

“Wednesday is the worst day of the week.” — MY SHOT, PAGE G12

Backspin

NEWS AND NOTES

by JIM GORANT



BIG BOLT Daly walked off the course after only 27 holes.

the opportunity... Perhaps inspired by the Tour's most notoriously sinful crowd, a record number of pros showed up for the players' informal Bible-study session on Wednesday night. The weekly meeting usually draws about 12 to 15 people, but **Aaron Baddeley**, who hosted at his home in Scottsdale, estimated the crowd at “easily 50-plus.”... **Tiger Woods** (*below*) enjoyed the win and the reported \$3 million appearance fee he got for playing in Dubai, but there was a downside. “Unfortunately I’m going to miss the Super Bowl,” he said after beating **Ernie Els** in sudden death, “so I’ll probably be making some calls on the plane to see who’s winning?”

Numbers

The stats from the deserts (Dubai and Scottsdale) provide a catchy handle for the possible future of pro golf: Tiger Woods and the Big Boppers. In Dubai, Woods earned his 66th pro victory while improving his playoff record on the PGA and European tours to 13–2, including a perfect 3–0 against Els. At the



FBR Open, **J.B. Holmes** averaged 320.5 yards off the tee (counting all his drives), with 23 of his 56 shots traveling more than 330 yards. Only 31 of those drives found the fairway, but the long ball trumps the short grass.

ALSO ...

- **Seve Ballesteros** says he will quit competitive golf—in 2011.
- The gold medal **Orville Moody** got for winning the 1969 U.S. Open was to be auctioned at Lyon and Turnbull in Edinburgh on Feb. 7.



Survey Says ...

Putters made by putters-only companies are used by about 10% of Tour pros. (Titleist is the top putter maker on Tour, at 39%.) Here are the top putters-only companies this year.

1. Seemore } TIE
2. Yes
3. Guerin Rife
4. STX
5. Daito Heavy Putter } TIE

The Darrell Survey has been tracking equipment at pro and amateur events since 1938.

Long Gone

John Daly blows off Phoenix, again

THESE ARE tough times for **John Daly**, with his wife being hauled off to prison and all, but that doesn't justify his acting like a punk on the golf course. At the FBR Open, Daly called in sick for Wednesday's pro-am, shot a 74 on Thursday and then a 40 on his first nine on Friday, at which point he walked directly to his car and left without telling a soul. Last year Daly spent the Tuesday before the FBR rocking out at a pre-Super Bowl event before jetting to town at the 11th hour, only to shoot 81 in the opening round, then WD. Daly should simply leave Scottsdale off his 2007 schedule. The dozens of players who failed to make it into the tournament would've coveted

New Math

Two starts and two playoffs add up to a 2–0 record for Tiger Woods

BUICK **JOSÉ MARÍA OLAZÁBAL** **APPEARANCE FEE** **ERNIE ELS** **TWO PLAYOFFS** **TIGER'S PERFECT START**

For more coverage of the Dubai Desert Classic, go to SI.com/golf.

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