



MICK ELLIOTT

State team title gives Avila area bragging rights

The Florida State Golf Association plays host to an annual tournament it calls the State Club Team Competition.

The tournament won't help decide the deep and philosophical debates private club golfers are prone to engage in — *na-na-na-na-na, my club's better than your club* — or which dining room serves the best seafood bisque. But which club plays the best golf is a subject the tournament can settle.



Kouwe

Each year, Florida's private clubs rally their forces, shine up their saddle shoes, pull on some match-lag pastels and go forth to prove their membership fees are the state's best golf investment.

And each year the trophy comes home to Tampa.

When Avila Country Club won its third consecutive state club team title last week, it was the 11th consecutive year a Hillsborough County golf and country club has claimed the title. Six times in the 11 years it has been Avila, Bloomingdale has won four times and Palma Ceia once.

Not even close

This tournament began in 1942 and never has any club or area come close to such domination. One more year in Hillsborough County and the trophy gets tenured.

This time it wasn't even close. The Avila team of John Fowler, D.J. Holland, Bob Kouwe, Doug LaCrosse and Wyatt Meyer won the two-day event by 10 strokes against the Country Club of Coral Springs. Bloomingdale finished fifth and its B team tied for seventh. Avila's B team was 11th.

On the first day of competition, nine of 10 players representing Avila's two teams shot 75 or better at Orlando's Grand Cypress Resort.

So here we are in the country club golf capital of Florida. Nobody does it better — please bring the Grey Poupon — but why?

"Each one of those clubs that have won over the last 11 years take this tournament so seriously," the FSGA's Kathy Maple said. "They actually have playoffs at their clubs to see who makes up their A, B or C teams. But it sure is an impressive streak."

The motivating factor is simple. Some might call it pride. More on target might be self-preservation.

"Golf in this area is not only about guys who like to play the game but who love to throw the needle out there," Palma Ceia pro Gil Gonsalves said. "It's bragging rights. That's why the competition has gotten so fierce. It's the conversation that goes with the championship."

That's why the Palma Ceia team decided to travel to Grand Cypress Resort, site of the tournament, to hold its tryouts. But this time, that extra effort didn't help. Palma Ceia couldn't produce a top 10 finish. Now members face a year of defending themselves with only the quality of their grill's summer salad.

Serious competition

"Yes, the competition between clubs around here has really inspired a club to put together its best teams and really compete," Avila pro Dana Saad said. "There's a real rivalry. I know our members really look forward to playing this."

"It's the only chance they get to play golf as a team sport. With this, the team spirit, the club spirit and camaraderie are there."

And now victory to relish and flaunt.

"It wasn't a real popular tournament until Avila started playing in it," Kouwe said. "We went down to Naples a long time ago and made it a family thing and had a big time. Then Bloomingdale played a year and became a real competitive thing."

Now, secure in the knowledge Hillsborough County is the undisputed center of country club golf and the valet parking that goes with it, Kouwe wonders about individual competition.

"We have an awfully lot of good players here, but the shame of it is we don't have a greater Tampa Bay amateur championship," he said. "The only thing we got is a City of Tampa amateur championship and the majority of the good players don't even play in it because it's on a couple of rinky-dink golf courses."

"The real shame of it is the character of the area doesn't exist any more. Before, the Invitation de Avila and Gills served as that, but they have been statewide tournaments. We don't have a county golf championship for, like, Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco or where else is around here. It's a shame."

No, it's a team.

1993 CLUB TEAM RESULTS GROSS DIVISION ONLY

First it was the San Francisco 49ers, then the Duke Blue Devils, the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Chicago Bulls, and now the Avila Golf & Country Club "A" team of Tampa. What do they have in common you might ask? Each team had visions of *three-peating* in their respective sports. Club team champions in 1991 and 1992, Avila "A" went into this years championship with dreams of capturing that third consecutive title at Grand Cypress Resort in Orlando.

With the exceptionally large field of 44 teams, consisting of five players per team, this years championship was played on 36 of the 45 holes that Grand Cypress has to offer. Avila "A" first faced the challenge of the Scottish-styled "New Course" with the pot bunkers and double greens it possesses. While the Avila "A" team finished their first round with a tremendous team score of 297 (74.3 per player) they found themselves in third place behind the teams of Bear Lakes Country Club of West Palm Beach (296) and their own "B" team, Avila "B" (293). Avila "A" would have only 18 more holes to try and capture the championship.

The second day of the tournament proved to be one filled with intense pressure and heat as all the top teams were gunning for the title while trying to endure the 90+ degree temperatures. Avila "A" started this day on the North/South course and continued to display their excellent form as they posted a 294 (73.5 per player) and then crossed their fingers hoping it would be enough. When the last putt had been holded and the 1st score had been posted, Avila "A" could celebrate in their third straight title, this one, a ten stroke blowout!. The next closest team, Country Club of Coral Springs, finished at 601 followed closely by Orange Tree Country Club of Orlando at 602. The final results are as follows:

Champions:	1. Avila Golf & Country Club "A" -- Tampa	297-294--591
Players:	John Fowler; Odessa; D J Holland, Tampa; Bob Kouwe, Tampa; Doug LaCrosse, Orlando; Wyatt Meyer, Tampa	
	2. Country Club of Coral Springs -- Coral Springs	307-294--601
Players:	Terry Bench, Dave Glabicki, Pat Grasch, Duff Gula, Larry Monteith from Coral Springs	
	3. Orange Tree Country Club -- Orlando	308-294--602
Players:	Buck Buckner, Pete Eddy, Tom Lynch, Nathan Oberle, Troyce Raynes from Orlando	
	4. Lake Region Yacht & Country Club -- Winter Haven	302-304--606
Players:	Jim Hill, Steve Saterbo, Richard Straughn, Brian Swain from Winter Haven; Dewey Tomko, Haines City	
	5. Bloomingdale Golfers Club "A" -- Valrico	301-312--613
Players:	Dave McSheara, Bill Moore, Tom Myers from Valrico; Rusty Napier, Keith Nye from Brandon	
	6. Silver Lake Country Club -- Leesburg	301-312--613
Players:	Jay Boyd, Doug Jenkins, Jim Keedy, Carl Martin, Jay Paquette from Leesburg	
	7. Sabal Point Country Club "A" -- Longwood	307-307--614
Players:	Tom Flach, Jeff Kridel, Chip Landon, Tom Stead from Longwood; Doug Snoop, Altamonte Springs	
	8. Bear Lakes Country Club -- West Palm Beach	296-318--614
Players:	Anthony Adams, Bill Erwin, Bill Harvey from Palm Bch Gdns, Dann Merrell and Eric Schreiber, W Palm Bch	
	9. Bloomingdale Golfers Club "B" -- Valrico	302-312--614
Players:	Dick Cona, Gary Cona, Doug Huigens, Kevin Keever from Valrico; Frank Griffin, Tampa	
	10. Country Club of Orlando -- Orlando	296-318--614
Players:	Glen Davis, Austin Jones, John Ward, Robby Madigan from Orlando; Jack Richey, Winter Park	
	11. Avila Golf & Country Club "B" -- Tampa	293-322--615
Players:	Rennie Law, Fred McClimans, Dick Moore, Stuart Sierra from Tampa; Kim Schwencke, Temple Terrace	
	12. Bay Hill Country Club -- Orlando	306-310--616
Players:	Ken Brewer, Lee Chira, Craig DeLongy, Pete Groux, John Kelley from Orlando	
	13. Martin Downs Country Club "A" -- Palm City	300-316--616
Players:	Dave Kartner, P J Navaretta, Andy Spears, Rick Spears from Palm City; Gil Turner, Port St. Lucie	
	14. Indian Creek Country Club -- Miami Beach	310-309--619
Players:	Bob Fazio, Frank Strafacci, Miami Bch; John Lipari, Boynton Bch; Gordon O'Neil, Coconut Grv, Frost Walker, Coral Gables	
	15. Tampa Palms Country Club "A" -- Tampa	319-304--623
Players:	Rob Glisson, Phil Kalafut, Doug Reintgen, Jeff Yablun from Tampa; Jimmy Jones, Lutz	
	16. Palma Ceia Country Club -- Tampa	308-319--627
Players:	Max Castro, Ross Hayes, Al Hogan, Rob Irvin, Gordy MacDonald from Tampa	

1993 CLUB TEAM RESULTS (con't)

17. Redland Country Club "A" -- Homestead 315-316--631
Players: Jim Brothers, David Vihlen from Homestead; Bruce Fitzpatrick, Sam Martinez, Bernie Smith from Miami
18. Black Creek "A" -- Tallahassee 315-317--632
Players: Rick Boutin, Van Champion, Don Dye, Jimmy Dye, Lee Meadows from Tallahassee
19. Cypresswood Country Club -- Winter Haven 320-313--633
Players: Brian Bierwagen, David Saliba, Bruce Scamehorn from Winter Haven; Dave Norka, Frostproof; Tim O'Neil, Auburndale
20. Alaqua Country Club -- Longwood 328-305--633
Players: Gerry Helmich, Jeff Pacha, Randy Parks, Bill Snyder, David Yun from Longwood
21. Tampa Palms Country Club "B" -- Tampa 319-318--637
Players: John Caveny, Ray Cibischino, Jim Donigan, Tripp Smith, Jeff Sproat from Tampa
22. Deerwood Club -- Jacksonville 312-330--642
Players: Bill Boutwell, Steve Langham, Bob Mielnikowski, Sanford Seligman, Dave Wiggins from Jacksonville
23. Martin Downs Country Club "B" -- Palm City 320-322--642
Players: Dale Anderson, Bob Watson from Stuart; Jay Huckins, Dick Rigabar, John Turner from Palm City
24. Buckhorn Springs Country Club -- Valrico 316-328--644
Players: Mike Cook, Skip Lujack from Brandon; Tony Njirich, Jim Purtell from Valrico; Nick Fernandez, Riverview
25. LaGorce Country Club -- Miami 320-326--646
Players: Tom Danluck, John Glode, Gary Hale, Brad Hopkins, Jim Reto from Miami
26. Avila Golf & Country Club "C" -- Tampa 318-330--648
Players: Luis Albertini, Al Dally, Mike Jasin, Bruce Reid, Richard Valdes from Tampa
27. Bent Tree Country Club -- Sarasota 336-312--648
Players: David Britigan, Lou DeMarco, John Jones, Norm Newland, Cal White from Sarasota
28. East Lake Woodlands Country Club "A" -- Oldsmar 308-341--649
Players: John Davidson, Scott Van Dame from Palm Harbor; Kevin Malone, Clearwater; Bill Simon, Tarpon Springs; Tiny Williamson, Oldsmar
29. Black Diamond Ranch -- Lecanto 313-336--649
Players: Ken Craig, Temple Terr; John Downs, Tampa; Dick Pearce, Bob Rennick, Ed Westcott from Lecanto
30. Harbor City Golf Club -- Melbourne 329-323--652
Players: Glenn Kerres, Bill Lewis, Jim Scott, Tony Stirtzinger, Chuck Zahm from Melbourne
31. Martin Downs Country Club "C" -- Palm City 333-321--654
Players: Barry Allison, Dana deWindt, Pete Navaretta, Jose Serra, Bill Wright from Palm City
32. San Jose Country Club -- Jacksonville 332-324--656
Players: Andy Bowers, Erie Brooks, Chuck Hansen, Don Nyman, Dave Radcliffe from Jacksonville
33. East Lake Woodlands Country Club "B" -- Oldsmar 336-320--656
Players: Joe Corbett, Jack Gleason, Pete Keck from Palm Harbor; Harold Talbert, Oldsmar; Jack Vasko, Clearwater
34. Don Shula's Golf Club -- Miami 331-325--656
Players: Lee Bowen, Albert Kaufman, Bob Meador, Stan Moody from Miami Lakes; Charles Murphy, Hialeah
35. Palatka Golf Club -- Palatka 321-341--662
Players: Steve Beckett, R L Glisson, Doug Miller, John Mussoline from Palatka; Guy Sapp, Palm Coast
36. Redland Country Club "B" -- Homestead 341-321--662
Players: Jack Cornelius, Andy Harbin, Marvin Ward from Homestead; Joe Novo, Ed Trinidad from Miami
37. Avila Golf & Country Club "D" -- Tampa 336-328--664
Players: Pete Azzarelli, Pete Donelan, Steve Szabo from Tampa; Tom Johnson, Temple Terr; Todd Taylor, Lutz
38. Temple Terrace Country Club -- Temple Terrace 329-335--664
Players: Charlie Johnson, Bobby Kilgore, Wesley Turnipseed, Homer Williams--Temple Terrace; Tom Sandridge, Tampa
39. Sabal Point Country Club "B" -- Longwood 344-327--671
Players: Charlie Ake, Altamonte Spgs; Jack Boyle, Jim Kelly, Glenn Paulk, Lee Stewart from Longwood
40. Port Malabar Country Club -- Palm Bay 345-329--674
Players: Fred Anders, Paul Berry, Everett Norton from Melbourne; Kevin Johnson, Herschel Wall from Palm Bay
41. Hunter's Green Golf Club -- Tampa 343-332--675
Players: Steve Backhaus, Brandon; Scott Besley, Seffner; Dale Johnson, Jeff Muir, Tampa; David Smith, Temple Terrace
42. Black Creek "B" -- Tallahassee 346-329--675
Players: Sam Childers, Jim Dye, Milton Johnson from Tallahassee; Bud Blank, Miami; Ron Parks, Tampa
43. Martin County Golf Course -- Palm City 362-335--697
Players: Bill Bryant, Bob Dunlea, Bill Flint, George Garabedian, Steve Gombas from Palm City
44. Polo Trace Golf & Country Club -- Delray Beach 390-363--753
Players: Bob Mahoney, Dennis Peters, Tony Sher from Boca Raton; Paul Laster, Deerfield Bch; John Stilla, Coral Spgs.