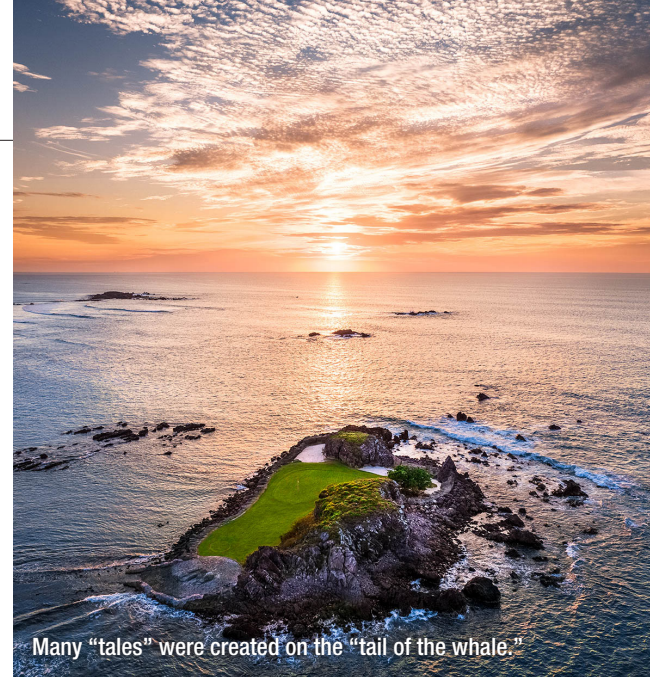




“The Pacifico Course, with eight holes directly facing or playing alongside the Pacific Ocean, features the ‘Tail of the Whale,’ a par-three with the largest natural island green in the world. It’s often difficult for a PGA professional to justify travel to Punta Mita. Time and cost are always a consideration. So, if club members field a team, the pro’s room, golf, most meals, and even airfare are complimentary. This is an opportunity for private club members to reward their pro with the best of south of the border hospitality.”

— JOHN MCINTYRE, DIRECTOR OF GOLF AT PUNTA MITA



Many “tales” were created on the “tail of the whale.”



The Punta Mita PRO-AM

A luxury destination that’s a gateway to paradise.

PUNTA MITA, MEXICO (50 minutes north of Puerto Vallarta): Along the northernmost tip of Banderas Bay lies one of the most enchanted corners in the Mexican Riviera, Punta Mita. Covering over 1500 acres, the luxury destination is a spear-shaped peninsula surrounded on three sides by crystalline waters and nine miles of pristine coastline.

The name Punta Mita is derived from the Aztec word *mictlan* meaning *gateway to paradise*. “Over the years, Punta Mita has expanded to include St. Regis and Four Seasons hotels, 23 residential communities, multiple beach clubs, and two oceanfront Jack Nicklaus Signature courses,” said Carl Emberson, director of operations at Punta Mita. “Preparation is now underway to break ground on two new luxury hotels and residences soon to be made public.”



Team Three Putt Kings



Fernando's Señoritas



Team The Matadors



Punta Mita Pacifico



The Olympians

THE 2023 PUNTA MITA PRO-AM

Located on the same latitude as the Hawaiian Islands and boasting more than 340 days of sunshine per year, you are virtually guaranteed sunny skies and balmy temperatures in Punta Mita. “You will appreciate the short flight times and plethora of non-stop itineraries,” smiled Emberson. “In about the time it takes to watch one movie, you arrive south of the border.”

This year, 13 teams participated in the 2nd annual

Punta Mita Pro-Am. “The draw to sun-drenched paradise is undeniable,” explained Mark Pazdur, partner in the Punta Mita Pro-Am. “We had a bit of celebrity status on-hand this year. One of our professionals was Rhein Gibson, who shot a 55 [16 under par] at River Oaks Golf Club in Oklahoma, setting a Guinness World Record, and Franz Klammer, a gold medalist skier at the 1976 Olympics, competed on the appropriately named Team Olympians.

Our host was Jean Van de Velde. We even had an amateur on the roster of players who is a free-style rapper!”

High heels and formal attire were left in the luggage for the Welcome Cocktail and Dinner Reception at MI TACO at the Punta Mita Surf Club. The private affair included hand-crafted drinks (with the best margaritas in Puerto Vallarta) and table-sharing entrees of fresh fish. ➤



Competitors in the optional
Horseshoe Shootout



Horseshoe winners
Steve Singer and
Bob Pancratz



Team B-Low



Team Par,
Then Bar



The A Team



DAY ONE: PRACTICE ROUND + HORSESHOE SHOOTOUT

Non-golfers enjoyed a private Whale Watching Excursion on Punta Mita’s resident speed boat. The trip did not disappoint since it is prime time season as the pods of whales are migrating north. Instagram-worthy moments were abound.

Golfers had a casual practice round followed by an afternoon, four-hole Horseshoe Shootout with 15 teams in attendance. Teams were eliminated until the field was whittled down to three, with the competition concluding on the iconic third hole, an island green par-3. After

the dust settled, The A Team from Arizona proved victorious and 50,000 American Airlines miles richer for their endeavor.

DAY TWO: ROUND ONE + COOKING CLASS

The group of non-golfers enjoyed a Cooking Class at the Pacifico Beach Club.

Perfect weather conditions (with an ocean breeze off the Pacific) greeted teams on the Bahia Course. The format for the Pro-Am was two best balls—one gross, one net—with amateurs playing to 80 percent of their handicap. It was clear competitors showed up with their game

face for the first round of the Pro-Am. At the conclusion of play, six professionals were within five shots of the lead (four of whom shot under par). For the team competition, it was too early to call a frontrunner.

DAY THREE: FINAL ROUND + WINE TASTING + AWARDS DINNER

Those not competing in the Pro-Am were treated to a Wine Tasting Event. As the teams completed play, many gathered around the leaderboard set up next to the oceanside 18th green on the Pacifico Course. “A fitting end to a terrific couple of days under the warm tropical sun,” extolled Wendy Wisbon, head golf professional at Annandale Golf Club in California.

The night concluded with guests and competitors dining on an expertly prepared wine pairing and dinner prepared by Executive Chef David Vidales at the Pacifico Beach Club while trophies were presented. ■

For more information, a complete itinerary, and pricing on the 3rd annual Punta Mita Pro-Am, April 4 – 8, 2024, visit ExecutiveGolferMagazine.com.

2023 Punta Mita Pro-Am Winners

Professionals:

- First Place: Rhein Gibson – 71 – 66 = 137 (seven under par) – \$5,000
- Second Place: Daniel de Leon – 68 – 70 = 138 (six under par) – \$3,000
- Third Place: Chris Moody – 71 – 69 = 140 (four under par) – \$2,000

Amateur Teams:

- First Place: Team Par, Then Bar – 138 – 131 = 269
- Second Place: Team Cherry Misiones – 135 – 137 = 272
- Third Place: Team The Matadors – 136 – 141 = 277

Closest to the Pin:

- Day One: Garry Loncon on The A Team – 44 inches from the cup
- Day Two: LeAnn Doby on Team Sandy – 6 feet, 7 inches from the cup



Rhein Gibson receiving trophy
from Jean Van de Velde

