

South Florida Bridge Player's Golf Tour

2020 Annual Report

Membership & Demographics

John Griscom passed away at age 90. John played on the Tour from 2001-2011, won the M.I.G.A. 2003, and was the Tour leader in 2002. John shot his age several times, and one under his age at age 73. Aside from his great skill as a golfer, (he was a scratch golfer in his youth), John's memory lives on whenever anyone parks their golf cart 30 yards away from where it should be parked. We remember him as well as the other lost Tour members, Marshall Hall, Russ Ekeblad and Mark Molson.

Tour membership increased. Late in the year, we welcomed Mark Kohn, a Stonebridge Member, Arthur Loring, a High Ridge member, and Ranald Davidson. Arthur and Ranald have been given their own columns in the Tour spreadsheet. Jeff Wolfson became a golf member at Woodfield. Jeff, 8th in line, was wait-listed for a year. Now the wait list is in the 30's. Most clubs have a surplus of golf memberships.

The Commissioner, with consultation from Larry, agreed to admit as a Tour member, (that is, add a column in the Tour spreadsheet), a golfer who plays at least 15 Tour rounds in a calendar year (with no M.I.G.A. voting rights attached). This will provide Larry and his Utah buddies with more golf enjoyment.

Time and Distance:

- Mike B continued to move up tee boxes on a few more courses, taking Bob J, Victor and sometimes David with him. On rounds when Alan, Mike M, Steve, Bob S (and sometimes others), play with the "short" people, there is a 1,000-yard disparity between tees. On occasion, Mike B has given shots to all of them.

The Health and Wellness Section:

- Alan had emergency surgery for a thoracic aneurysm in late October, survived, but will take 5 or so months to recover.
- During the pandemic, Gary continued his physical therapy regimen of bending a short rubber rod -- 3 reps of 10. But, with some free time, he did hundreds of reps instead. Regularly. He strengthened his arms and shoulder... Gary has a full rotator cuff tear. He will try to play through the season and is likely to have surgery next summer. In a "developing" story, he also had a bum knee.
- Gary had successful bladder surgery. He was out of golf from 9/28 to 11/23, and on his return, took several rounds to re-perfect his swing.
- Bob J had lingering cancer problems which look to be OK now. Feeling better, he returned to playing \$10-\$10-\$20 in the sixes.
- Mike M took up tennis with wife Barbie over the summer and while playing, injured his foot in the Fall (season). He was not the same for the rest of the year. He tried playing golf in a boot in December and shot an 86! He'll be out of action at least another month. The good news is that his dizziness is gone.

Of War and Peace:

- Aided by single-rider carts, David and Gary resumed playing together. "Joy to the world."

Of Courses

- In March, the Covid-19 virus closed the country clubs, public and private golf courses. There were no Tour foursome rounds between March 23rd and May 17th. When the country club courses reopened there were restrictions on guest play that caused the Tour to “go public.” Eventually, guests were allowed at Seagate, Boca Rio and The Falls (all late May), Wycliffe and High Ridge (early July), and Stonebridge (mid-September). Alan, a “big macher,” at High ridge, gained permission for the Tour to play out-of-season rounds at High Ridge even if he was not in the group. 33 rounds were played there from July until mid-October. Summer rates were \$85, but all the Tour members were happy to pay the price. In late October, High Ridge reversed its guest policy, followed by Wycliffe in mid-November, but the other courses above still allowed guests.
- Reopened courses adopted a single rider golf cart policy. While rounds became less intimate they also became a lot shorter.
6/1 Gary and Larry played 18 holes in 1:50.
At The Falls: Victor, Mike, Larry and David played in 3:20 with Larry walking with a pushcart with a dead battery; Arthur, Larry, Bob J and Victor, played in 3:10; Larry, Bob J, Gary and Bruce played in 3:05. Larry, Bob J, Gary Yossi played in 3:00,* a record. Alas, the record gets an asterisk, as the two-cart record is 3:06 played by Larry, Bob J, Gary and Steve at Seagate in 2016.
- Bob S gave up his Ibis membership and in November, joined The Eastpointe Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens. Ibis’s policies were making it difficult for him, as an outside member, to play in golf games with his full-member buddies. Eastpointe has two courses.
- Mike M gave up his Wycliffe rental and bought a home there.
- The Falls, whose golf director plays bridge, graciously waived all guest limit rules.
- David reported that in-season guest restrictions at Stonebridge were eased.
- The 2020 Utah Golf Championships were held from September 1-8. Not as many players made the journey this year. Gary, Larry, Bruce, Mark Kohn, Eric Robinson, Mike Berkowitz and Howie Weinstein attended, along with Bob Freer, a “local” player from Tucson, AZ. Gary and Larry did well. Bruce, who arrived with a 6.4 index did not. Gary won the Utah championship—a big change from his usual last-place finish. We hope to have a longer/bigger 2021 Utah tour.
- Howie and significant other, Carol, are building a home in Heber (near Park City). Larry and Maria are looking.
- Woodfield closed for a \$9,000,000 course-lift by Kipp Schulties, the same architect that did High Ridge and Stonebridge. The course closed March 15th (well- timed for the pandemic). When it reopened on December 19th, it was cart paths only for two months and guests were restricted due to Covid-19. We look forward to playing the “new” course, but not until at least late February.

Financial Report – Tour Money

The Top

After some jostling between Marc, Gary, Larry, David and Bob S, David emerged as the pre-pandemic Tour Leader. Upon resumption of play in May, Larry passed him with +\$571. Larry cruised to leading David by \$1,000 on December 10th. But Larry had lowered his index and started slumping (bad combo), and by December 25th, Larry was merely \$323 ahead of

David. They met at the Falls on December 26th in the first of three face to face rounds until year end. Larry shot one of his best rounds of the year, an 80, and picked up \$260 on David. He proclaimed the Tour race was over. But...David won it back and then some in their next face-off when they both shot 82. Then Larry lost \$40 without David playing and David won \$155 without Larry playing. On December 31st, Larry led by only \$123. The met at The Falls. Hundreds of birds came out to watch.

[Dialing back to 2016, Gary picked up \$285 on December 31st to lose the Tour leader race to Mike B by \$9 when David missed a three-foot putt on the last putt of the year.]

David and Larry would play against each other in the first two matches. The first match was tied (where the low score was 3 net birdies and three pars), but David led Larry 1-3-1 in the private. David would need a big win in the second match and pile on his lead in his private match with Larry. It was not to be - after four holes, David was mathematically eliminated. Congratulations to Larry, who finished the year +\$1,581. Larry's record setting total of +\$2,129 in 2017 was never breached, although he was +\$1,996 with three weeks to go.

The Bottom

On the downside, after the usual meaningless shuffling, by the time the pandemic shut down golf, Gary had a bear grip on the bottom and went into hibernation at -\$595. When play resumed, Gary remained on the bottom until Bob J passed him at -\$624 in late September. [Meanwhile...Victor, a perennial contender for the Tour bottom, had been plus since January 27th. On October 6th, he shot an 82, reaching his high of + \$385. His index dropped and he drooped. By the end of October, he was minus, again.] Gary, out of shape after his return from surgery, dove beneath Bob J in late November and on December 4th Gary was down -\$1,327, and Victor was next up at -\$679. While Victor continued to play consistently poor golf, Gary, returning to form, rallied with some big wins. On December 19th, Vic completed his long journey to the bottom, by only a tad. Then Gary sunk below Victor and Victor below Gary. It came down to the last day, with Vic on the bottom, trailing by \$7. At Stonebridge, after 16 holes Vic was up \$10 for the day (ahead of Gary by \$3). He and Bob S needed to tie the final two holes against Mike and David. Vic had a shot on each hole, but David and Mike had a ½ shot on 17. David and Mike won both holes with pars, so Vic captured the Tour Bottom for the 8th time in 20 years of Tour play.

Gary had the most volatility, as usual. In 4 consecutive rounds in Utah, Gary won a total of \$775. Later in the year he won a record \$360 in one round. And he had rounds where he won \$300, \$260, \$225 and \$215 as well. But then there were more than a few bad rounds. Gary's difficulties stemmed from health problems (described above). But some of his losses can be attributed to his, "I press alone, all by myself..." philosophy, where he presses, regardless of how he or his partner are playing or stroke anomalies.

2020 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 2020 than in 2019? 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 four times."

There were several candidates for the M.I.G.A.

Larry (11.7 to 10.1) lowered his index three points over the last two months of the year. Larry hits the ball longer and straighter than ever, rivalling all but Alan and Mike M in distance. He is one of the best chippers on the tour...At year end, his index touched 9.9 with the eight

rounds of 82 or lower. Larry does not remember if 9.9 is new territory. The archivist can state he hasn't been in single digits in the last 5 years.

David (17.2-16.0) returned to good form down the stretch. His drives had their former length, and his approach shots from all distances were on target. Remarkably, he lowered his index from 20.6 on September 16th to 16.0 at year end.

Bruce (8.8 to 8.7) - you may not have noticed, but Bruce briefly had a 6.4 index (in time to go to Utah and get crushed). For someone whose index has been between 8 and 10 for five years, getting to a 6.4 is awesome.

Victor (26.9-26.8) reduced his index briefly to 20.3 (see above), his lowest index in recorded indexes (5 years). Had the year ended on October 6th, he would have been the clear MIGA winner. Anyone whose index can even temporarily reach "new" ground deserves mention.

Bob J (21.3 to 22.8) got 1/2 a vote. He gets a one liner. He did shoot a 91 on December 31st.

Ineligible honorable mentions:

Jeff got a GHIN number in January and after a few rounds, his index became official at 22.0. He took some lessons and finished the year as a 16.1. Down 5.1! Inch for inch, there's no one who hits the ball further. He's taking more lessons. When he begins to play regularly, his index will drop even further.

Alan (9.4 to 6.8). Alan's Tour lifetime low is 6.3, but 6.8 is worth a mention, especially since he lowered his index by 2.6.

The Vote: Larry 8.5, Bob J 0.5, No One 1.0 All the Electors have recognized Larry's improvement. (Larry voted for No One.) Congratulations to Larry on winning his 3rd M.I.G.A.

The News of the Year in Review

- Victor started the year with birdies on his first two holes! (#1 and 2 at the New Course – tough holes)
- Bob S recorded two (off Tour) eagles in the first two weeks of January.
- 2/3 Victor apparently won the annual short drive contest, notching 19 inches.
- 2/21, Jeff's greenside bunker shot was weak and short, but his ball hits a sprinkler head next to the trap and rolls to 2 inches to a middle-of-the-green pin.
- 2/24 The Falls. Gary and Larry have an under 80 bet. If Gary under 80, Larry pays Gary \$225; If Larry under 80, Gary pays Larry \$50. On this day, Gary offered to double the bet. So, Larry shot a 79 and won \$100. The spontaneous offer of Gary's is reminiscent of the time Larry once gave Gary \$500 to \$5 that he would not break 90 (this was in 2012), and Gary shot an 84, bettering his Tour best by an incredible **SIX** shots. Larry's side bet still stands as the worst side bet ever made on the Tour.
- 2/27 Scratch 2/3 above. Victor swung and missed off the tee; Then 5/28 Gary did the same.
- 5/21 "The Long Distance Club." No, this is not about long hitters. GCC Legend #6, 165 yards. Gary, hands sweaty, takes his usual mighty swing on the tee and the golf club travels 100 yards into the middle of the lake. Completely irretrievable. Hopefully, a golf ball diver will retrieve his beloved rescue 5.
- 6/12 Victor scored a 2 and 9 consecutively. The latter hole was more difficult. Same round: Mike hit driver, putter, 7 wood. How can that be? It was # 8 at Park Ridge, where after a good drive, Mike had to lay up and putted 45 yards to the edge of the fairway.
- 7/2 Wycliffe, holes 13-18. Vic's index is a Tour record 27.8. Vic, playing 900 yards up from Bob S and Mike M, is still getting 5.5 shots from Bob S. His gross scores: bogey, par, double bogey, birdie (getting ½), eagle, par. 4.5 under par net. The birdie, getting a half shot, was last done also by Vic in 2017, was termed a beagle by Mike M,

(although Vic spells it, “bigel.” You need a high index to score one of these. Also, the eagle was a net albatross (first ever on Tour). This is the story of the year.

- 7/28 High Ridge. “Nothing but net shot.” Mike B birdied #3 by sinking his 69-yard flop. This is only the second “swisher” on the Tour. (Stan’s screaming low line drive at Boca Rio was the first and the best).
- 9/6 High Ridge Mike B shot a 77 at High Ridge from the Green Tees. 5289 yards - 66.7/126. One over his age. He did shoot a 75 at age 74 from real tees, but that was on a par 71).
- 10/6 High Ridge Victor, index 23.1, shot an 82 from the Green, 5289-yard tees, his lowest Tour round ever. It included a back nine 37 with 11 putts. The round lowered his index to 20.3 (down 2.8!). (In his previous life, he had a couple of 84’s from the white tees at BSOC, certainly a better performance.)
- 10/27 Seagate. Hole 10, 392 yards. Larry’s “short” drive left him 205 to go to a way-back pin. He crushed his three wood and thought it rolled through the green. Larry has the best eyes on the Tour. He could not find the ball and eventually looked in the hole. There it was! He was getting a stroke (from Mike B!), so he scored a 2 for 1! Another net albatross (Vic had the Tour’s first one – see above).
- 10/30 The Falls. Vic’s shot to the green from 80 yards traveled three feet up and landed two feet...behind where it started! A REHLOC! For the newbies, a relhoC, (Cohler spelled backwards), is a stroke where the ball winds up behind where it started without hitting another object. This is the first relhoC since 2016!
- 11/22 Westchester. A “two-carter:” Victor had an impossible 110 yard shot to the green with trees requiring a low shot, water and then a bunker guarding the green. He swung his 11 wood and...struck a tree trunk followed by two of our carts. The ball rested close to where it started.
- 12/3 Stonebridge. David, index 19.7, shot a 79 from the green-white tees (5644 yards), his first below 80 round in at least four years. The round lowered his index by 1.9 (see 10/6, where Vic lowered his index by 2.8). I predict no one will ever play a round that lowers their index by more in absolute terms or percentage terms.
- Victor lost only one range finder in 2020.

Sixes and Private Match Highlights:

1/30 BSOC New Course. Holes 1-6. From Tee #4, Mike B, index 15, shot one under par gross and tied his sixes match.

5/31 After shooting 103, his worst round of the century, Mike’s next round yielded a new Zip Code, playing against Victor: +7 +5 +3 +1 -1 is the Zip Code of Puebla, Mexico.

9/3 Utah Tour. Gary shot an 83 at Glenwild, while the others shot 89-91-91, and he was getting strokes from all the others. Gary won a record \$360, winning \$150 in the sixes and the rest in privates against Larry, Bruce and Eric. The previous Tour money record was \$320 held by him and one other.

9/29 High Ridge Bruce 6.8, Bob S 6.8, Alan 8.5 and Mike B 13.5. Mike B played Green, 1100 yards shorter than the other three, playing white. The Tour Stokes calculator had Alan and Mike getting ½ per 6 from Bruce and Bob S. Has a group ever been closer to zero shots than that?

11/20 The Falls. Victor made a 60-foot \$60 dollar putt in a sixes match. This is either alliteration or a sign of the devil.

Schneider #21

2/18 Seagate – Larry-Steve Vs Neil Yossi Holes 7-12.

Larry and Steve won three holes each...as opponents in first match. Now they are partners. On 7-12, the best they can muster is a net ½ over par and 5 net bogeys. Neil pars all six holes, with 5 up and downs and a two putt – all from >50 feet from the pin! Yossi does not factor on any hole. So this is the Tour's first "solo" Schneider -- he would have won a Schneider playing with any of the other three golfers!

Schneider #22

8/5 Tuhaye Holes 7-12.

Mike Berkowitz, playing with Eric, "solo" Schneidered Larry and Howie. Mike was one under par net. Two keyholes: Larry's par lost to lost to Mike's net birdie; Larry missed a short putt that would have tied a hole. The stakes were only \$5-\$5-\$10, so the result was only \$60 -- lowest Schneider in dollars since 2015, when Mike Mancini lost a Schneider (#10) in his first round with the Tour.

Schneider #23

12/8 The Falls – Gary-Larry Vs Mike B-Yossi Holes 1-6

Larry and Gary were 3.5 under net on holes 2 thru 5 and won the first hole with a bogey and the last with a double bogey. Perhaps the first time a Schneider winner won a hole with a double bogey. Key holes: Yossi missed a 3-foot birdie putt to tie #5 and Mike put his shot to the green in the water when a more careful shot would have assured a tie on #6.

Rounds Report

Tour in-season guest fees were increased to a \$110 cap in November.

The "2020 Annual Golf Stats.xls" spreadsheet, like the 2018 and 2019 spreadsheets, will be delayed until the Golf Central back office has upgraded its spreadsheet program. Bob S is in the 23rd hour of the project.

A Tour round is any assemblage where two or more Tour members in the same group wager some money against one another, whether in Florida or elsewhere. 238 Tour groups were assembled in 2020, a decrease of only 16 from 254 in 2019. Similarly, not counting non-Tour members ("Others"), 880 Tour rounds were played in 2020, down from 953 in 2019. About 54 days were lost to the pandemic. If rounds or groups played were measured on a per-day basis, this would have been the busiest year ever.

The largest changes in rounds played Vs 2019: Bob J +22, Bruce +20, Victor +19, Howard - sadly, -41 (pandemic related). Mike B played the most rounds, 120.

Scheduling

In December, the Tour began posting the week's schedule thru "Constant Contact," and Larry's website. Mike continued to schedule the week's rounds, but updates on player changes, tee times, courses, etc. were posted on the "Larry Link." Mike stopped sending out updates. Also on the link were Tour standings, day to day play records, and annual reports. Look for more material to be added in 2021.

See the next two pages for some stats. The annual Golf Stats.xls will eventually follow.

Wishing you all a Happy and healthy New Year!

Mike

Below are some stats.

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
2014	Gary Cohler	2014	Bob Sartorius	*1526
2015	No One	2015	David Berkowitz	1353
2016	No One	2016	Mike Becker	1008
2017	Larry Cohen	2017	Larry Cohen	*2129
2018	Victor Markowicz	2018	David Berkowitz	1707
2019	No One	2019	Mike Becker	1921
2020	Larry Cohen	2020	Larry Cohen	1581

* Record

Here's a recap of Tour indexes for the year, up (+) and down (-):

		Change	1-Jan	31-Dec	Low	High
Mike	Becker	0.3	16.1	16.4	12.7	17.7
David	Berkowitz	-1.2	17.2	16	16	20.6
Neil	Chambers	1.8	8.1	9.9	7.5	9.9
Larry	Cohen	-1.5	11.6	10.1	9.9	14.2
Gary	Cohler	0.5	14.4	14.9	12.7	18
Marc	Culberson	-0.3	22.7	22.4	21.9	23.4
Yossi	Ende	-1.4	11.8	10.4	10.3	12.1
Bob	Jones	1.5	21.3	22.8	21	24.2
Mike	Mancini	-0.1	7.5	7.4	7.1	9.8
Victor	Markowicz	-0.1	26.9	26.8	20.3	27.9

Alan	Osofsky	-2.4	9.2	6.8	6.8	9.5
Howard	Perlman	3.7	15.9	19.6	15.5	19.6
Bruce	Rogoff	-0.1	8.8	8.7	6.4	9.7
Steve	Sanborn	0.6	11.4	12	9.9	12
Bob	Sartorius	2.2	6.4	8.6	5.9	9.3
Stan	Tulin	1.4	21.1	22.5	21.1	24.6
Jeff	Wolfson	-5.9	22	16.1	16.1	22

	Money	AVE/Rd	Rounds
Larry	1581	13.63	116
Dave	1308	16.99	77
Neil	509	16.97	30
Bob S	355	7.10	50
Yossi	257	7.14	36
Marc	231	25.67	9
Mike B	195	1.63	120
Eric	120	12.00	10
Jeff	5	0.24	21
Alan	-2	-0.12	17
Steve	-54	-5.40	10
Howie	-220	-24.44	9
Howard	-230	-7.67	30
Bruce	-234	-6.32	37
Mike M	-513	-11.66	44
Bob J	-688	-8.71	79
Others	-769	-12.82	60
Gary	-902	-11.56	78
Victor	-949	-8.87	107
	0		940