

South Florida Bridge Player's Golf Tour

2013 Annual Report

Membership

Tour membership remained stable. No new members. No departing members. Dennis Kleinman, who played a few rounds last year, was never seen again after he objected to another player's smoking of cigars. Yossi, Victor's friend, played 8 rounds and won \$624 thru February, but was "inadvertently" not invited to play again until October.

Of Courses

Boca CC and Boca Hotel briefly returned to Tour play when Marshall took out a summer membership. Two Rounds were played at the CC and five at the beautiful Hotel course.

Ibis CC was visited by 16 Tour groups when Bob S's new membership included a one-year perk of "cart fee only" rounds. In 2014, Bob S has fewer perks.

The Hamlet CC went off tour when it was purchased by the Seagate Hotel & Spa and guest fees skyrocketed. (New name: the Seagate Country Club) Steve became a cash player, but fees are lower in 2014, so the tour will play there from time to time.

Stonebridge CC will undergo a major course renovation, closing sometime in 2014-2015. Women and senior members want to reduce the carries on water holes. Stan has written a letter to the BoD supporting this aspect of the plan.

Non-"host" Tour play included Boca Greens (6x), Deer Creek (5x), Delaire (2x), Gleneagles (3x), Hunter's Run (5x), Mizner (5x), Polo Club (8x), Weston (7x), The Hamlet (1x), Quail Ridge (only 1x), and 13 Utah courses (30x). Osprey Point disappeared from the Tour after 11 rounds of play in 2012 (perhaps because David shot a 76 there in late 2012).

Financial Report – Tour Leader

2013 saw the most competitive Tour Leader race ever. Unlike the mostly wire to wire performances seen from 2008 thru 2012, the Tour lead was held, in order, by David, Victor, Stan, Marc, David, Marc, David, Marc, Larry, Marc, Larry, David, Mike...which brings us to the end of October. David won \$568 in his last six rounds of November to edge past Mike, who was injured for the month. Mike resumed play after the Nationals and passed David, who was playing bridge with Stan in Palm Springs. When David returned, he shot his best round of the year, an 80, against Mike, to take a small lead. The next day Mike shot a 79 to regain the lead. With 10 rounds to go, Mike clung to a \$100 lead. Mike and David would play 6 rounds head to head, and David would play 4 other rounds. But from this point, David never gained any ground on Mike. The Tour

Leader Award was sewn up on 12/30, when Mike shot another 79. Mike finished +\$1175 to David's \$898. Congrats to Mike.

Looking back, Mike successfully employed the "Swiss Team Gambit." He steadily lost money and went to -\$923 in late April. His handicap rose into the stratosphere. Then, after getting used to 5 new clubs he'd purchased in March, and taking two lessons*, he started playing well, and, from won \$2,098 in his march from the near-Gary, (formerly called near-bottom), to the top of the leader board. It wasn't until the end of the year that his handicap caught up with his skill level. (*Mike's taken only one other lesson in the past 14 years).

The money at the top of the leader board is fueled, of course, by those at the bottom. Gary grabbed the bottom position the first round of the year and refused to relinquish it. Yes, he was last wire to wire. The record Tour loss prior to 2013 was Victor's -\$1,003 in 2011. Gary was behind more than that by mid-February, and never looked up after that. By September and through year end, Gary, aided by Victor, had cornered more than 80% of the negative money, making the top of the leader board rich with competitors. (These two wound up holding an incredible 86% of the negative money – a difficult achievement considering there are 16 players tracked.)

Looking back, Gary unsuccessfully employed the "Swiss Team Gambit." He lost, got more shots, and lost more, got more shots, etc. Remarkably, while losing, his game did not appear to get worse.

So Gary now holds the record for most money lost, and has set the bar-to-beat that record quite high (or is it low?). Gary becomes the only player to go from last to first to last in consecutive years.

It was disappointing to see Victor, who led the Tour for three months, fall deeply into the minus column, again, by year end. He will always have the memory of finishing plus in 2010.

Alan earned an amazing \$52 per round in 10 rounds of play. As Tour veterans know, this performance is a testament to incorrect strokage by Alan's foursomes. If he had played about 25 rounds,..could he have won the Tour Leader Award?

2013 Most Improved Golfer Award (M.I.G.A.)

The charge to the Electors: "The Most Improved Golfer Award should be awarded to the golfer who has improved the most. Who played better in 2013 than in 2012? If more than one person has improved, who has improved the most? If No One has improved, no Award should be given. "No One" has won the Award twice."

Members who played more that 25 rounds were the "Electors."

Stan nominated Mike. Some commented that Mike's drives were longer and his short game was stronger. Bob S of course, asked for stats. Mike reported that he averaged nearly 91 for the first 3rd of the year and nearly 87 for the next 2/3rds of the year. In all, he had an average year stroke-wise – 88.43, compared to 2012 and his last seven

years. But, when compared to the end of 2012, his strokes given or received from other players had improved by more than 1 shot in his private matches and his handicap had dropped by more than 1.5 shots. Could an average year measured by stroke average, structured worst-first, best-last, garner enough votes to win the coveted M.I.G.A.? The votes were cast. Mike received 7 votes, No One received 3 votes, and David received one vote. Congratulations to Mike.

The News of the Year in Review

- Mike, Steve and Bob S 76's tied for the lowest Tour rounds of the year. (Mike's 76 was the only personal best round in 2013.)
- Mike and Victor had a hole-in-one. These are the 6th and 7th on-Tour holes-in-one in some 43,000 par 3's played since 1996. (Mike 2, Larry 2, Marshall 1, Victor 1 and Steve 1 (but Steve was not a member of the "hole-in-one club"). Steve also scored up an off-tour hole-in-one this year. Mike also eagled a par four and par five.
- David and Mike recorded the **sixth** Schneider in Tour history against Bernie and Victor at Stonebridge, four days after David, also playing with Mike, three putted from five feet on the 6th hole to fail to Schneider Marshall and Bernie. Mike and Bernie recorded the Tour's **seventh** Schneider against Larry and Victor in Utah by discovering on the 8th hole, that Mike had a half stroke on the sixth hole. Due to the Bernie tax and that the back 3 holes were pressed, Mike won \$84, the most money won in a 6's match at any stakes. We look ahead to the first \$10-\$10-\$20 Schneider. (Apparently a Schneider occurs as often as a hole-in-one.)
- Mike set a Tour record by winning money ten consecutive rounds.
- Larry set a Tour record by winning \$712 in seven consecutive rounds.
- Mike beat Gary the first 8 holes 8-6-4-2 and tied the pressed and tied the 9th hole. This accomplishment, 8-6-4-2-0, was dubbed an "El Cocoito," the Zip Code of said town in Mexico, in keeping with the previous titles of "Draper" (South Dakota) 5-7-5-3-1 and Kerby (Oregon) 9-7-5-3-1. Also, Gary beat Victor a plain, 8-6-4-2, tying a middle hole. This is merely called Gary beat up on Victor, bad.
- Bernie broke the record of 5 putts held by several tour members. He reached a difficult par 5 in 3, and after three not very good putts, double hit his fourth putt. After 5-putts, with four feet to go, he picked up (because he could no longer tie the hole). Score it, generously, as a conceded six putt.
- Gary, Victor, Bruce, Larry, David, Stan, Joe, Alan, Bruce and Bob S are now playing \$10-\$10-\$20 in the sixes. Gary and Victor play \$10-10-20 against each other and all comers, and some of those mentioned above also play \$10-10-20 with each other. With the increased stakes, some "absolute" money records were set in both directions. Gary now holds the "absolute" single round win record of

\$280 and the single round loss record of -\$320. While there were only two, over \$200 rounds in 2012, there were ten over \$200 rounds in 2013. Mike will play sixes matches for \$10-\$10-\$20 in 2014. Bernie will increase his stakes to \$5-5-10 in the sixes. Reading between the lines, only Bob J, Marc and Bernie don't play \$10-10-20 in the sixes. Playing for more in the sixes than in private matches is thought to place the money emphasis where it belongs, in the teams.

- Mike's average lifetime earnings per round flipped positive for the first time ever. Now earning \$0.28 a round after 2,025 rounds, he should consider washing windows at Lyons and Glades.
- Victor's shoe was hit by his partner's well putted ball. He was in his shoe at the time.
- At High Ridge, Gary whistled a rescue club through the golf cart of his host, Paul Fireman. Paul was sitting in the cart at the time. Gary missed Paul. Paul had foolishly thought that he was safe 25 yards away at a 90 degree angle right of where Gary was hitting.
- Gary played his first *Florida* Tour Golf round ever...in pants, violating his local rule that "If you can't play golf in shorts, you shouldn't play golf."
- Bob S shot a 78 and lost money (no one has shot better and done worse).
- On the last hole of 2013, Gary and Victor, the bottom two on the leader board, getting no shots, pressed David and Mike, the top two Tour leaders. Perhaps their thinking was that if they could win \$3,600 on this hole they would be even for the year. Alas, David birdied the hole and won it by two shots. Another notable press by these two revered gentlemen.
- The most Tour rounds were again played by Gary (143) and David (135). Mike holds the record of 157 rounds in a year.
- [Larry videoed the swings of several Tour golfers. For viewing, click on \(control-click\), or cut and paste the links on the last page into your browser.](#)

The Put

On "April Fools Day," when Gary was -\$1,684, Larry, David, and Mike bought a -\$2,000 put from Gary, expiring 12/31/13, for \$50 each. Gary collected \$150, but would have to pay \$1.50 per dollar lost over \$2,000. If Gary lost \$2,100 for the year, he would break even. [This was Larry's idea.] The Put added excitement and trash talk to many of Gary's rounds, emails, dinner conversations, etc. For those involved, "The Put" took on a significance rivaling the Tour Leader race.

Gary fell to -\$2,271 in May, and rose to "only" -\$1,172 in July. Then he gushed money, leaving for the Fall Nationals with a -\$2,640 deficit. Some wagers, (not David) felt badly for Gary. Going into the last round of the year, Gary was -\$2,067, \$33 on the good

side of his break even point of \$2,100. Alas, his last round cost him \$98, most of it on a 5-putt on the 17th hole. In finishing -\$2,165 for the year he lost \$97 on "The Put." Much ado about nothing, but what a ride!

Another side bet was the \$500 to \$35 bet that Gary had, also with David, Larry and Mike. If Gary broke 80 he would receive \$500 by any of these three in his playing group. If DB, LC or MB broke 80 when Gary was present, Gary would pay the beneficiary \$35. Gary lost \$70 for the year. The "Bet" continues until someone cries, "Uncle."

Home & Away Rounds Report for Hosts

Mike, David, Bernie, Victor, Stan and Alan were the Tour Hosts in 2013. Golf Central tracks their home and away rounds.

Larry, Marc, Marshall, Steve, Joe, Bob S, Bob J, Bruce and Gary, are cash players. Note: the first five are former hosts; all but Gary and Larry have some access to a private course, but are cash players for varying reasons.

Beginning in late 2013, guest fees (for the cash players) were capped at \$80, up from \$75.

After decreasing by 30% in 2012, (fewer hosts, more cash players), the number of hosting rounds held steady in 2013.

The attached spreadsheet, "2013 Annual Golf Stats.xls" details the number of guests playing at a host's home club -Vs- the number of times that member played at other host's clubs. There is a summary for 2013 and a summary for all 18 years combined. Mike has a large credit and Stan a large debit, so in 2014 expect more rounds at Boca Rio and fewer rounds at Woodfield.

The home and away summary assumes cash players paid the member for their greens fees. I organized 242 groups. A Tour round is any round where two or more Tour members in the same foursome wager some money against one another, whether in Florida or elsewhere. Not counting non-Tour members, 888 Tour rounds were played in 2013, a modest increase from the 845 rounds played in 2012 and the 727 played in 2011.

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

[See below](#)

M.I.G.A. Winners:**Tour Leaders:**

	1996 Others	123
	1997 John Lewis	*247
	1998 Lee Rautenberg	*448
	1999 Barnet Shenkin	403
	2000 John Lewis	440
2001 Drew Casen	2001 John Lewis	*459
2002 John Griscom	2002 John Lewis	*712
2003 Mike Becker	2003 John Griscom	597
2004 Marc Culberson	2004 Marc Culberson	*834
2005 No One	2005 Stan Tulin	427
2006 Joe Machotka	2006 Joe Machotka	702
2007 Larry Cohen	2007 Larry Cohen	581
2008 No One	2008 David Berkowitz	*1041
2009 Gary Cohler	2009 Mike Becker	736
2010 Victor Markowicz	2010 David Berkowitz	739
2011 Gary Cohler	2011 David Berkowitz	*1455
2012 Gary Cohler*	2012 Gary Cohler	831
2013 Mike Becker	2013 Mike Becker	1175

* = record

Golf swings on U-Tube:

Becker: <http://youtu.be/7BxbndIYbas>

Berkowitz: http://youtu.be/Yl_hmnqwZ9o

Cohen: <http://youtu.be/lhQvUhRar5A>

Cohler(2): trap: <http://youtu.be/e8wZyww94IU> and <http://youtu.be/X3UejmssZA0>

Hall: http://youtu.be/lkBziyacx_g

Markowitz (2): <http://youtu.be/GU0Ye3btuNA> and <http://youtu.be/PbOrqxqpbrU>

Sartorious: <http://youtu.be/fr1olGIR8wo>

Tulin: <http://youtu.be/yrDtqxNXAx4>