

The Marvelous Debutante Parties Couldn't Top Abe's Bar Mitzvah

By Joe Cohen
Reprinted Courtesy of Variety

The turn-of-the-century parties for debutantes on Philadelphia's Main Line were definitely outclassed and outspent by the party thrown by Janie Greenwald for the bar mitzvah of son Abraham at the Concord Hotel, Kiamasha Lake, N.Y., on Jan. 12.

The previous high for a bar mitzvah was by her late husband, Phil Greenwald, for their older son, Joey, nine years ago. Phil at the time of his death was the entertainment booker for the Concord, who had laid the base for name acts at the Cat-skill hotel.

One conservative cost of the latest affair was \$300,000, about \$75,000 for table decorations alone.

The theme of the party was a three-ring circus and its sideshow. Every item on the agenda related to the palmy days of the big top. The pre-dinner sideshow had an organ grinder with monkey, a clown musical trio, a pair of robots, stilt walkers, clowns and jugglers roaming the halls, and then, with the opening of the sideshow, there were booths for an elephant and his mahout, a pair of caged bears, a llama, jungle cats, a chimpanzee, etc.

Surrounding stages had fire eaters (and they weren't on a diet), a tattooed man, a bearded lady, a sword swallower, a lady who lay on a bed of spikes and had a male cohort sledge hammer three building blocks on her chest, a pair who looked like transvestites who just sat, a costumed two-headed boy, and some other "freaks," both genuine and imitation.

During the sideshow, guests, of whom there were about 600 who stayed overnight at the hotel, participated in foods of various nations. There was one booth which served caviar, vodka and all the trimmings; there was also a Chinese counter and chef, there were Italian and Russian foods, as well as numerous bars and roving waiters with canapes.

Serving of the dinners started after the ap-

petizer "interlude" and continued until about 2 a.m. in a room separated into three rings, each of which accommodated dancers. After dinner, the guests went down to a Viennese dessert bar, loaded with goodies, many gooey, plus various booths which dispensed ice cream, Irish coffee with various liquors, and other made-to-order sweets.

The comics got underway, but each, realizing the time of morning, confined himself to a very brief stint, few being germane to the occasion.

Corbett Monica emceed and other stunts were by Dick Capri, Billy Baxter and Stewie Stone. Singers included Sylvia Syms and Errol Dante.

Considering it was Sunday morning, the departing guests were given a copy of the N.Y. Times.

The religious aspects of the bar mitzvah were performed prior to the reception, but Joey, the older of Phil Greenwald's two sons, before the dinner, recited the blessing for the bread.

Joey, for a while succeeded his father as the Concord booker, but then elected to study law. He's a third year student at Fordham Law School. His mother, hostess Janie, was gracious and resplendent in a red sequined gown. She's a co-owner of the Rich Advertising Agency in New York.

One of the other entertainment features of the session was a drum solo by guest Buddy Rich who then duetted on drums with the bar mitzvah boy, Abraham, who seemed to understand the intricate movements on the skins. It's something for a 13-year-old lad to duet with Buddy Rich.

It was also something for the boy to have as guests such sports figures as Mark Gastineau, Phil Simms and Ron Darling. For him it was not just a display of ostentation, but a glorious send-off into manhood in the sight of his peers, friends and the celebs in sports and show business he reveres.

Mark O'Meara Ready To Play For \$421,000 Bonanza

LAS VEGAS — Mark O'Meara has left no doubt about his big-money decision involving \$421,000. He made the decision even before scoring his second consecutive PGA TOUR victory Sunday, a one shot triumph in the Hawaiian Open.

The question was whether to play in the Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational in March and to take a shot at a \$250,000 bonus in addition to the first place prize of a record \$171,000.

"I'm definitely going after the \$421,000 Bonanza," O'Meara said after winning the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am two weeks ago, making him eligible for the big prize. "I had already committed to be at the Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational. This makes it even more exciting."

The victory in the Crosby was worth \$90,000 and Sunday's win in Hawaii totaled another \$90,000 to lift O'Meara, golf's number two money winner last year, into the lead this young season with \$194,625.

After posting a 267 total in the Hawaiian Open this week, 21 strokes under par, O'Meara became the first man to score consecutive victories since Gil Morgan won the first two tournaments in the 1983 season.

The earlier Crosby victory put him in line for the big jackpot. It works like this. If a player wins either the Bob Hope Classic or Crosby, plus the Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational, the Panasonic Bonanza is \$250,000 in addition to the tournament prize money. Lanny Wadkins won the Hope and is also eligible for the bonus.

Craig Stadler, Johnny Miller and strong young players like Payne Stewart, Gary Hallberg, John Cook and Fred Couples are early commitments also shooting for the PGA TOUR's largest first prize at the Panasonic Las Vegas Invitational March 20-24.

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