



2010 THE ACE GROUP CLASSIC ADVANCE MEDIA INFORMATION

EVENT: The 23rd annual The Ace Group Classic, the 2nd of 26 Charles Schwab Cup events.

DATES: February 8-14, 2010

SITES: The Quarry, Naples, FL

PAR: 36-36—72 **YARDS:** 7,094

COURSE DESIGNER: Dr. Michael Hurdzan, Dana Fry (2007)

FORMAT: 81 players, 54 holes of stroke play, no cut

PURSE: \$1,600,000 (\$240,000 to the winner)

2009 CHAMPION: **Loren Roberts** (70-71-68—209/-7); finished one stroke ahead of **Gene Jones**.

TELEVISION: The event will be televised on a tape-delayed basis by GOLF CHANNEL. Coverage on GOLF CHANNEL will be from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Friday, 6:30-9:30 p.m. on Saturday and 7:00-9:30 on Sunday.

THE 2010 SCHEDULE: The 23rd annual The ACE Group Classic is the second of 26 official events in 2010, concluding with the season-ending Charles Schwab Cup Championship in San Francisco at the Harding Park Golf Course. This is the 31st year of the Champions Tour, and official prize money is \$51.5 million, with the average purse a record \$1.98 million. When the Tour started in 1980, there were four events and total prize money was \$475,000.

A LOOK BACK AT LAST YEAR'S EVENT: **Loren Roberts** made three birdies in his last four holes to edge **Gene Jones** for the crown. Six different players held or shared the lead during the final round, and eventually Roberts and Jones were tied going to the final hole. Jones hit his approach shot to 12 feet, and then Roberts knocked a pitching wedge from 102 yards to three feet. After Jones' birdie try went past the left edge, Roberts holed his short birdie putt for the win.

CHARLES SCHWAB CUP: The Charles Schwab Cup is currently in its 10th year. The Charles Schwab Cup, designed to recognize the Champions Tour's leading player, is a season-long bonus-points competition. Players receive points for top-10 finishes at all 26 official events based on each week's money distribution, with \$1,000 earned being the equivalent of one Charles Schwab Cup point (points are doubled at the five major championships during the year as well as the season-ending Charles Schwab Cup Championship where all 30 participants will earn double points for the first time). The program offers \$2.1 million in tax-deferred annuity payouts to the five leading finishers, with the winner receiving a \$1-million annuity. After one event, **Tom Watson** is the leader with 315 points followed by **Fred Couples** with 196 and **Michael Allen** with 132.

THE ACE GROUP CLASSIC STORYLINES...

NEW VENUE FOR TOURNAMENT: The 2010 The ACE Group Classic will be contested at The Quarry, a course which opened in 2007. The Dr. Michael Hurdzan/Dana Fry-designed layout will be the ninth facility to host the tournament. No tournament on the current Champions Tour has amassed as many changes. The Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf is second, with eight different venues, while the Constellation Energy Senior Players Championship will be staged at its seventh site in 2010. Below is a rundown on the sites for the previous 22 ACE Group Classics.

The Club at Pelican Bay (1988-90)

The Vineyards Golf & CC (1991-95)

The Classics at Lely Resort (1996)

Bay Colony GC (1997-99)

Pelican Marsh GC (2000-01)

The Club at TwinEagles (2002-06)

Quail West (2007-08)

TPC Treviso Bay (2009)

AZINGER TO MAKE DEBUT: Veteran PGA TOUR player **Paul Azinger** will make his Champions Tour debut at The ACE Group Classic. The Bradenton resident turned 50 on January 6. A 12-time winner on the PGA TOUR and captain of the victorious 2008 Ryder Cup team, Azinger earned over \$14 million in his TOUR career, which also included membership on five U.S. Ryder Cup teams and one Presidents Cup squad. Azinger made his PGA TOUR career debut at the 1982 Phoenix Open, where he finished 69th and earned \$606. He did not earn his first victory until his 108th start on the PGA TOUR when he won the 1987 Phoenix Open by one stroke over Hal Sutton.

EVENT IS ONE OF OLDEST ON TOUR: The Champions Tour will be making its 23rd stop in Naples when it holds the 2010 The ACE Group Classic, making it one of the oldest on the circuit. The tournament shares second place (with the Outback Steakhouse Pro-Am) for the longest span in one metropolitan area. The AT&T Championship in San Antonio leads in that category as it readies itself for the 26th playing of that event later this year. When **Gary Player** won the inaugural event in 1988 by one stroke over **Dave Hill**, he pocketed a check for \$45,000 from the \$300,000 purse. This year's winner will take home \$240,000 from a total purse of \$1.6 million. The 2010 event will be the 12th sponsored by The ACE Group.

PRODUCTIVE OPENER FOR IRWIN IN HAWAII: After failing to record a top-10 finish in 41 consecutive starts from the start of 2008 until his last start in 2009, **Hale Irwin**, the Champions Tour's all-time leader in wins, with 45, finished fifth at the season-opening Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai. It was his second consecutive top-10 finish dating back to a T6 at the AT&T Championship last October in San Antonio. His effort in Hawaii last month gave him 197 top-10 finishes in his career, second only to **Bob Charles** with 203 on the all-time Champions Tour charts.

COUPLES IN SECOND CHAMPIONS TOUR EVENT: Fresh from a runner-up finish at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai, **Fred Couples**, a 15-time winner on the PGA TOUR, has committed to the event. Among Couples' wins are the 1992 Masters Tournament and the 1996 THE PLAYERS Championship. He captained a victorious U.S. Presidents Cup team last fall.

HASKINS TO MAKE CHAMPIONS TOUR DEBUT: While his name may not be recognizable to the average golf fan, rookie **Steve Haskins** last name might ring a bell with college hoops followers. Haskins' father, Don, was a highly successful college basketball coach at the University of Texas-El Paso. The elder Haskins led the Miners to one of the great wins in college basketball history. His 1966 squad (then known as Texas Western College) upended the University of Kentucky to win the NCAA Basketball Championship. The victory was later the inspiration for the book and film *Glory Road*.

THE ACE GROUP CLASSIC TOURNAMENT NOTES...

NEW PLAYERS TO COMPETE IN THE EVENT: Several new players are expected to tee it up at The ACE Group Classic for the first time, including a number of former PGA TOUR winners. The former tournament champions competing this year in addition to **Paul Azinger** and **Fred Couples** will be **Bob Tway, Olin Browne, Russ Cochran, Tom Pernice, Jr., Phil Blackmar, Tommy Armour III, Ronnie Black, David Peoples** and **David Frost**. Other new faces include Q-School medalist **Peter Senior**, winner of more than 20 events worldwide, **Jim Roy** and **Steve Haskins**, a long-time Nationwide Tour veteran. Like Azinger, Armour and Peoples will be making their Champions Tour debuts.

CHARITY INFORMATION: The ACE Group Classic has given \$2.5 million to area charities since 1988, including \$232,100 in 2009. Tournament donations benefit 14 local charities, including educational institutions, human-services agencies and health organizations working to aid individuals and their communities.

PLAYERS HAVE LOCAL TIES: The current Champions Tour roster includes players who currently reside in and around the Naples area or spend part of their year in the area. Among those players competing are **Peter Jacobsen** (Bonita Springs), **Wayne Levi** (Naples), **John Harris** (Naples), **Scott Hoch** (Naples) and **Fuzzy Zoeller** (Naples). **Gary Hallberg** has a tie-in with the West Bay Club in Estero and **Chip Beck** spends part of his year in Miromar Lakes.

MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS DOT COMMITMENT LIST: This year's field will also include 37 players who have won major championships on either the PGA TOUR or Champions Tour. **Gary Player** leads the way, with 15 titles, including nine PGA TOUR majors. **Lee Trevino** and **Hale Irwin** each own 10 major titles. Trevino has six on the PGA TOUR and Irwin three.

GILDER STREAK CONTINUES: **Bob Gilder** is scheduled to make his 146th consecutive Champions Tour start for which he's eligible for when he plays in this year's ACE Group Classic. It is the Tour's longest current streak. The last event Gilder missed was the 2004 Greater Hickory Classic at Rock Barn. **Dana Quigley** holds the Champions Tour record for consecutive eligible events played with 278.

PLAYOFF HISTORY: There have only been three playoffs in the 22-year history of the event. In 2000, **Lanny Wadkins** bested **Tom Watson, Jose Maria Canizares** and **Walter Hall** in overtime, becoming just the ninth of 11 players to win in his Champions Tour debut. In 2004, **Craig Stadler** made a 27-foot birdie putt on the first playoff hole to nip **Tom Watson** and **Gary Koch** in overtime. The third was in 2008 when **Scott Hoch** birdied the 54th hole and then first playoff hole to defeat **Tom Kite, Tom Jenkins** and **Brad Bryant**.

IT'S BEEN CLOSE: Twelve of the previous 22 tournaments in Naples have been decided by either a playoff or a single stroke. Also in 12 of the 22 events, a player has come from behind in the final round to win, including six of the last eight years. Six of 22 first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win the Naples event, the last being **Bobby Wadkins** in 2007.

LAST PAIRING IS GOOD PLACE TO BE: The winner of The ACE Group Classic has come out of the final grouping in each of the last 10 years. The last time it didn't happen was in 2000 when **Lanny Wadkins** needed a final-round 64 to rally from three strokes back and eventually triumph in a playoff.

SIGNIFICANT VICTORIES: **Allen Doyle** (1999) and **Lanny Wadkins** (2000) won their first Champions Tour titles in Naples, while **Gene Littler** (1989) and **Al Geiberger** (1996) claimed their last events there. **Lee Trevino** (1990) and Wadkins were rookies when they triumphed. **Loren Roberts'** victory in Naples in 2006 made him the first player on the Champions Tour to open a season with three consecutive wins. Doyle (1999) and Trevino (1990) are the only wire-to-wire winners (no ties) in tournament history. A total of seven players all claimed The ACE Group Classic in their first attempt. The group includes **Craig Stadler/2004**, **Mark James/2005**, **Loren Roberts/2006**, **Gary Player/1988**, **Lee Trevino/1990**, **Hale Irwin/1997**, **Allen Doyle/1999** and **Lanny Wadkins/2000**.

THEY WERE ABLE TO REPEAT: Five players have won this event twice, including **Lee Trevino** (1990-91) and **Mike Hill** (1993-94), who successfully defended titles in Naples. **Hale Irwin** won in 1997 at Bay Colony Golf Club and 2002 at The Club at TwinEagles. **Gil Morgan** won in 1998 at Bay Colony Golf Club and also claimed the 2001 tournament at Pelican Marsh Golf Club. **Loren Roberts** joined the group when he prevailed in 2009 after winning three years earlier. Roberts' victory in 2009 was his fifth overall in Florida. On the PGA TOUR, Roberts claimed the 1994 and 1995 Nestle Invitational and the 2007 Boeing Championship at Sandestin.

IRWIN LEADS THE WAY: **Hale Irwin** has earned more money in this event than any other player, with \$748,946 in 10 appearances—an average of \$74,895 per event in Naples. **Gil Morgan** is second, with \$699,296, followed by **Loren Roberts** (\$611,200).

CAN HAAS' DROUGHT END HERE?: Despite earning the Charles Schwab Cup in 2006 and 2008 and winning Champions Tour Player of the Year honors in 2006 and 2007, **Jay Haas** has still never won an event in Florida. Haas has now gone 0-114 in the Sunshine State in his TOUR career (0-12 on the Champions Tour). His best efforts on the Champions Tour were runner-up finishes at the 2007 Allianz Championship and T2s at both the 2007 and 2008 Outback Steakhouse Pro-Am near Tampa. On the PGA TOUR, his best finish was a T2 at the 2003 THE PLAYERS Championship.

SUCCESS IN FLORIDA: **Hale Irwin** has a combined 65 wins in his PGA TOUR career, including a record 45 titles on the Champions Tour. Of those 65 wins, nine have come in Florida, with seven of those coming on the Champions Tour—three Senior PGA Championships, two wins in The ACE Group Classic, one victory at the Outback Steakhouse Pro-Am and one win at the American Express Invitational. His PGA TOUR titles came at the 1982 Honda Inverrary Classic and 1976 Florida Citrus Open. **Lee Trevino** leads all players on the Champions Tour in Florida victories with 13 combined (PGA TOUR, 6, Champions Tour, 7). **Jack Nicklaus** won 12 TOUR events in Florida (PGA TOUR, 10, Champions Tour, 2). **Raymond Floyd** (PGA TOUR, 7, Champions Tour, 2), and **Gary Player** (PGA TOUR, 3, Champions Tour, 6) also have won nine times on TOUR in the Sunshine State.

THIS AND THAT: **Gene Littler** is the oldest winner of this event, capturing the 1989 tournament at 58 years, 7 months, 5 days. **Lanny Wadkins** is the youngest winner of The ACE Group Classic, winning at Pelican Marsh in 2000 at 50 years, 2 months, 8 days...**Allen Doyle's** five-stroke, wire-to-wire victory in 1999 made him the first player to win on both the Champions Tour and the Nationwide Tour...**Bobby Wadkins'** 2007 victory, coupled with older brother Lanny's win at Pelican Marsh in 2000, made the Wadkinses the first set of brothers to claim titles in Naples. It's happened two other times on the Champions Tour... **Mike** and **Dave Hill** both won the Fairfield Barnett Space Coast Classic (Dave in 1987, Mike in 1990) in Melbourne, FL. Dave (1988) and Mike (1993) also claimed the PaineWebber Invitational in Charlotte. Wadkins also became the 16th different winner in the 22-year history of the event.

IT HAPPENED ON THIS DAY

2/8/81 – Just three weeks after winning in the desert, Bruce Lietzke's sparkling play on Sunday proved the difference in his win at the Wickes-Andy Williams San Diego Open. Lietzke was five strokes off the lead going to the sixth hole on Sunday, just two behind after 13, and with a birdie on No. 18, took the clubhouse lead. Raymond Floyd and Tom Jenkins joined him. After Jenkins made bogey to drop out of the playoff, Lietzke ended the playoff with a birdie on the second hole.

2/8/98 – With former San Diego Chargers quarterback Stan Humphries on his bag, Scott Simpson earns his seventh career title on the PGA TOUR, defeating Skip Kendall in a playoff at the rain-shortened Buick Invitational near San Diego. Simpson trailed by eight strokes when play began on Sunday, but fired an 8-under-par in the final round of the 54-hole event. After Simpson posted his 12-under-par 204 he waited more than two hours for the final outcome to be determined. After Kendall birdied his final hole to force a playoff, Simpson, ended it on the first hole with a birdie-4.

2/8/04 – Bruce Fleisher wins his third Royal Caribbean Classic in six tries when he bests Dana Quigley by one stroke.

2/8/87 – Corey Pavin defends his Hawaiian Open title and wins his sixth career title when he birdies the second extra hole to defeat Craig Stadler.

2/9/97 – One week after winning a fifth victory at Pebble Beach, Mark O'Meara wins his sixth PGA TOUR title in California with a two-stroke margin over Donnie Hammond at the Buick Invitational. Trailing Jay Don Blake by two strokes at the start on Sunday, O'Meara's 71 was good enough to win.

2/10/85 – One week after holding off three players by a stroke at Pebble Beach, Mark O'Meara thwarts a late run by Craig Stadler at the Hawaiian Open to win for the second week in succession. O'Meara is a one-stroke victor over Stadler, who fashions a final-round 64.

2/10/91 – Corey Pavin wins his second Bob Hope Chrysler Classic. After tying the PGA TOUR 90-hole scoring mark of 29-under-par 291 with Mark O'Meara, Pavin makes a birdie on the first extra hole to win the tournament.

2/11/73 – Arnold Palmer wins the Bob Hope Classic for his last PGA TOUR victory.

2/12/79 – Ground breaking ceremonies are held at the TPC Sawgrass.

2/12/95 – Peter Jacobsen fires consecutive 68s on the weekend to win for the second straight week by four strokes over four players at the Buick Invitational of California.

2/13/83 – Isao Aoki holes a pitching wedge from the rough for an eagle-3 on the 72nd hole to defeat Jack Renner at the Hawaiian Open. He becomes first Asian player to win on the PGA TOUR.

2/13/00 – Lanny Wadkins defeats Tom Watson, Walter Hall and Jose Maria Canizares for the title at The ACE Group Classic in Naples. Wadkins rallies from three strokes down in the final round with an 8-under-par 64 then wins when he makes par to eliminate Canizares on the third extra hole. He becomes the ninth Champions Tour player to win his debut.

2/14/82 – Wayne Levi makes history when he becomes the first TOUR player to win a tournament while using a colored golf ball when he wins the Hawaiian Open. After opening with an even-par 72, Levi followed with three straight sub-par rounds to nip Scott Simpson by one stroke at Waialae CC. A Wilson staff member, Levi used an Optic Orange ball in his victory.

2/14/93 – Tom Kite shoots five straight rounds in the 60s, including a 10-under-par 62 in the final round matching his career low round and goes on to a six-stroke victory over Rick Fehr at the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic. Kite's 90-hole score of 35-under-par 325 is a record for the event at that time. It is later broken by Joe Durant in 2001. He also becomes first player to hit \$8 million in career earnings.

2/14/88 – Two years after winning the PGA Seniors' Championship, Gary Player added a second title at the event when he beats Chi Chi Rodriguez by three strokes in Florida.

2/14/99 – Bruce Fleisher becomes the first Champions Tour player to win his first two starts on the circuit when he is a three-stroke victor over Larry Nelson at the American Express Invitational.