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Which of the following is true? 1. Arnold Palmer will ceremoniously hit the first drive at this year's Masters. 2. Nancy Lopez is planning to compete again as a 50-year-old on the LPGA Tour this season. 3. PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem plans on running for mayor of Jacksonville, Fla. The answer: Palmer and Lopez will almost certainly happen, but as far as Finchem running for mayor, that's not in the works. He just plans on annexing the city, at least during this year's Players Championship at TPC Sawgrass.

Arnold Palmer Tournament Services started a trend when they erected a giant TV screen and some practice holes in downtown Manhattan during last year's US Open at Winged Foot. Never to be outdone, Finchem decided The Players Championship should make the concept their own. "We want the tournament to feel like it's downtown as well," Brian Goin, Executive Director of The Players Championship, told me. "With plans already in the motion, the PGA Tour is in the process of creating activities in downtown Jacksonville and spreading the economic impact across the city. It's going to be exciting that The Players will continue after the golf course shuts down. The fans will go back to the clubs, waterfront and other areas and still be able to feel The Players an environment downtown."

As for Arnie teeing it up for the opening drive at Augusta, it took Gary Player's recent comment that "he couldn't wait to do it as soon as he broke Arnie's record for Master's appearances in 2008." So Palmer is "seriously thinking about it and can't find any negatives." It would be great if Palmer and Nicklaus both did it from now on to be joined by Player in two years.

Nancy Lopez will play at least five events on the LPGA Tour this year starting with the Ginn Championship at Reunion in April.

So where have all the long hitters gone? Maybe they're just getting warmed up, but there are only seven PGA Tour players averaging more than 300 yards in driving distance, compared to 23 at the same time a year ago.

Ernie Els had some clubs SST PUREd this week and here's some trivia for you – the last time he missed a cut in a PGA Tour event was in 2004 at Bay Hill. His streak of consecutive cuts is 44, the longest on the tour, but not even close to Woods' record of 142.

The American President's Cup Team that will be playing the International team in Canada this year right now looks like this: Tiger Woods, Jim Furyk, Phil Mickelson, Charles Howell III, John Rollins, Chad Campbell, Davis Love III, Mark Calcavecchia, David Toms and Lucas Glover.



Vijay Singh and Charles Howell III continue at the top of the FedEx Cup Points ranking as the big names take a one week break in preparation for the Masters. Both players have had SST PURE their clubs and the results certainly show. Singh has won twice this year and Howell once.

SST players also continue to dominate the statistical accuracy categories. Take driving accuracy, for example. Last year players with SST PUREd clubs finished 1,2,3, and this year the top-four players have played with SST PUREd clubs: Jim Furyk leads, followed by Jose Coceres, Fred Funk and Joe Durant. The two players with the best scoring average are Jose Coceres and Robert Allenby, who also PUREs his clubs.

SST also dominates the Par 3 category where distance and accuracy are a premium. Coceres leads, followed by Funk and Padraig Harrington. The SST PURE victory list in 2007 began with Singh at the Mercedes Benz Championship, Paul Goydos at the Sony Hawaiian Open, Aaron Baddeley at the FBR Open in Phoenix, and Charles Howell III at the Nissan Open on the always difficult Riviera Course in Los Angeles. Fred Funk was in the winners circle when the Tour traveled to Mexico for the Mayakoba Golf Classic, Marc Calcavecchia won the Pods classic as the Tour started the Florida Swing and Vijay captured the inaugural Arnold Palmer Invitational on a very difficult Bay Hill course that saw only five players under par on Sunday. Funk added a win on The Senior Tour and Harrington and Paul Casey, both players have had SST PURE their clubs, won on as the European Tour began in the oil rich sheikdoms of the Middle East.

WHO GOT PUREd THIS WEEK?

Ernie Els had several clubs SST PUREd this week at Doral as did Padraig Harrington, Jim Furyk, Thomas Bjorn, Steve Striker, Thongchai Jaidee, Colin Montgomerie, and Scott Piercy. NBC announcer Roger Maltbie was also back in SST PUREing line.

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