

# MGA Newsletter



Coto de Caza  
Golf & Racquet Club

August 2008

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## Steve Schamun and Vince McCowin beat odds ... ... win 2008 Presidents' Cup!



Two of the toughest tournaments on the MGA Tour are the two President Cups, individual and doubles. They are kind of stealth tournaments as they take over 6 months each to play with singles usually spilling over to the following year. Well, time to redress this and give some "props" to the two guys who got the job done this year.

The 2008 President's Cup winners are Steve Schamun and Vince McCowin. Given the teams they beat in the final stages, one could say that they were surprise winners but more generously....giant killers.

In the semi final they beat the possible tournament favorites, Steve Gormly and Bob

Wray.....and this was a war! They were 3 down after 13 on the North Course...a lost cause?? No way! They win 4 holes in a row and are 1 up going down 18 with both stroking. However a solid birdie by Gormly takes the match into extra time. On the 20<sup>th</sup> hole their strokes finally give them the edge and they head for a final showdown against Larry Hickey and Tim Aspel. Outside observers would say that they would have minimal chance. Hickey has been the 'go to" guy over the last few years in team play and Aspel won the President's Cup singles two years back. But who cares for reputations. Steve and Vince brought their A game and just smashed their opposition....it was all over by the 12<sup>th</sup> hole! **Super stuff!**

## 2008 MGA Tour

We are into the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year now with all to play for. There are 3 Saturday events (Best of Buddies, Lone Wolf and the Triple Play formats) and a major, the 'Fall Stampede' still to come plus the results of the President's Cup Individual event (400-500 points still up for grabs!). The President's Cup Doubles points are not included.

To qualify for this year's finale you'll need to hit 350 points (Cut points: 2007 = 357, 2006 = 364. Winning points: 2007 = 726, 2006 = 695). The guys in the lower half cannot afford to relax and better keep participating and, more importantly, winning. Last year 5 players dropped out of the Top 24 after the Fall Stampede so it's far from over....the fat lady ain't even warming up the vocal chords yet, so get involved!

<b>MGA Tour 2008 Leader Board</b>					
1	Schrier, Eric	466	17	Hickey, Ron	222
2	Olsen, Ted	438	18	Reese, Craig	222
3	Heath, Clark	412	19	Lim, Sean	220
4	Bittick, Jason	360	20	Skenderian Jay	212
5	Contrucci, Rick	341	21	Retoske, Denis	210
6	Schamun, Steve	308	22	Berlin, Scott	200
7	Thomson, Tom	306	23	Maestri, Jim	200
8	McCalla, Lonny	298	24	Pena, Bill	200
9	Stoddard, Scott	286	25	Gormly, Steve	190
10	Aspel, Tim	280	26	McCowin, Vince	190
11	Huber, Dave	280	27	Frederick, Frank	188
12	DePatie, Gene	262	28	Griffith, Mark	186
13	Marsala, Guy	250	29	Peterson, Greg	186
14	Hickey, Larry	240	30	Butler, Jeff	185
15	Champlain, Jay	226	31	Allen, Roland	182
16	Mulhauser, Richard	226	32	Skubic, Lou	180

Following Troy's departure, the MGA Tour Committee did a complete review of points to date. There were several discrepancies which have now been fixed. At the time of going to press we did not have the President's Cup Doubles sheets available **so these points still have to be added**. Once added the known movers in this list are Schamun +130 points, Aspel + 105 points, L. Hickey +105 points, Gormly +75 points. For others add 10 points for every round you won and you will have a feel for where you stand once adjusted.

## MGA Tour 2008 Top 100

33	Toth, Steve	170		67	Kiesel, Mark	120
34	Varo, Bob	165		68	Word, John	120
35	Steele, Mike	162		69	Johnson, Richard	116
36	Akers, Jim	161		70	Abbey, Brandon	115
37	Graham, Steve	160		71	Feld, Rick	110
38	Hayes, Gary	160		72	Gauntner, Bob	110
39	Chapman, Mike	155		73	Trausch, Tom	110
40	Koz, Robert	155		74	Uematsu, Greg	110
41	Jones, John	152		75	Chadwell, Tom	100
42	Senick, John	150		76	Hardy, Ray	100
43	Vonsalzen, Kirk	150		77	Lynch, Richard	100
44	Weiss, Dennis	150		78	Akin, Chris	96
45	Peck, Stuart	144		79	Almquist, Scott	96
46	Owens, Tim	141		80	Hackett, John	96
47	Heino, Gene	140		81	Kovacs, Bob	96
48	Humphrey, Terry	140		82	Moses, Jack	96
49	Lane, Tom	140		83	Murtaugh, Bill	96
50	Castner, Mike	136		84	McEwen, Dave	92
51	Chen, James	130		85	Bennett, Ron	90
52	Donohue, John	130		86	Flucht, Dave	90
53	Gonzales, Larry	130		87	Forkner, Randy	90
54	Hannigan, Marty	130		88	Huffman, Dave	82
55	Hong, Chuck	130		89	Roth, Pete	82
56	Maconachy, Drew	130		90	Tanaka, Roy	82
57	Males, Jim	130		91	Wuerth, Mike	82
58	Scholey, Lee	130		92	Cain, Guy	80
59	Summers, Scott	130		93	Coate, Chris	80
60	Woods, Rick	130		94	Deustster Bob	80
61	Chaney, John	127		95	Grover, Kent	80
62	Burke, Ray	125		96	Hoffman, Rob	80
63	Joynt, Don	125		97	Hubbell, Richard	80
64	Rodie, Don	125		98	Kelly, Joe	80
65	Carroll, Scott	122		99	Kron, Micheal	80
66	DelaMotte, Ernie	120		100	Turner, Bob	80



## *Off the Ranch (Part I)*

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Normally “Off the Ranch” covers trips to other parts of the world or favorite holes but this time we have something special to report. It involves two of the best players at Coto and their super success in recent SCGA events. Both were in great form; the former, Jason Bittick, having just recently been crowned Coto Club Champion for the first time and the latter, Clark Heath, a former Club Champion, who also had a strong championship.

Firstly Jason’s triumph (report from the SCGA) in one of the toughest formats in golf!

SANTA BARBARA, March 14 -- John Adams and Jason Bittick rode two golf cliches – “pars win foursomes tournaments” and “horses for courses” -- to a seven-shot victory in the 6th SCGA Foursomes Championship today at Rancho San Marcos Golf Course.

The 41-year-old Adams and his 40-year-old partner finished with rounds of 72-70 -- 142, even par in the challenging alternate-shot format over the Robert Trent Jones, Jr.-designed layout that was buffeted by strong winds for a second consecutive day. They ran away from Bob Carver of Fullerton and Brian Edick of Valencia, who were tied for the lead heading into the final round but slipped to a 6-over-par 77 today.

“We used the same plan as yesterday and it worked,” said Bittick after securing his first SCGA championship. “The course set up perfectly for us in this alternate-shot format. If we could hit every green in regulation, John would end up having 12 of the birdie putts, including eight of nine on the back nine. Having a partner who putts as well as John does, makes for a huge advantage in this format!”

For Adams, who also secured his first SCGA title, the two windy days harkened back to last year’s U.S. Mid-Amateur at Bandon Dunes when both he and Bittick nearly earned medalist honors.

“The greens here [at Rancho San Marcos] were more severe because strong winds are not normal,” noted Adams. “The greens at the Bandon Dunes courses were designed for the wind because it always blows up there. But essentially our strategy today was similar to what we both used at Bandon Dunes: hit it in the middle of the green and attack when we had a short iron, like a wedge, in our hand for the approach shot.”

Adams and Bittick had two birdies and a bogey on their front nine today and two birdies and two bogies on the back. “Our goal,” both said, “was not to do anything stupid, keep it below the hole on the greens, and don’t make a big number. That’s what we did both days and it worked.”



**Now for Clark's great victory. The foursomes format is brutal but what about standing tall, fighting your way to the finish, trying to close out your biggest win ever!** (Again the report from the SCGA)

CITY OF INDUSTRY, July 1 — Clark Heath of Coto de Caza almost didn't make the field for the 31st SCGA Senior Amateur Championship, but he made his first appearance in the event a memorable one by grinding out a one-shot victory today at Industry Hills Golf Club.

The 56-year-old Heath, a Continental Airlines pilot for 30 years, had to survive a two-hole playoff in a qualifying round at Shadowridge CC to get into the field. Once there, he shot 71-73 — 144, 2 over par over the challenging Zaharias Course, and finished one shot ahead of Michael Miyasaki of La Habra, who had today's best round, an even-par 71, for a two-round total of 145.

With his wife, Trish, as his caddie, Heath, a three-time club champion at Coto de Caza Golf & Racquet Club, posted three birdies on the front nine and his 2-under-par total for 27 holes had him four shots clear of the field. Then the wheels came off, as he went bogey, bogey, double bogey over the next three holes and saw his lead shrink to one. "It was a struggle out there," he admitted after the tournament was over.

With Miyasaki sitting in the clubhouse at 3 over par for the tournament, **Heath righted the ship, making three consecutive pars before knocking a wedge approach shot to within six feet of the hole on the 416-yard 16th hole and sinking the birdie putt.** "That was huge," he said later, "because it gave me a little cushion going into the last two holes."

**On the 188-yard 17th hole, Heath two-putted from 80 feet ("another turning point," he would say later), and although he made bogey 6 on the final hole, it was enough for the victory, which Heath termed his "biggest win ever."**

Miyasaki had closed to within a shot of the lead after making birdie 2 on the 179-yard 14th hole but a bogey 5 on the 16th hole turned out to be the difference. "I had my chances," he said later, "and just couldn't close the deal."

The top six finishers will be among the 16 seniors who will play in the SCGA Senior Match Play Championship August 12-14 at Sandpiper Golf Course in Santa Barbara. The "junior" portion of the event will feature 32 golfers; that list will be finalized in early August.



Given the standard of golf at Coto you would think we would have more reports like this. Let's hope that Jason and Clark have opened the gates!

**Spectacular performances!  
Well Done!**

# MGA Tour 2008

*Coming soon to a course near you.....*



## *“Best of Buddies”* (August 23, 2008)

Sign up with your “**Best Buddy**” and see if your 2 man team can beat all the teams that play every week at Coto. We’ll try and match you up with your usual Saturday group. Best ball with two balls counting on some holes. 8 shot differential in force.

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## *“Lone Wolf ”* (September 13, 2008)

Everyone plays their own ball. After the drives, one person goes Wolf and that ball counts (net) and the team chooses the best of the other 3 balls (net) per hole; so two balls count for the competition. The same player cannot go Wolf on consecutive holes. A-B-C-D Format.



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## *“Triple Play”* (October, 2007)



The popular 2 man “team” format! Sign up with a partner and see if you can handle the 3 formats.....  
**(6 Holes Best Ball, 6 Modified Chapman, 6 Scramble).**  
8 shot differential in force. If you are a new member, or your usual partner is out of town, sign up anyway!

## *The 19<sup>th</sup> Hole*

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Travel used to be fun and, to some extent exciting, especially when you were headed for a vacation; but today it is generally beyond painful and for those, like your favourite Scotsman, who does well north of 50,000 business miles a year, you just wish you had witnessed the following as it would keep you just this side of sane.....

*An award should go to the Virgin Airlines gate attendant in Sydney some months ago for being smart and funny, while making her point, when confronted with a passenger who probably deserved to fly as cargo.*

*A crowded Virgin flight was cancelled after Virgin's 767s had been withdrawn from service. A single attendant was re-booking a long line of inconvenienced travelers. Suddenly an angry passenger pushed his way to the desk. He slapped his ticket down on the counter and said, 'I HAVE to be on this flight and it HAS to be FIRST CLASS!'*

*The attendant replied, 'I'm sorry, sir. I'll be happy to try to help you, but I've got to help these people first, and I'm sure we'll be able to work something out.'*

*The passenger was unimpressed. He asked loudly, so that the passengers behind him could hear, 'DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO I AM?'*

*Without hesitating, the attendant smiled and grabbed her public address microphone: 'May I have your attention please,' she began - her voice heard clearly throughout the terminal. 'We have a passenger here at Gate 14 WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHO HE IS. If anyone can help him find his identity, please come to Gate 14.'*

*With the folks behind him in line laughing hysterically, the man glared at the Virgin attendant, gritted his teeth and said, 'F\*\*k you!'*

*Without flinching, she smiled and said, 'I'm sorry, sir, but you'll have to get in line for that too.'*

Some translations for the next one: Dole = Unemployment benefits; Liverpoolian = people from Liverpool; Toxteth = think Compton; scouse = Liverpoolian.

### **Latest News From Formula 1...**

#### **The Ferrari F1 team fired their entire pit crew yesterday!**

The announcement followed Ferrari's decision to take advantage of the British government's 'Work for your Dole' scheme and employ some Liverpoolian youngsters.

The decision to hire them was brought about by a recent documentary on how unemployed youths from Toxteth were able to remove a set of wheels in less than 6 seconds without proper equipment whereas Ferrari's existing crew could only do it in 8 seconds with millions of pounds worth of high tech equipment. It was thought to be an excellent, bold move by the Ferrari management team as most races are won and lost in the pits, giving Ferrari an advantage over every other team.

However, Ferrari got more than they bargained for! At the crew's first practice session, not only was the scouse pit crew able to change all four wheels in under 6 seconds but, within 12 seconds, they had re-sprayed, re-badged and sold the car to the McLaren team for 8 cases of Stella, a bag of weed and some photos of Catherine Zeta Jones in the shower!

**For several years, a man was having an affair with an Italian woman. One night, she confided in him that she was pregnant.**

**Not wanting to ruin his reputation or his marriage, he said he would pay her a large sum of money if she would go back to Italy to secretly have the child. If she stayed in Italy to raise the child, he would also provide child support until the child turned 18.**

**She agreed, but asked how he would know when the baby was born.**

**To keep it discrete, he told her to simply mail him a post card, and write 'Spaghetti' on the back. He would then arrange for the child support payments to begin.**

**One day, about 7 months later, he came home to his confused wife.**

**'Honey', she said, 'You received a very strange post card today.'**

**'Oh, just give it to me and I'll explain it later,' he said.**

**The wife obeyed and watched as her husband read the card, turned white and fainted.**

**On the card was written: 'Spaghetti, Spaghetti, Spaghetti, Spaghetti, Spaghetti.**

**Three with meatballs, two without! Send extra sauce!!**



## *Off the Ranch*

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A bunch of our intrepid members headed to Scotland and Ireland for 10 days at the end of July. John McGovern, who operates as an extension of the Irish Tourist Board, organized the motley crew and somehow managed to get them in St Andrews to start their homage to the great links! Steve Ludwig provided some much appreciated commentary from the trip although he must have a few too many “Black & Tans” as he actually seems to prefer the Irish copies to the real thing. McGovern must have put him on the payroll! I’ll accept the restaurants and the pubs being better but the courses?....behave yourself laddie!

Fortunately there were others on the trip with better judgment and in talking to Timmy Aspel and Ted Olsen and hearing them speak almost reverently about coming off the Road Hole and crossing the Swilcain Bridge....brings tears to the eyes it does! Ted shot a nice even par round, and Commish Lud a sweet 76. Tim a nice round 80.

If anyone watched the Senior Open at Troon, you would have seen that the boys arrived in the first summer witnessed in Scotland in a decade. McGovern must be tapped in to a higher authority!! But even Kelly O’Grady does not have that level of influence!!

### From the Thursday Night League Commish:

“We played KingsBarns (newer course by the sea, but maybe my favorite in Scotland), Gleneagles (inland and hilly, more American style and the only place we left pitch marks in the greens) and the Old Course at St. Andrews (like playing in a park, lots of people milling around and a road crossing #1 and #18) before heading to Royal Troon (jets landing over your head and minutes later crackling back winds scaring hell out of you) and playing 2 days after the British Senior Open.



We then ferried across the Irish Sea to Northern Ireland (the *troubles* are over for a while) to the town of New Castle. The next day we played Royal Portrush in a windy intermittent rain. It is a great golf course with a lot of elevation differences and small doorways into the hills to escape the lightning. I had a 15 year old, skinny caddy that had no clue. I later found out that he had won a contest held by Julliard in all of Ireland and was to play piano at the White House for President Bush. He said that didn't scare him as much as playing at Carnegie Hall the next day! I told his mum he had no future as a caddy and to keep up the piano (he practices 6 hours a day). He told me his father was a lawyer. I asked what kind and he said a "persecutor". I assume that is a divorce attorney.

The Commish and Tim bonded well (maybe too well!!)



Our last two days were spent at Royal County Down, which is now my favorite course on earth. The first day was windy, rain with patches of torrential rain. The second day was perfect.

The last night in Dublin at the pub in our hotel, Jay Champlain scared away two girls from their hopeful pursuers by his very presence (we went under an umbrella at an outside table to escape the rain). After much debate with our new Irish friends one of them declared the girls left because Jay had c---blocked them and thus coining a new word - Jay'd. Jay went on to Norway to find his wife Robin's roots and eat pickled fish so this new word must be in the Coto lexicon before he returns!

Parting shots – Scotland has by far the best caddies, but the Irish have the better golf courses (in my humble opinion). The Irish also have the better food, but not by much and the people seem to be a bit friendlier – you know, except for the McAdams! (He had to say that or this would not have passed the editor's cuts) John McGovern had a very close friend die of MS not long ago so John made sure that there are golf balls with his friend's initials left all over the greatest golf courses in the world - buried deep in bunkers, in the Irish sea from a poor lie in a the median of a busy highway, well, you get the idea!



## *Tradition at Coto (in last year's issue but always worth reiterating!)*

We have written about building tradition at Coto. Given the diversity of our membership in playing ability, age, family size, economic standing and background it is highly likely that this has differing connotations for different members. Many, who may consider themselves purists, would see clubs such as Pine Valley defining the Gold Standard.....strict dress codes, basically male only, sports coats required in the restaurant, non-members only play when invited and members can only have a few guests per year. The whole environment whiffs of rules, privilege and history with club champions dating back years. It is also only about golf...no tennis or social memberships there! Off the ranch trips to Ireland and Scotland would serve up similar experiences.

Like everything else, life has evolved and, as much as many of our members would love to create some of the aspects above, this is not likely to happen at Coto. Coto is a large club and many joined for the total "country club" experience with tennis, pools, spa etc. and love all the youthful energy around the club. However, the quest for building tradition does necessarily incorporate some of the elements of these historical clubs and it is not just related to tournament winners over 100 years and a dusty trophy case... although they help. We have nearly a complete set of perpetual trophies and we have developed a very strong set of tournaments which would be the envy of most clubs so that aspect is in hand.

The most noticeable thing about the older clubs is a respect for standards and the club itself. Members at these clubs adhere to the dress code. It is not even a discussion....try wearing your shirt hanging over your shorts or your golf cap the wrong way around! You would be asked to go play the municipal across the street in a heartbeat. It wouldn't necessarily be a Board member or the Director of Golf who would be telling you but just about any of the members. These clubs basically self-police. Members should not place that burden on the Board or the Pro Shop. The "denim in the club" decision has not been as painful as it may have been as most of our members disagree with it and dress appropriately. It shows many of us care and share a similar philosophy of what type of club we would like to be a part of.

The same principles apply on the course. Members at "traditional" clubs worry about the course condition and appearance. Coto faces challenges with the lack of rain and an out-of-date irrigation system but it is imperative that members do not add to this. Let's keep carts on the paths at the normal "parking" areas, rake bunkers etc. Generally our members are good in these regards and the issue pertains more to the outsiders who come to play in the Monday events etc. The MGA has to look to the Pro Shop and the course marshals to police these players.

A third area is behavior inside the club. There is a line between loud and raucous and loutish. Let's leave the latter to British soccer hooligans! Of course this does not just relate to the MGA. Coto is very "kid" friendly. We need to ensure that they are also well behaved and respect the club. It's not a playground although many seem to treat it that way. This extends to the course and the driving range. We are all responsible and should not hesitate to confront any behavior that is obviously outside the norms of a classy country club.

## *MGA Board of directors*

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Mike Castner	President
John McAdam	Communications
Jim Akers	Major Tournaments
Lou Skubic	Handicaps, Ground staff liaison
Steve Ludwig	Tournaments
Scott Carroll	Treasurer
Bob Gauntner	Commissioner Club Championships/President's Cups
Brian Kelly	Secretary
Randy Forkner	MGA Tour Commissioner

Mike Steele is not on the Board but acts as SCGA liaison

## *MGA 2008 Calendar* ★(*Red for Majors, Blue for Minors*)

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### MGA Tour Events

January 6	President's Cup - 2 man
February 23	MGA Tour "CotoBowl II"
March 28, 29	<b>Spring Classic</b>
April 26	MGA Tour "3-2-1" (4 Man team)
May 1 – July 10	Thursday Night League (now 10 weeks!)
May 15,16, 17	<b>Windmill Invitational</b> (sign up March 1st)
June 6, 7, 8,	<b>Club Championship</b>
July 12	President's Cup - Individual
July 18	MGA Tour (1 Man Scramble) (Canceled)
August 23	MGA Tour "Best of Buddies"
September 13	MGA Tour "Lone Wolf"
October ??	MGA Tour "The Triple Play" (Date to be confirmed)
November 14, 15	<b>Fall Stampede</b>
December 5, 6	MGA Tour Championship

### Other Events

January 20	Pinehurst Qualifier
Feb 29, March 1, 2	<b>Senior Club Championship</b>
March 9	Pinehurst Qualifier
June 1	Pinehurst Qualifier
June 22	Pinehurst Finals
TBA	<b>Pro Skins at 1:00pm</b>

(Any letter, comments, corrections, suggestions.....Email John McAdam)  
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