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After the European team lost the Ryder Cup last year to the Americans, many Brits would have loved to stab Captain Nick Faldo with a sword for some of his tactics and selections that did not work out. Queen Elizabeth had that chance when Nick bowed in front of her on her birthday, except she took the sword and knighted him for his many contributions to the sport of golf instead. Faldo, only the second professional golfer to receive a knighthood following Sir Henry Cotton in 1988, won his first professional title in 1977 and added 46 more wins worldwide — including three Masters and three British Opens.

Pity the poor guys in the CBS booth and Kelly Tilghman on the Golf Channel who now have to work with Sir Nick. I'm just kidding, as Nick has been a fresh breath of air and great fun which is far different than his persona as a player.

Phil Mickelsen scored a big hit with the fans when he showed up at Bethpage earlier this week to test the U.S. Open course. Tiger played the day before and apparently some fans didn't like the fact that he was aloof. Of course, Tiger was there to concentrate on his Open preparation and not a personal appearance but Phil is a more public kind of guy and the fans love him for his availability. Mickelson walked off the 18th green and interacted with nearly three dozen fans, signing autographs and talking about the layout of the course, which he meticulously scouted with short-game coach Dave Pelz and his caddie, Jim MacKay. "You have a great place here, what a wonderful golf course," Mickelson told spectators on his way back to the clubhouse. "I enjoyed my time here and I'm looking forward to getting back to Bethpage next week. I'm excited about it."

Camilo Villegas got some great news this week just after learning that his regular caddy decided to work part time for Sergio Garcia. Villegas played in a charity event the Monday after The Players Championship with Fred Couples and since the President Cup captain will not be playing the Open he worked out an arrangement for his well-experienced caddy Joe LaCava to loop for Villegas at the Open.

A sad bit of news for one of the nice guys in golf, Ken Green, now playing on The Champions Tour. A tire blew on Green's RV in Mississippi, killing his brother, his girlfriend and his German Sheppard. Doctors in Mississippi had to amputate part of Ken's leg.

The USGA plans a first in 2014. They selected Pinehurst No. 2 to host back-to-back weekend U.S. Opens: The men's U.S. Open will come first and then NBC won't have to move their cameras as the women check in the following week for the U.S. Woman's Open.



Wins Keep Coming for SST PURE

Brian Gay collected his second victory this year this week at The St. Jude Classic, making it 14 weeks in a row that a player who asked SST to PURE their clubs won an event on the PGA Tour. No other company in golf can make the same claim. Gay's victory, which also qualified him for this week's U.S. Open, was the 19th victory overall this year for SST PURE. Included in that total are the Masters won by Angel Cabrera and The Players Championship won by Henrik Stenson.

Tiger Woods' two victories in 2009 are included and were won at the homes of two of golf's legends — The Arnold Palmer Invitational and last week's Memorial hosted by Jack Nicklaus. *Golfweek* published an article earlier this year by James Achenbach stating that in a blind test of a dozen set of irons Tiger chose the only two sets that had been SST PUREd as his gamers and backups. The King and the Bear also PURE their clubs.

With Gay's victory the money won by players with PUREd clubs climbed to more than \$81 million, well ahead of last year's record of over \$137 million.

Once again players with SST PUREd clubs in their bag had another outstanding week. Along with Brian Gay's victory, Paul Goydos, Robert Allenby, Graeme McDowell, Woody Austin, Jeff Overton, Rich Beem, and Lee Janzen all had top-20 finishes. Robert Garrigus was the longest driver for the week and Gay had the low scoring average.

Over on the Champions Tour SST is having another great year. Bernhard Langer is the Charles Schwab Cup points leader followed by Michael Allen who won the Senior PGA Championship a few weeks ago.

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