



## MBBC XXII - TRIP REPORT

(\*Disclaimer - due to some major procrastination, this trip report is being written at various times in the week before the 2019 MBBC and completed the day before our trip.

The majority of this report is based off of my memory, although I have begun to recognize the limitations of my memory as I've gotten older, so I've started taking notes during the trip. Unfortunately, my notes from 2018 only cover the first 3 days of the trip, with nothing from the final 2 days... Not sure exactly why that is or what it means.)

There had been *some* debate about whether MBBC XXII would return to Las Vegas for a second time or remain in Myrtle Beach, especially after Droz was forced to leave MBBC XXI early. There was some nostalgia for Myrtle Beach, but it is pretty hard to beat Las Vegas, and ultimately, defending champion Paul Rovner chose Vegas. The dates were set and while Scott got to work on the lineup, Dan worked on the accommodations. Apparently, a major issue for booking the rooms was the Daisy Festival, an electronic dance music festival held at the Las Vegas Speedway, was going on the same weekend. In addition, the new NHL franchise, the Las Vegas Golden Knights, would be in the midst of a playoff run while we were there, making getting a room even more difficult. It was assumed that we would end up at our old haunt, The Flamingo, but a significantly lower rate at New York-New York would prove to be the deciding factor. Dan made nearly weekly calls to the hotel to try and get the rates reduced and the final total for 2 adjoining rooms was \$1,216.00. Scott booked the golf through Jason of VIP Golf Services, who had not disappointed during the inaugural trip to Las Vegas. We agreed to return to Reflection Bay and Wolf Creek and added rounds at Arroyo Golf Club at Red Rock, Primm Valley (Lakes and Desert) and Dragon Ridge Country Club. The total per man for golf was \$807.00. Scott and Dan booked flights on Southwest with points. Dan and Paul flew American, but direct this time, in part to avoid their nightmare trip home in 2016. As the champion, Paul had the honor of selecting the location for the Champions' Dinner and chose Gordon Ramsey's Hell's Kitchen.

There were not a whole lot of developments in the build-up to the 2018 MBBC. Haley Drossner and Jenna Rovner celebrated their bat mitzvahs in the fall. Just 8 days before the MBBC, however, Haley broke her leg sliding into second base during a soft ball game (she actually stole third before realizing the extent of her injury). Dan had started a new job (and was miserable and already looking for a new job by the 2018 MBBC). There were virtually no warmup rounds played by any of the group in the build-up to Vegas. Droz played only a single round, and that was a scramble. Scott, Dan and Paul played only 1 round combined, although Paul spent quite a bit of time on the driving range. As usual, Scott was up most of the night before writing odds and prop bets and other nonsense.

### **Friday, May 18, 2018**

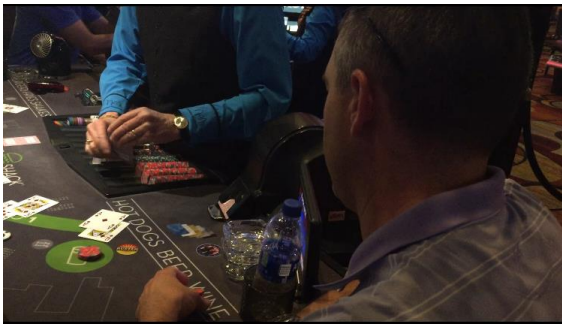
Scott and Dan were up VERY early to catch their flights, although Paul and Droz weren't too far behind. Dan's flight left at 6:10 a.m. out of Pittsburgh and was scheduled to arrive in Las Vegas at 7:50 a.m. Scott had a 6:25 a.m. flight out of BWI scheduled to arrive at 8:35 a.m. Droz and Paul were scheduled to leave Philadelphia at 8:00 a.m. and arrive in Las Vegas at 10:15 a.m. It was Droz's turn to pick Paul up for the trip to the airport despite the fact that Paul it makes much more sense for Paul to pick Droz up. Naturally, everyone had breakfast sandwiches.



Scott had his first Coke in several months, as he claimed to be exercising and eating right in the months before the MBBC (claims that seem questionable at best based on some of the pictures below).

Dan and Scott arrived in Las Vegas 30 minutes earlier than expected and met up in baggage claim. Clubs and bags arrived without issue and they headed to the shuttle to the rental car hub (a chore this writer would like to point out that Droz and Paul have never had the pleasure of experiencing...) Dan had booked the rental car as he is a Hertz Gold Member. There was some concern that the rental car company "took" the reservation, but didn't "hold" the reservation because Dan's name was not listed on the marquee at the rental center. Hertz did in fact have Dan's reservation and things went very smoothly as we were placed in red minivan with Kentucky tags. Scott and Dan drove to New York-New York to check-in, even though the rooms would not be available. In addition, Dan was able to get free parking for the entirety of the trip. Scott waited in the car outside while Dan checked in and made the parking arrangements. Dan and Scott still had some time to kill before they needed to pick up Paul and Droz and there was some serious consideration to hitting the casino, but they ultimately

decided to head back to the airport and went to the cell phone lot. Scott continues to have problems navigating the McCarran International Airport, as once again he made a wrong turn trying to get to the cell phone lot and actually ended up in one of the parking garages. Luckily, a friendly lot attendant let him out free of charge. Dan and Scott waited no more than 30 minutes for Paul and Droz to land. They were also early. They took quite some time to get their bags and Dan was able to direct Droz where to meet up for the perfect airport pick-up. We headed to New York-New York, parked, checked bags and grabbed something to eat. Since our opening round at Reflection Bay wasn't for another 2+ hours, we decided to start gambling. Scott bet on the Red Sox to beat his hometown Orioles, who were the worst team in baseball in 2018, but managed to win that game 7-4. Paul bet \$100 on the Celtics money line for their playoff game against LeBron and the Cleveland Cavaliers the next night. (The Celtics would lose by 30) We then hit the tables. Scott and Droz played some blackjack, while Dan and Paul played Pai Gow. Paul would later make his way over to Free Bet Blackjack.



After the opening gambling session, Droz was up \$38, Scott was up \$33, Paul was down \$70 (in an hour) and Dan was down \$100. (For those hoping that I have a running tally of wins and losses, unfortunately, this was the only session where I actually kept stats).

And with that, it was time to head to Reflection Bay for the opening round where we had a 2:00 p.m. tee time. Temperatures were a bit high as we unpacked our clubs from their travel bags.



Reflection Bay has changed just a little bit since our first visit there 2 years prior. Due to housing construction, there is no longer a driving range, and instead an area where players can hit balls off of mats into a net.



The 9's have been switched (although we actually played them in the same order as we had 2 years before). Unfortunately, J-Ho, the cart woman who had hooked us up with beers 2 years before no longer works there. After hitting a few balls and smacking some putts around, it was finally time for the 2018 MBBC – Las Vegas to begin.



Scott and Droz hit solid tee shots off the first tee, while Dan and Paul found the water. Scott and Droz actually had decent looks at birdie on the first green, but both putts were terrible. The play was less than stellar for the most part until the 512 yard Par 5 6<sup>th</sup> hole. Droz found the green in regulation, but still had a lengthy putt that he was able to coax into the hole for the first birdie of the trip.



Scott would join the birdie “barrage” on the 318-yard Par 4 11<sup>th</sup> hole. He hit his approach to 15 feet and was able to drain the putt to get on the board.



(Thanks to Droz, this was nearly the first birdie missed on video in the 3 years since we started filming this nonsense. Droz had the cover over a portion of the camera, but the video was salvageable. Of the 4 of us, Droz is the last choice to video anything, although he does make good comments.)

Droz was able to finish up the round in style on the 369-yard Par 4 18<sup>th</sup> hole, when he stuffed his approach and drained the putt for his second birdie of the day.



After the opening round, we headed back to New York-New York, where we were able to check into our rooms and shower. That night the Vegas Golden Knights were hosting the Winnipeg Jets in the Stanley Cup Playoffs, and there was large contingent of Jet fans in the city. Since it had been a long day, we decided to stay at New York-New York for the night. Dinner was at Il Fornaio, New York-New York's Italian restaurant in the middle of the casino. Everyone seemed to like the dinner (my notes do not indicate that anyone had any major issues... I do recall the bread being a big hit since we were all starving), and we headed back to the tables for a long night of gambling. Eventually, Dan, Droz and Paul had had enough, while Scott, who was down quite a bit, decided to stay up longer to try and rally, although that rally would never come. In the end, Scott would be up for 24 hours before finally going to bed.

### **Saturday, May 19, 2018**

Dan, Droz and Paul were up fairly early the next morning, while Scott was pretty slow to crawl out of bed. We had plenty of time before our tee time at Arroyo Golf Club – Red Rock. Scott and Paul decided to head down to the sportsbook and find something to bet on. Scott bet on Stephen Strasburg and the Nationals at home against the

Dodgers. Paul decided to join in the fun and took the Nats run line. They lost 5-4 in the 9<sup>th</sup> inning. We stayed at New York – New York for more gambling. My notes don't indicate how everyone did, and I have no recollection of it myself. After an apparently uneventful gambling session, we headed over for our only round of the day at Arroyo Golf Club at Red Rock. Arroyo Golf Club had been recommended by Jason, as several other choices did not work out. Our tee time was at 11:05 a.m. It was an interesting course that wound through a community near the Red Rocks. Scott seemed to like the course, while the rest of the group seemed unimpressed. There was at least one noteworthy thing about the course. While hitting putts on the practice putting green before teeing off, we noticed a pretty annoying but mildly attractive girl talking up some of the guys a group or two in front of us and quickly realized that she was part of the infamous Par Mates, advertised by several of the Las Vegas courses. (Unfortunately, Scott failed in his photographer duties and did not get a picture of her). Scott has actually considered hiring a couple of Par Mates over the years but has never pulled the trigger. As the round went on, we realized how awkward it must be to ride with one of these girls for 4-5 hours and engage in what is sure to be awful conversation and pay her for it. It all but confirmed that Scott will never book Par Mates for the MBBC, although we should probably never say never...

In any event, off we went for round 2...



While the majority of the round was pretty awful, one of the most significant events in MBBC history would occur on the 468 yard Par 5 11<sup>th</sup> hole. Droz was able to get on the green in 2, but he was left with a 50 foot eagle putt. However, he gave it a good run and was able to walk it in for the first eagle in MBBC history.



Droz's hot streak would continue on the 368 yard Par 4 13<sup>th</sup> hole, where he would drain another lengthy putt for his 4<sup>th</sup> birdie/eagle of the trip.



Scott would make things interesting on the 124-yard, Par 3 14<sup>th</sup> hole, draining a 10-footer for birdie.



Dan would finally join the party on Hole #16, a 475-yard Par 5. Dan hit a massive drive that actually ran through the fairway and into the waste bunker leaving him with a difficult at best chance of reaching the green in 2. Dan hit an impressive shot out of the waste bunker to about 8 feet above the hole leaving himself a quick putt for eagle. He gave it a good run, but it would not drop. He was able to tap it in for his first mark of the trip.



We finished up and headed back to the hotel to shower and get ready for the night, which would include the Champions' Dinner at Hells Kitchen. After everyone got ready, we decided to walk to the Bellagio to see if the Deal of No Deal slot machine was still there, which it was. We held off on playing because of our reservation and walked over the restaurant in front of Caesar's Palace.



We were a bit early for our reservation, so we had some drinks including tequila shots at the outside bar in front of the restaurant and played some cornhole.



Despite being on time for our reservation, we had to wait about 15 minutes before we were finally seated. Paul was NOT happy. But, once we were seated, everyone was very happy as the food was fantastic. Scott got a “flaming” drink (you mean, flaming... no, but we are willing to learn). Everyone loved their dinner and we even had dessert, which Dan seemed to be a big fan of.



After dinner, we decided to head back to the Bellagio to win some money on Deal or No Deal. Unfortunately, things did not exactly go our way. We ended up losing \$399.91 in a relatively short period of time, as we did not have any of the success we'd had 2 years before. This picture of our cash-out ticket sums up the night pretty well.



We walked over to The Cromwell where Dan played some craps and Scott, Paul and Droz played some 3-card poker. Again, I don't have any notes about success or failure at the tables at the Cromwell, so I can only assume that there was nothing of any significance up or down. We took an Uber back to New York – New York and headed to bed with a long ride to Wolf Creek set for the next day.

### **Sunday, May 20, 2018**

Two years ago, we seriously regretted having an early tee time at Wolf Creek, so this time around we scheduled the tee time for later in the morning, 9:30 a.m., to allow

us to sleep in and make our way to Mesquite. The morning did not get off to a great start as Scott clogged the toilet. Paul was kind enough to leave a friendly note for the cleaning people.



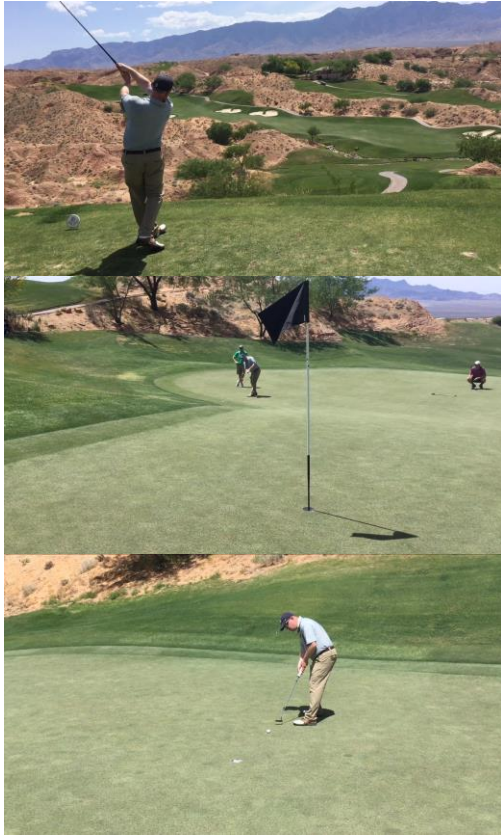
The later tee time gave us time to head to McDonald's for Paul's favorite breakfast sandwiches. We then made the long trek to Wolf Creek. There were a couple of interesting things at Wolf Creek besides the golf... there were skydivers above us for most of the round and there was a bizarre circular rainbow that appeared in the middle of the round.



It was another spectacular day at Wolf Creek.



The first birdie would come on what is quickly becoming the group's favorite hole in Las Vegas, the 453 Par 5 5<sup>th</sup>. Scott hit a massive drive that was reminiscent of some drives in the Tiger Woods Golf video game. He was able to put his second shot on the green but was on the lower tier of the green with the pin on the upper tier. He had to putt his eagle putt through the rough, but left himself with 5 feet for birdie, which he was able to drain.



Paul would finally get on the board on the difficult 152-yard, Par 3 8<sup>th</sup> hole (which I often call the “fart” hole, because it’s the one with the video of Droz farting on the tee box from 2016). Paul hit a beautiful tee shot to about 7-feet and was able to finally make the putt.



Perhaps the most interesting thing about Paul's birdie is the circumstances surrounding it. Prior to and after making his birdie, Paul was on the phone with Lisa who had called him from the store after she and Jenna had decided that they wanted to upgrade Jenna's phone. Paul was very annoyed that they had decided to do this on the spur of the moment and while he was on vacation and eventually told them he would figure it out

when he got back (I don't know for sure, but I'm pretty sure Jenna upgraded her phone shortly after Paul got home.)

Much of the rest of the round was a struggle for everyone. Droz was able to find the mark on the 15<sup>th</sup> hole, a downhill, 113 yard Par 3, as he drained a 5-footer for his fifth birdie of the trip.



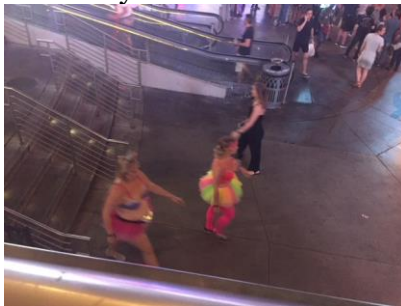
We made the drive back to Vegas. When we got back to the casino, Paul was pretty adamant that he wanted a milkshake from Shake Shack, so we walked over to the restaurant. The place was PACKED and the wait seemed forever. In this writer's opinion, Shake Shack seemed to be pretty overhyped, as there was nothing special about it. (To be honest, since my notes don't include Shack Shake, I'm not entirely sure what day we went there, but I'm 90% sure that I have the correct day.) We then had showers and FaceTime. Dan and Scott headed down to the casino to play some Pai Gow. I honestly don't remember the session, but my notes read, "Shelly was a cunt," so I assume I'm referring to our dealer and that things did not go well. Droz played some 3-card poker which my notes also indicate was "NOT GOOD" (I'm sure Droz will remember what went down...) Dan, Scott and Paul then played some blackjack switch. It was finally time for dinner, but we weren't really sure where we wanted to eat. We decided to just walk toward The Flamingo and see where we ended up. We found a restaurant on the strip a short distance from the hotel, but there was a pretty long wait for a table, so we decided to push on after snapping a few pictures.



We ended up at Cabo Wabo Cantina in front of Planet Hollywood and sat on the rail along Las Vegas Boulevard.



Dan insisted one of the hostesses looked like Janet Jackson. We also saw some fans of the Daisy Festival.



(Quick note... I did not actually take the video that this picture comes from. The girl sitting next to me took the video, as I was too slow on the draw. I actually managed to convince her to text me a copy of the video, and promised that the 44-year-old guy would not text her after that.)

Dinner was pretty good, and we decided to head back to our favorite casino, The Flamingo. From my recollection things were pretty up and down there, although my notes also indicate that “Dan rolled well at craps.” After another long day, we’d had enough and grabbed an Uber back to the hotel and headed to bed.

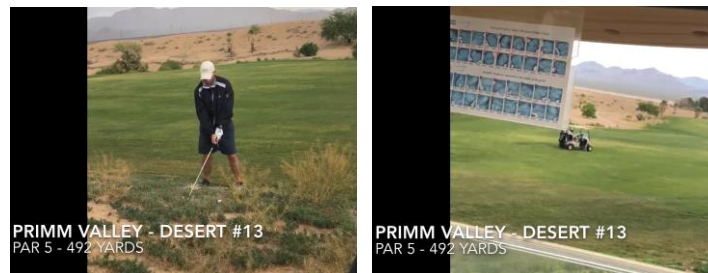
### **Monday, May 21, 2018**

We were up pretty early as we were playing 36 holes and had to cross the border into California to get to Primm Valley. Scott grabbed a bacon and cheese croissant for breakfast, which was awesome. Primm Valley was in the middle of nowhere, and we pretty much had the place to ourselves on a Monday morning. We started on the Lakes course at 7:20 a.m.

Things were relatively quiet until the 485-yard Par 5 11<sup>th</sup> hole. Droz found the fairway with his drive and then stuffed a wood from the fairway, leaving himself no more than 4 feet for eagle, which he promptly drained for his second eagle of the trip.



The rest of the round was very uneventful. The overall play was not very good. (I have a lot of missed putt videos from the round). We finished up the first round and had a decent lunch on the veranda of the clubhouse, and then headed off for our second round on the Desert Course at 12:40 p.m. The winds picked up in the afternoon, and there was also some rain toward the end of our round. The overall play did not improve much, if at all, from the morning round. We ran into a coyote toward the end of our round strolling across one of the fairways. Perhaps the only memorable moment was on the 13<sup>th</sup> hole, when Paul tried to hit out of the rough. He was kind enough to warn Scott and Dan who were sitting in their cart some distance ahead of him, but then promptly hit their cart with his scuffed shot (unfortunately, the audio can't be included on this report...)



We finished up the round with Scott deciding that Primm Valley was a pretty major disappointment. We had to stop for gas on the ride home. Since we were basically in the middle of nowhere, Scott had to stop off at the only exit with gas and paid more than \$4.00 per gallon. We headed back to the hotel, showered and got ready for the night. Once again, we were not really sure where we wanted to have dinner, but someone suggested that we head over to the MGM. We wandered over there and decided to have dinner at Wolfgang Puck's, since there wasn't a long wait. Dinner was pretty good, and then it was time to hit the tables. Scott and Droz played 3-card poker, which was an absolute disaster. Dan and Paul played craps for most of the night with some success thanks in part to Haley, a girl they met who rolled well for a while. Dan, of course, enjoyed playing his new favorite bets, All Tall, All Small, with some success. I don't have a clear memory, but I'm fairly sure I had to go to the ATM while we were at the MGM. Droz eventually joined Paul and Dan at the craps table. We then walked back to the hotel and headed off to bed for a final day in Vegas.

**Tuesday, May 22, 2018**



Our final round was at the Dragon Ridge Country Club, which had been recommended by Jason (and which would not disappoint). Our tee time was at 10:50 a.m., so we were able to take our time in the morning. Scott had another breakfast croissant, and we made the drive to the course. Dragon Ridge is located in a gated community in the mountains overlooking Las Vegas and was an immaculate golf course. We were there very early and had time to hit the driving range.



The course was pretty awesome, but there was not much action in the first few holes. Droz and Scott wasted golden opportunities for birdies on the short Par 5 4<sup>th</sup> hole but hit terrible second shots when trying to get on in 2. Scott would finally get rolling on the 6<sup>th</sup> hole, a 314-yard Par 4. He found the green in regulation, but still had 30 feet for birdie. He got a look from Paul and managed to get the putt to fall.



There were no other birdies on the front 9. The only thing of note was that Droz somehow injured his knee while looking for one of Paul's golf balls.



Scott started to get a little hot on the back 9 as he tried to make one final push for the MBBC title. With his birdie on the 6<sup>th</sup> hole, Scott now trailed Droz 6-4. The general consensus was that Droz's 2 eagles would serve as a tiebreaker (it was unclear what would happen if there was a tie with the defending champion), so Scott needed 3 more birdies, which was a longshot, but not completely unfathomable. Scott made things even more interesting when he found the range on the 310-yard Par 4 10<sup>th</sup> hole.



Scott had a few opportunities to tie it up and make things even more interesting, but simply could not get it done. Scott was officially eliminated on the Par 3 17<sup>th</sup> hole, when he chunked his tee shot into the hazard, and Droz was formally declared the winner of the 2018 MBBC, 6-5-1-1 (Hey, Dan and Paul, thanks for coming). Scott did have one last chance on the Par 5 18<sup>th</sup> hole to at least tie Droz as he was able to get on the green in 2. But, Scott could not 2-putt for the birdie, and the 2018 MBBC was officially over.

We made the relatively short drive back to the hotel. Everyone was hungry, so we had a late lunch in the food court and discussed plans for the 2019 MBBC. Everyone agreed that while Vegas is awesome and likely the semi-permanent home of the MBBC, there are concerns about the length of the trip, the number of rounds played and the effects on us physically. There was general agreement that the number of days of the trip would be reduced by 1, but the other issues were tabled for further discussion. There was a brief ceremony in the room to honor Droz's championship.



The general consensus was that things had gone fairly well at MGM the night before, so we agreed to go back there for dinner and final night festivities. Scott made one last losing bet on over the total in the first half of Warriors – Rockets playoff game. We played some at New York – New York, before heading over to eat at MGM. According to Dan, we tried to get into a sports bar called Taps, so that we could watch basketball, but the wait was too long. I have little recollection of this, and all I know is that we ended up eating at Emeril's New Orleans Fish House. We ordered frog legs as an appetizer and everyone seemed to like them.



Everyone seemed to enjoy their food and drinks, and we headed back out to the casino hoping for one last rally that wouldn't come. We actually all ended up on the craps table, and, if I'm not mistaken, Haley showed up briefly, which Dan and Paul were very excited about. Scott even joined in the fun and came to appreciate the All Tall, All Small bets himself.



After some success, it was finally time to call it a trip and we headed back to New York – New York. I'm fairly certain that Dan actually jumped onto another craps table there, but I might have this confused with another night. We eventually all headed to bed with fairly early flights the next morning.

Dan had the first flight home. Scott wasn't too far behind him, so he dropped Dan off at the terminal before filling the rental car up with gas and returning it. Paul and Droz took a cab to the airport from the hotel as their flight was a few hours later. Everyone got home without any travel issues. Paul followed up with the Stats and the Who Owes Who What email shortly. Scott put together the birdie montage video pretty quickly. The trip video took some time and due to music copyright issues, it remains unpublished. And, obviously, this trip report was not completed until the day before the 2019 trip.

Thanks for us!!!!