



67th Annual SWDGA Tournament at Grey Rock Golf Club in Austin, TX



June 9-12, 2025

Front Row:

Linda Bradford (TX), Joan McCowin (TX), Walt Camenisch (TX), John Davis (LA), Paul Rutowski (TX)

Middle Row

Cullen and Erica Pressley (TX), Ron Stern (NM), Joey Calvano (TX), Daryn Taylor (TX), Joe Ed Thompson (TX), Mike Hummel (TX), Jose Sermenon (CA), Alfred Casaccia (TX), Andrew Everett (CA), Randall Long (TX), Kyle Gumm (TX), Joe Olivo (TX)

Back Row

David Ramirez (NV), Mike Finneran (CA), James Kim (NV), Brendan Stern (MD), Danny Lacey (TX), Jeremy Warshaw (TX), Mitchell Phillips (UT), Wayne Miller (CA), Darrell Hovinen (UT), Cal Balogun (TX), Nathan Kester (CA)

SWDGA Tournament Shines in Austin with Historic Wins, Honored Legacies, and a New Generation of Golfers

Austin, Texas — The Southwest Deaf Golf Association (SWDGA) concluded one of its most memorable tournaments to date with clear skies, fierce competition, and a deep sense of community that brought generations of Deaf and CODA golfers together in celebration. Held at Grey Rock Golf Club, this year’s tournament featured 27 players, breakout performances, and powerful nods to both history and the future.

“This year was a milestone for SWDGA,” said Interim SWDGA President Walt Camenisch. Camenisch added, “The weather, the energy, and the unity of the community made this an unforgettable experience.”

Special recognition was given to ZP, a VRS company, for sponsoring the event, and to the Deaf Television Foundation, led by Dr. Stephen C. Baldwin, for donating drinks for the awards luncheon. Their generosity helped elevate the experience for all participants.

The tournament was organized with exceptional care by Paul Rutowski and John Davis, whose leadership ensured a smooth and spirited weekend. A former Open Champion, Rutowski also switched to the white tees this year - a personal choice that led to a dominant victory in the Senior Division, finishing more than 20 strokes ahead of the nearest competitor.

The tournament also received high praise from the host venue. Kevin Tracey, Head Golf Professional at Grey Rock, who said: “In 25 years of running tournaments, this is the most appreciative, positive, fun group I’ve ever been around. It makes my job 1000 times more fun and enjoyable! Y’all are amazing! All the employees feel the same.”

His words captured the uplifting atmosphere and left a lasting impression on players and staff alike.

Notable Wins and Historic Firsts

- Former Division I standout Erica Pressley made SWDGA history by becoming the first woman to win the Open Division, finishing 15 strokes ahead of Daryn Taylor and 16 ahead of James Kim, the reigning World Deaf Golf Championships (WDGC) Champion.**

- **Father-son duo Brendan and Ronald Stern, both doctors and avid golfers, each captured Net titles in their divisions - adding a personal and memorable chapter to the tournament's highlights.**
- **Other division winners included:**
 - **John Davis: Net Champion, Senior Division**
 - **Mike Finneran: Champion, Super Senior (three-day)**
 - **Jose Sermenon: Runner-up, Super Senior—just three strokes behind**
 - **Walt Camenisch: Champion, Super Senior (two-day)**
 - **Ronald Stern: Net Champion, Super Senior**

Adding to the multigenerational spirit of the weekend, Kyle Gumm made his tournament debut. A talented newcomer, Kyle is the grandson of Billy Gumm, a three-time SWDGA Champion in the 1960s. His father, Terry Gumm, a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults), continues the family's strong connection to Deaf golf.

Kyle's participation honored his grandfather's legacy and brought a three-generation story full circle.

Also making his first appearance was Joe Olivo, a former San Marcos high school standout, whose poise and performance impressed the field. Both Joe and Kyle represent the future of SWDGA and are expected to play a key role in its continued success.

Leadership Transition and Planning Ahead

This year's tournament also marked a pivotal leadership transition. Linda Bradford, recognized for over 14 years of dedicated board service, was honored for her unwavering commitment to SWDGA. Stepping into the role of Vice President is Cal Balogun, founder of the Black Deaf Golf Players (BDGP). His leadership is expected to bring bold vision and new growth to the organization.

Looking forward, Paul Rutowski will collaborate with Joe Olivo and Kyle Gumm to help plan the 2026 SWDGA Tournament, ensuring the energy and excellence of this year's event carries into the future.

With stellar weather, unforgettable performances, and unwavering community spirit, the 2025 SWDGA Tournament stands as one of the most meaningful in the organization's rich history.

And even after the final putt dropped and the sun dipped low, players lingered sharing stories, celebrating victories, and honoring the values that make SWDGA more than a tournament: camaraderie, competition, and community.

About SWDGA

Founded in 1959, the Southwest Deaf Golf Association is one of the oldest Deaf sports organizations in the United States. Its mission is to promote fellowship, competition, and inclusion through the game of golf. Each year, SWDGA hosts a regional tournament bringing together Deaf and CODA golfers from across the region to compete, connect, and build lasting bonds.