

Solid Gold, Palm Beach

One room, three layers of light.

By Justin Hampton

Photos by Allan Toft

Highlighting the onstage talent and creating a stimulating environment for patrons have always been top priorities for ambitious gentlemen's club owners. And few are more discerning than former Miami Dolphins defensive end John Bosa, an admitted perfectionist who took a full two years before breaking ground on Solid Gold Gentlemen's Club in Palm Beach, Florida.

Luckily, he's a patient man as well, which allowed his installers to construct a kinetically lit and visually sumptuous high-performance platform, capable of making any onstage adult fantasy come true. According to David Chesal, who supervised the entire build for Martin Professional before taking his current job at Robe, "[John] wanted to focus the club around the stage sound, lighting, trussing and decoration, making the whole room part of the show."

Accent, Not Spotlight

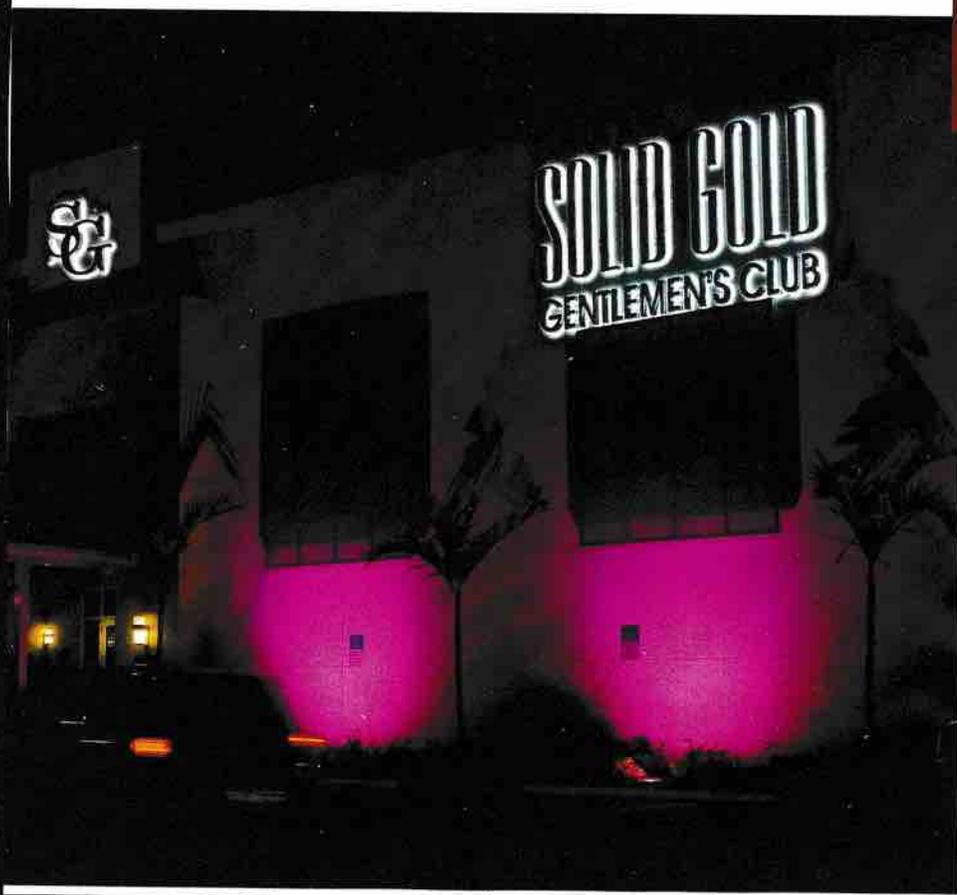
After visiting their booth at the Gentlemen's Club Owner Expo in Las Vegas, Bosa opted for a full A/V package from Martin.

His first desire was to make his club visible from I-95, to make up for its off-the-path location. Chesal pulled it off with three Martin Architectural Inground 200 color changers, which uplight the building's facade and perforated metal signage. Once patrons have found their way to the club, weather-resistant Exterior 200 long barrel color changers, mounted on poles, paint the interior of the glass *porte cochere* in opulent CYM colors.

The fireworks go off in earnest once patrons enter the 10,000-square-foot space. Custom carpet by nightlife specialist fabricators EntaLeis (entaleis.com) covers the floor, and metal beaded chains rain down from the ceiling behind the main bar's liquor display, catching and refracting the light provided by six Cyclo 03 DMX fluorescent washlights.

Directly in front of the bar is the stage, a three-foot-tall perforated metal box custom-fabricated for the club by Brian Arnold of Minnesota's Staging Concepts (stagingconcepts.com). Inside the stage, a combination of Martin Professional MAC 250 washes, MAC 250 Kryptons, MX-10 scanners, CX-10 Extreme color changers, Atomic Strobes and Wizard effect lights shine through the perforations and the Plexiglas top, as if the

Solid Gold is owned by former Miami Dolphin John Bosa.



mothership had landed. This console is part of not one, but three separate layers of lighting throughout the room, designed by Chesal, and installed and programmed by Karl Kieslich of Connecticut's Sound Stage Systems (soundstagesystems.com).

"When you're [installing] for a gentleman's club versus a dance club, ultra-lounge or theater, the placement and programming of the fixtures are totally different," industry vet Kieslich explains. "In this case, your job is to highlight the girls. Certain colors work; certain colors don't. It can't be too bright. You don't use greens and yellows and whites. It's got to accent the girls, not just put them in a spotlight."

The club's second layer is suspended directly over the stage, and consists of four Wizard effect lights arranged like the petals of a flower around an Atomic strobe, alongside six MAC Kryptons. "The Wizard cluster over the stage was to emulate a really radical mirror ball effect, because each Wizard puts out multiple beams," says Chesal. "And, of course, you have [it] controlled by DMX; the color and gobo, and the pan and tilt, speed and direction of the mirror drum. So it gives for a nice effect." These lights, as Kieslich

discovered while programming, can also morph the side walls into splashes of impressionistic hues and shapes, by switching out gobos and colors and pulling focus.

The room's third level of lighting is truss-supported. Six MX-10 scanners, six CX-10 Extreme color and pattern changers, and two MAC 250 washes add another layer of color and depth to the LJ's palette. He can choose up to 100 "transparent" cues – Kieslich's term for cues that can be altered endlessly through a number of menu prompts – from the club's LightJockey controller.

These trusses also delineate the first floor VIP areas, to each side of the stage and covered with white removable sheers for privacy. Once within, clubgoers can recline on custom-built banquettes crafted by Grafton Furniture, and either drink or eat on tables, raised or lowered by hydraulics. A 4' x 4' scissor lift acts as a platform, which raises entertainers up to the stage from the floor, while metal beads around the edges conceal the mechanics.

"Pretty Hot"

Adult entertainers can't work without music, however, and the installers delivered with speakers from the Mach series. Six subs are tucked under the stages, while tops and mids are flown from the club's ceiling. The placement of the speakers was devised to provide a perfect monitor for the entertainer onstage.

"The worst thing in the world is to be an entertainer and not have a monitor or a sense of programming,"

says Chesal. "By cross-focusing the top boxes in the room, we were able to go down the right with four top boxes, and the left with four top boxes. We found that it worked very nicely."

Because of the six private VIP suites upstairs, Solid Gold needed a DSP flexible enough to provide for several different channels of music as well as LCD video, so Kieslich installed the BSS Soundweb, a standard piece for all Sound Stage Systems' jobs. "It allows us to give each room its own selector for music genre, volume, and source, so it's like little systems within the system," he says. "It also gives us great expandability, and the ability to control each speaker component individually." Video is routed through Soundweb, then sent through a Knox video switcher to both plasma and LCD monitors.

Two Eiki projectors can also project images onto the side walls, but Chesal admits video is used very sparingly. "[Bosa's] very satisfied with just being able to play DVDs and show significant sporting events by cable because his business is not really the video content,"

The main course.



BSS Soundweb controls the club's sound and video.



says Chesal. "It's more the entertainer on the stage."

So is the exacting owner pleased? "I think the club has the feel that I was going for, which is a kind of a flexible South Beach, kind of chic look, but also very comfortable," says Bosa. "Whether we've done that for the long haul or not has yet to be seen, but certainly most people who come in think it's pretty hot."

www.myspace.com/solidgoldpb