

## LI GOLFBEAT

# Private club lite 15-pack

BY ERIK BOLAND  
STAFF WRITER

Please note: The following is for the well-to-do only.

It is the Tour GCX, a concept developed by four Long Islanders that gives golfers a private club experience, minus the private club membership dues.

"We're giving people the opportunity to play private club golf without joining a private club," said the Tour's chief marketing officer, 40-year-old Gary Rosenberg. "What we saw with young people is that they were time-challenged. We saw people in the market who couldn't justify the cost of joining a private club for the amount of time they might use it."

The Tour GCX card, which looks like any credit card, costs \$6,250 for one year. It enables a member to play — with a threesome of his or her choice — one of 15 private clubs in the New York Metro area up to 10 times a year. The maximum a player can play a particular course is three times. But here's the catch: You won't find out which courses until joining.

"We're about protecting their privacy and not competing with their membership structure," Rosenberg said. "If you're a member of club X, who put down \$60,000 to join, and he sees an add [for Tour GCX], that could create some issues."

The concept was developed by Dave Kaufman, Jonathan Halpern, Kenny Dichter and Rosenberg, four longtime friends with extensive business backgrounds. Kaufman founded Xando's, a sandwich shop which eventually merged with the Cusi's chain. Halpern spent most of his career in the venture capital/private equity business. Rosenberg did all the licensed publishing for the PGA of America and Dichter founded Marquis Jet Partners, a private aviation company. Kaufman, Halpern and Dichter are each 37 and at-



PHOTO BY JACK MCCOY

Three of the four Tour GCX founders, from left, Gary Rosenberg, Jonathan Halpern and Dave Kaufman, have a plan if you have the money but not the time to join a private club.

tended Bellmore JFK High School together.

Kaufman, Tour GCX's president, said the Tour has received a positive response from clubs because it gives members exposure to clubs they might eventually join.

"If you're going to play 25 times a year, you should join a club," Kaufman said. "If you can only play 5-10 times a year, it doesn't make economic sense at that point to join a club."

The three have apparently

hit on something. Since the Tour's launch in April 2004 — it has its own Web site, [tourgcx.com](http://tourgcx.com) — membership has grown from 50 at this time last year to 320 currently, according to Jonathan Halpern, the Tour's senior vice president of sales and membership services. Halpern said membership is on pace to reach about 550 by summer's end.

The targeted membership demographic is businessmen and women ages 25-45 with an in-

come of \$200,000 or a net worth of \$1 million. The Tour has marketed itself in various Ivy League clubs, lawyer clubs and other associations where young executives might gather.

"It's been fantastic for me," said Adam Cott, 37, the owner of In Record Time in the Garment District, who joined the Tour this summer.

"When I found out about it, it sounded like the most perfect thing. It's been an absolute home run for me."

### Today's tip Swing the club low

"Here's one warm-up shot that helps get a player in the right hitting position and helps with both feel and taking a divot. Warm up and practice three-quarter swings with a 9-iron, holding your hands below your waist during the follow-through. Make sure, however, that you point your chest, hands and club shaft toward the target at the end of the swing. This will force the club head to stay behind your body and to hit down through the ball. This move helps with short pitch shots, giving you a swing that is ideal into the wind and helps rotate your body toward the target. Taking the hands out of the swing takes loft out of the club, helps with proper impact and prevents steering of the shot."

Joe Dolezal,  
PGA professional,  
Piping Rock Club

### Aces

**Andrew Rafuse**, Wheatley Hills CC, eighth hole, 142 yards, 8-iron.

**Joseph Soukup Jr.**, Sunken Meadow Red Course, eighth hole, 169 yards, 3-iron.

**Matthew Lyons**, Mosholu Golf Course (Bronx), ninth hole, 151 yards.

**Gary Beckel**, Mill Pond Golf Course, fourth hole, 144 yards, 7-iron.

**Jack Crowley**, Edgewood in the Pines (Pa.), 11th hole, 160 yards, 6-iron.

**John Liebler**, Eisenhower Blue, eighth hole, 115 yards, pitching wedge.

**Jared Rabinowitz**, Bethpage Green, 15th hole, 160 yards, 7-iron.

**Larry Gordon**, Cedar Brook Golf Club, 13th hole, 150 yards, 6-iron.

**Bob Donnelly**, Cedar Beach Golf Course, second hole, 70 yards, 9-iron.

**Bob Sullivan**, Peninsula Golf Course, sixth hole, 150 yards, 6-iron.

**Nancy Crowley**, Garden City CC, 14th hole, 145 yards, 7-iron.

**Matt Comito**, Stonebridge CC, 15th hole, 120 yards, pitching wedge.