system can give you the data, your pro can actually tell you how to interpret the data to adjust your game,” Beecroft says.

Need a pro’s tips right away? HD Golf™ is working on a new application that will have world-renowned golf pro Jim McLean coming to your rescue after every shot with advice on how to correct the nuances of your game.

Space, of course, is an issue when installing HD Golf™ into luxury homes. During the recent Parade of Homes™ in Austin, Jenkins Custom Homes built an indoor/outdoor media room specifically for the installation of the system.

“We had sliding glass doors that opened up to an outdoor living space with a view of an Austin hillside. Then when you turned back inside, you had breathtaking views of famous golf courses,” says Bethany Jenkins, vice president of Jenkins Custom Homes. “It was easily the favorite room of almost every man on the home tour.”

Fortunately for the homeowner who was not a golfer, the space was also the perfect media room and since the HD Golf™ system doubles as a home theater system, families can adapt a larger, current media room for the simulator.



Photo courtesy of HIGH DEFINITION GOLF™

“We have three different models depending upon your ceiling height; we have 10 and 12 foot heights with widths from 12 to 15 feet. In addition, you’ll need at least 20 feet of depth to accommodate the arc or swing of the golf club,” says Beecroft.

Jenkins says it isn’t always necessary to work with a room in your home. “A garage enclosure would be ideal for a golf area and would probably be fairly easy to remodel,” she says.

Even for the avid golfer with plenty of space in the home for an HD Golf™ simulator, the cost may cause a mishit. The system can run anywhere from \$40,000 to \$60,000 depending on what options you purchase. But when you consider the time saved (you can play a full round in an hour), the benefits of the swing analysis and the

enticement of playing a number of courses that you would have otherwise never have been able to play, it may be well worth it for some.

Besides, the simulator will let you take as many mulligans as you need. And, as the famous sports writer Dan Jenkins once said, “If God didn’t want a man to have mulligans, golf balls wouldn’t come three to a pack.” Yet another benefit of HD Golf™, you’ll only need one ball, no matter how many shots drop in the water. ♦