



WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. – McDonald Hopkins LLC will mark its 13th year as a sponsor of The Honda Classic on Thursday when the first round of the PGA Tour's annual stop in South Florida tees off at PGA National Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens.

"We've been involved with The Honda Classic ever since it moved to PGA National from the Country Club at Mirasol back in 2007," said McDonald Hopkins member Peter Bernhardt, who is a Florida litigation attorney in the firm's West Palm Beach office. "Honda Classic Executive Director Kenneth Kennerly has been a client of mine since the mid 1990s. We've represented multiple companies over the years, including IGP Sports and Entertainment Group and K2 Sports Ventures."

Continuing that relationship into The Honda Classic, beginning with helping to keep the event on the PGA Tour schedule, has been more a labor of love for Bernhardt.

"When you are doing something you love, it never feels like going to work," said Bernhardt, who was invited to become an inaugural member of the tournament's Ambassadors Club in 2007. The club was created to bring together a group of business and community leaders who share in the passion of golf and interest in supporting local charitable efforts. "Golf has always been a passion for me. So, giving back through The Honda Classic is not something I really consider work."

The charitable mission behind every tournament separates the PGA Tour from other professional sports. Every event on tour is a 501(c)(3) charity. Last year, **The Honda Classic awarded \$4.55 million to South Florida children's charities**, the 12th consecutive year the event has increased its giving. It's no coincidence the annual increases started with the move to PGA National and the involvement of local organizations like McDonald Hopkins. In that first year, The Honda Classic raised \$505,000.

"There was an issue with the charity that was then running the event in 2006, and Honda was ready to terminate its relationship at the end of its contract," said Bernhardt. "Kenneth single-handedly saved the tournament. In addition to moving to PGA National, he went to Barbara and Jack Nicklaus and they agreed to have Children's Health Charities become the tournament's host organization with Nicklaus Health Care Foundation as the event's primary beneficiary."

Along with increasing its charitable giving since the 2007 move, The Honda Classic has seen its attendance grow from less than 40,000 in its last year at Mirasol to 224,642 when World No. 3 Justin Thomas captured the championship.

Once again, attorneys from every McDonald Hopkins office will be in attendance for Thursday's first round. Members of the McDonald Hopkins Women's Council and their guests will use the firm's 18th Green SkySuite on Thursday. On Friday, guests will play in the annual "McDonald Hopkins Before The Honda" golf outing at The Preserve at Ironhorse before taking in the second round. Following Saturday's third round, the firm will host a dinner for guests at Café Chardonnay following a viewing of The Honda Classic's annual fireworks display.

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Peter Bernhardt	Robert Cohen	Alena Guerra	Jessica Liffitz	Raquel Rodriguez
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