

South Florida Bridge Player's Golf Tour

2009 Annual Report

Membership

There was no change in tour membership. John Lewis returned to occasional play after a two year respite. Richie Coren played more often. Bruce Rogoff purchased a home and golf membership at Woodfield, but won't be living there until at least September, 2010, when he will be mostly an "in-season" player. We look forward to Bruce joining the tour. Gavin Wolpert played a few tour rounds, but needs more "seasoning" before becoming a regular tour member.

Of Courses

Stonebridge became more playable as the greens softened up after a makeover in 2008. Mizner, one of the best tracks on the tour, became a cash course, available at guest rates when Joe was in town. Boca Greens, one of the favorite tour courses, went public in November. Larry gave up his membership and retired his golf cart. BG can be played at cash rates for now, but could become too pricey in prime season. Addison Reserve, where Richie is a member, was not played this year, but can and should be played at reasonable rates out of season.

As expected, the use of the "forward" tees became more prevalent, to the dismay of Larry and Joe, who prefer the back tees for their longer drives.

Financial Report – Tour Leader

Mike was +\$412 by Jan 20th and built on that into the spring. Larry, in second place most of the year, threatened to catch Mike in late November, but a few bad rounds ended his chances. On December 13th, David was in fourth place, +\$113 and Mike was cruising at +\$861. But in the last 18 days of the month David went on a tear, winning \$395, easily passing Richie and Larry to place second on the Tour rankings. David would have passed Mike, too, but the month ran out of days. Mike finished +\$736, with David, last year's Tour Leader winding up at +\$508. David appears to have fully recovered, golf-wise, from his medical issues.

Gary, -\$580 February 24th, clawed his way into the plus column for the first time ever, ahead \$380 on October 30th. With much complaining from other tour members, (and beating the commissioner scratch), his strokes were dramatically slashed. At various times during the year, Stan, Victor and Gary vied for the bottom of the leaderboard, but as the fall set in, Stan had a firm grip on last place. On December 10th, Stan was -\$656 and Victor -\$123. Then Stan rallied and Victor swooned. With one round to play, Stan was -\$515 and Victor was -\$501. But, as luck? would have it, Victor's good round kept Stan at the bottom of our heap. "It couldn't have happened to a nicer guy," said Mike.

Stan was the tour leader in 2005. Mike was the tour loser three times in the 1990's. Stan and Mike are the only tour members to have ever been on both sides of the leaderboard.

This is Mike's first Tour Leader Award, and his win more than halves his lifetime money deficit. In the press conference announcing his win, (held in his bathroom), Mike said, "As the year went by, winning the Tour Leader Award took on a strange importance. I found myself preparing more for each round -- stretching and exercising before playing, and arriving earlier at the driving range. Earning this Award is as important as winning a NABC. Thanks to all the losers for making this moment possible. I couldn't have won this award without your help."

Last century, Larry had the first tour hole-in-one. Then, after a ten year drought, there were THREE holes-in-one this year: Mike (his first), Larry (his second), and Marshall (his seventh but his first on the tour). Members of the hole-in-one club were busy doling out or collecting \$100 bills. Also, Joe eagled a par 5, (he's lost count of his eagles).

2009 Most Improved Golfer Award (M.I.G.A)

In 2009, Gary took 5 of the 10 lessons gifted to him by hosts who were feeling guilty from their somewhat unjust enrichment at his expense in 2008. The lessons helped Gary to take a whopping 12 strokes off his game. In so doing, Gary saved about 150 golf balls from a watery grave, even though David still gives Gary 3x on their penalty-shots-per-round bet. Gary has the potential to single handedly win (or lose) any match, regardless of how well or badly his opponents are playing. Should the hosts renege on the other five lessons?

Larry started the year as an 11 HCP and lowered it to an 8 in late summer. That's a huge improvement for a "low" handicap player. His drives are longer and straighter than ever, and his putting has improved as well. When he is in form, he is the least likely to leak any \$5 bills. But towards end of the year, he could not give golf his full attention, and he reverted back to his "B" game.

Victor improved during the fall, and by December was averaging under 100. Marc, Bernie and Richie (new to the tour), held their own. Marshall finished the year shooting a 80 and 81, his best two rounds in the past two years. The rest of the tour probably went a little backwards. John G, now [a young] 80, lost about 10 yards in distance, but is still shoots around 90. Will John able to shoot his age, again? Stan had his driver extended in the fall (a little guy needs a long driver), and is driving the ball farther, (or at least as far as he hit the ball three years ago). Mike, the 2009 Tour Leader, actually averaged .20 more strokes-per-round than the previous year.

Thirteen electors, (a record number), who played [about] 20 or more rounds were asked to select the Most Improved Golfer. Unanimously, Gary was voted the Most Improved Golfer. Taking 12 shots off one's game in one year is an incredible achievement, even for a high handicapper. Congratulations, Gary.

Home & Away Rounds Report for Hosts

The attached spreadsheet details the number of guests playing at a "member's" home club -Vs- the number of times that member played at other clubs. There is a summary for 2009 and a summary for all 13 years combined. We are about as out of whack as last year.

The home and away summary assumes "others" (non-members) paid the member for their greens fees. I recorded 187 groups, including 57 that I did not play in. A tour round is any round where two tour members in the same foursome wager some money, whether in Florida or elsewhere. [Not counting non-tour members], 667 tour rounds were played, up from 603 rounds in 2008 and 514 rounds in 2007. The increase is attributable to more guest play – host play actually went down.

Greens fees differ significantly from club to club and by season and I took neither into account. What this means is, by comping each other, hosts wind up paying their home guest fee rates when they play at other courses.

Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Mike

The Great Organizer

(Assisted by Larry)

Encl: Spreadsheet re: Financial Report and Home and Away Rounds Report (329 lines on 4 pages in .xls format)