

South Florida Bridge Player's Golf Tour

2004 Annual Report

January 1, 2005

Home & Away Rounds Report

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 2004 and a summary for all seven years combined.

In 2004, there were 703 recorded rounds, down from 777 the year before. The home and away summary assumes "others" (non-members) paid the member for their greens fees. I included 29 groups that I did not play in. If you reported your round, I recorded your round.

Counting all years, I owe 12.5 rounds and Larry has a credit of 10 rounds, but the rest of the group is pretty flat.

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 we wind up paying our home guest fee rates when we play at other courses. For example, in season, when Neil hosts Larry at Coral Ridge, Neil pays \$125 for Larry. When Larry hosts Neil at Boca Greens, Larry pays \$58 for Neil. But who would want to play Coral Ridge and pay \$125? This is "rub of the greens fees."

Membership

Sad to say, Lee Rautenberg and Neil Silverman played nary a round last year (see 2004 Player Summaries).

Stan Tulin joined our group and put Addison Reserve (and occasionally Boca Rio) on our tour. Stan is a year or so away from retirement and playing a significant number of rounds in Florida.

Also, next fall, David Berkowitz is expected to move to our area, perhaps with a membership at another nearby club.

Financial Report

Marc Culberson and Mike Becker battled the last six months of the year for the top of the 2004 money list. The race was determined when Culberson picked up \$263 on Becker in two head to head rounds in mid-December. Culberson's +\$834 (167 - \$5 bets) broke John Lewis's record of +\$712 set in 2002.

As far as the 2004 betting went, I kept track of money gained or lost, which speaks for itself. Our thanks go to several people who did not take as many strokes as they deserve. Where would the winners be without these underperformers?

Enclosed are the betting results since I moved to FL in 1996 and your money performance at particular clubs over the last four years. Except for Marc and Larry who are big winners at their home courses, it appears random where golfers win and lose.

If anyone is interested, it would be my pleasure to provide (by fax or downloadable e-mail) the round by round records used to generate the home and away records and the money results, for 2004 or since 1996.

2004 M.I.G.A.

Larry was the Supervisor of Elections. After consultation with others, Larry nominated three candidates, Barnet, Marc and Mike. Tour members who played 25 or more tour rounds were deemed voters: Barnet, Bernie, Bob, John G, John L, Larry, Marc C, Marshall, Mike. All nine were required to vote, but nominees could not vote for themselves. Voters could split their votes. Larry would announce only the winner, but not the vote totals.

The Electors received an emailed ballot containing the following information:

...The MIGA is supposed to be given to the Most Improved Golfer, of course. You may or may not wish to include the stats below in considering your vote:

Barnet +\$6.86 per round, +\$302, 43 rounds

Marc +\$11.19 per round, +\$834*, 74.5 rounds

Mike +\$3.43 per round, +\$539, 157* rounds

* = record

Barnet has taken about 3.5 strokes off his game, due to a new set of clubs and more frequent play (he often played with Maggie thru a summer membership at Boca CC.)

Marc C finished the year playing Mike even in their private matches. Marc has taken about 2 strokes off his score. His +\$834 finish beats John L's previous annual record of +\$712.

Mike averaged 86.5, 0.5 strokes better than last year, and finished the year with a personal best 8.3 HCP. Mike averaged three rounds a week, a tour record.

--End of email to the Electorate--

The voting took less than 24 hours, which is less time that it takes for Mike to receive his golf-next-week emails. Barnet was at sea, but it turns out his vote wasn't needed (regardless of his vote, the outcome was determined). ...The 2004 MIGA goes to...Marc Culberson. This is the first time the MIGA went to the actual tour money leader.

Comment from Mike:

In a golf group where as many players improve as "de-prove", Mark and Barnet led the pack on the "im-" side. I was hoping Barnet would win, so he wouldn't whine as much when we discuss strokes, but Marc deserves the award. In the foursomes he played with me, he consistently crushed me. He has the best swing on the tour, and has no weaknesses.

Happy New Year!

Mike (assisted by Larry)

The Great Organizer

Encl:

2004 Player Summaries - below

Spreadsheet on Home and Away Report and Financial Reports (2 pages)

2004 Player Summaries

By John Griscom

(edited/modified by Mike Becker, Larry Cohen)

The Roman God Janus of the New Year has two faces — one looking backward and one looking forward. So too does the annual report with these short summaries of the major players in the South Florida bridge players golf tour.

Mike Becker. Despite a hamstring tear, sporadic shoulder problem, and an unwelcome visit by “shanks incorporated,” he had a banner year with many rounds in the low 80’s and a few high 70’s. His drives avoid the rough with an enviable passion and his up-and-down game has gotten the envy of all. He has been near the tour money lead throughout the year, his handicap has settled into the 8-10 area, and his excellent play should continue into 2005. Nominated the 2004 MIGA.

Larry Cohen. He’s finally brought his inside swing to a more straight back take back that leaves him 30-40 yards ahead of the pack off the tee in the fairway. His handicap is trending lower and he uses fewer golf balls per round. Only the 10-day cruises and Nationals dampen his consistency some when he returns. The group can only hope the ACBL decides to have more Nationals and the oceans beckon him to protect us from lower and lower scores.

Marc Culberson. A new consistency in all phases of the game has propelled Marc to the top of the tour leader race for most money won. Fewer strokes for him plus keeping him down at Weston give the rest of the group some protection from his improving game. Always fair and a no-nonsense attitude make him an ideal partner. Nominated the 2004 MIGA.

Russ Ekeblad. A snowbird who is among the group’s most talented players, capable of hitting as long and straight as anyone, he should have a single digit handicap, but has played less than 10 tour rounds in the past two years. Needs more tour time.

John Griscom. His years are inching up as well as his scores, but he still **shot three under his age** this year in an “unconscious moment” at Boca Greens. Now 75, he is appointing Mike as his surrogate partner to garner 75 this year. Working some and practicing less will challenge him to keep pace with all the improving players. At present he gets strokes only from John Lewis, but things could change.

Marshall Hall. He spent the year building a house which resulted in fewer rounds, frequent cancellations and more cell phone-distracting calls than bogeys and pars. Losing 100 pounds also left him in the best physical shape in years. A new set of lessons makes the “incredible shrinking man” the dark horse for 2005.

Bob Jones. He’s hitting his drives straighter, though shorter, and his chipping rivals Mike’s. We suspect he’s gone to Dave Pelz’s short game school instead of teaching his bridge classes. Bob is against giving a putt to someone out of the hole to avoid his giving his partner “the line,” but his argument is somewhat weakened by the fact that most of us can’t putt it straight even when we presumably know “the line.” We see even better golf by Bob in 2005 and getting fewer stokes than he thinks he merits [skill has its price].

John Lewis. Rounding into shape after suffering pneumonia, hypertension, atrial fibrillation, and a stress injury to his ankle ligaments gave him the “sick trophy of the year” despite stiff competition

from perennially musculoskeletal injuries to Becker and Cohen. He's in the 70's again, threatening to go lower. He's also the best and most frequent "small bet" expert in the group.

Joe Machotka. Joy's illness and Chicago visits limited his playing, but he remains one of the best on tour. When his drives have that slight hook, he leaves everyone in its wake (except Larry and John Lewis). Only if he misses a few putts can we deal with him. We see low scores for Joe when life settles down and Joy continues her improvement.

Victor Markowicz. Snowbirding makes Victor a sporadic, but favorite player in the group. Agreeable to any stroke arrangement, he takes on all comers. He's never met a press he didn't like. Recently improved driving and putting bode well for 2005.

Bernie Miller. Only his chipping keeps him from consistently being in the 80's. But this will get better in 2005. A recent 83 with 10.5 strokes for the round make him a most desirable partner. If you don't win your "six" with Bernie or Barnet as your partner, watch out!

Mark Molson. Perhaps subject to the widest extremes as anyone but getting more consistent and very capable of consistently breaking 80. One of the best recoverers from trouble (and he can get into it), plus an excellent seldom-miss putter, Mark is never out of any hole. He has sped up his pace and now can hit an occasional bad shot in almost the same time as the rest of us.

Lee Rautenberg. With a broken arm and shattered index finger, Lee has spent the entire year dealing with a larger ball, where high scores are better. He's on the senior bowling tour and enjoying it and hasn't decided when to dust off his clubs and start playing the mini-ball game again. He is missed and we expect an eventual return to the ranks.

Barnet Shenkin. Finally parting with some Scottish cash, he bought new irons and a Cleveland 460 driver — proving that equipment can make a difference. If he continues improved play, the group will soon have paid for Barnet's new clubs. Better in all phases, he will have to give up some of his strokes soon. Nominated the 2004 MIGA.

Neil Silverman. A torn shoulder kept Neil off the tour the entire year. Surgery over the late summer was followed by a longer recovery than expected. Neil may return to golf in the early spring, but the single digit handicap he had before his injury may take longer to achieve.

Stan Tulin. A snowbird and the newest member of the tour, Stan hits the ball straight as a dart, but can't reach most par fours in regulation, so his short game gets lots of practice and is close to perfect. He's Mike Becker three years ago. When he starts hitting the ball longer, strokes will disappear from his scorecard.