

COUNTDOWN – 7 WEEKS



2007 CHAMPIONS TOUR OPENS WITH FAMILIAR WINNER:

The Champions Tour opened its season in Hawaii over the weekend with the MasterCard Championship in fitting fashion, as the tour's all-time victory leader, **Hale Irwin**, notched a five-stroke victory. In garnering his 45th victory, the 61-year-old Irwin shot a 7-under 65 on Sunday to finish with a sparkling 23-under 193 total for the 54-hole event. The victory also stopped Irwin's winless streak, which dated back to October of 2005, 25 tournaments in all. He did not win on the Champions Tour last season, the first time in 12 seasons he did not win at least one event. Irwin opened the event with a 66 on Friday, followed by a tournament-low round of 62 on Saturday, as he outdistanced defending **AT&T Champions Classic** winner **Tom Kite** and **Jim Thorpe**, each of whom shot 198 to tie for second. While the **AT&T Champions Classic** is not one of the events Irwin has won, Kite, as mentioned, did win last year's event and the 2002 event at Valencia Country Club.

UP NEXT ON THE CHAMPIONS TOUR:

The Champions Tour players call Hawaii home for one more week, as **Loren Roberts** looks to defend his title at the Turtle Bay Championship. The Kahuku, Hawaii, based Palmer Course at Turtle Bay is the site.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NICK PRICE:

The Champions Tour welcomes a new member to the 50 and over set – **Nick Price**, a three-time Major winner hits the milestone on January 28th. Price won two PGA Championships (1992 and '94) and the 1994 British Open. He has 18 PGA Tour Victories and was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2003.

HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY:

Since this is our first edition, we missed sending birthday greetings to **Mark O'Meara**, who turned 50 on January 13. He won the 1998 Masters and the 1998 British Open and owns 16 PGA Tour victories in all.

WELCOME BACK JERRY AND PETER:

Jerry Pate and **Peter Jacobsen** returned to Champions Tour play following surgeries last summer. Pate had shoulder surgery, while Jacobsen had hip replacement surgery. Pate finished last week's season opener tied for 9th, while Jacobsen tied for 19th. Both players are expected to be among the field for the 2007 **AT&T Champions Classic**.

CHAMPIONS SCHEDULED TO RETURN:

AT&T Champions Classic tournament officials announced last week that in addition to reigning champ and 2002 winner **Tom Kite**, recent past winners of the event scheduled to appear in this year's tournament include: **Des Smyth**, the 2005 winner, **Gil Morgan** from 2004 and **Tom Purtzer**, the 2003 Classic winner.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Just last week tournament officials put out the call for local volunteer assistance for the upcoming event. Community members interested in aiding the operation of this year's tournament can check out the event website at www.attchampionsclassic.com and hit the volunteer link for more information.

TICKET SALES:

Tickets for this year's 54-hole stroke play event are available for purchase online at www.attchampionsclassic.com with a variety of ticket packages available. Tickets, which start as low as \$15, can also be purchased by calling 661-260-1897. A third option is to purchase a ticket through one of the Champions for Charity partners, including the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, Special Olympics Southern California/Santa Clarita Chapter, Domestic Violence Center of Santa Clarita, Santa Clarita Committee on Aging, the Santa Clarita Food Pantry and the SCV Youth Project.

TEE IT UP WITH THE PROS:

Pro-Am spots are available for Wednesday, March 14, and Thursday, March 15, at Valencia Country Club. The price per foursome is \$9,000 per day, which in addition to the round of golf on the tour's fourth hardest golf course, includes a VIP gift package; two tickets per Pro-Am participant for Tuesday night's pairing party, the Wednesday evening Gala and Awards Party and the Thursday Reception and Awards Party; and two general admission tickets. Contact the tournament office at 661-260-1897 for information.