



By: Steve Hosid
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Are you sitting down? Can you help put PGA commissioner on a respirator?

The big news as I'm writing this is the significant number of PGA Tour players who will be seeking European Tours card next year. The biggest name at the moment is Phil Mickelson, who is 99 percent sure of making the move. The reason? Pure economics. "I am talking about big figures in golf, big personalities who want to expand their horizons," said Guy Kinnings of the sports agency IMG, which represents many of the game's leading players.

Among those already announced to spend more time in Europe in 2009 are Vijay Singh and Robert Allenby. Allenby told me he has just about had it playing here in the States and money is not his reason for making the switch. "You'd be stupid not to join the European Tour," Allenby told me. "Some tournaments over here get a bit monotonous, with the thick rough. I miss the fairway by two feet and I'm screwed. My body hasn't been handling it very well, particularly my tennis elbow. The other thing is to freshen my mind up."

Some of the players may also be looking into a financial crystal ball with the American economy in turmoil and the PGA facing some sponsor cancellations and a less lucrative television contract. The same is not true in the countries the European Tour visits. Next year's lucrative "Road to Dubai" series will feature a final event played in the Emirates where players will be competing for a \$20 million purse. The \$10 million paid this year to Vijay Singh in the FedEx Cup is only half of the \$20 million "The Road" events will pay.

You'll still find Phil and Vijay playing events here in the States, but their PGA Tour schedules will be reduced. That will make it even harder for the Tour to lure the sponsorships needed in some events. So will we see some holes in next year's schedule where there is no PGA Tour event? It's a real possibility. The Tour has to be quaking about what they can hold the networks up for when the contracts come due within the next few years. This is what happens when they have continually asked sponsors to almost double their fees over the past few years. Is it any wonder sponsors are finding other sports or means to get their message across?

Tiger has made it clear he does not plan on switching to the European Tour but he really plays a limited schedule anyway, and you know he's not going to put his healing knee at risk with extra appearances.

If you have a chance to play the Black Course at Bethpage it's virtually all set for the 2009 U.S. Open. The only slight change from 2002 is you won't have to fly a tee shot 276 just to reach a fairway. They've changed that already.



SST PURE Wins Every FedEx Cup Event ... And the Championship

A few years ago at Doral, Camilo Villegas first had some clubs **PUREd**. His win in a playoff over Sergio Garcia on Sunday at the Tour Championship was his second in the FedEx Cup Championship. Vijay Singh won the other two as well as the overall points total to capture the FedEx Cup and the coveted \$10-million bonus.

Before we ring the cash register and total up all the money that will be added to the \$110 million already won by players on the PGA Tour with a history of asking SST to PURE their clubs, let's look at the number of tournaments they've won this year.

Villegas's victory in the TOUR Championship boosted the victory total to 30. If it seems like SST PURE players win almost every week you're just about right. Players who have PUREd their clubs have won four in a row, all the FedEx Cup events and six of the last seven events. Add in the two majors won back to back this year by Padraig Harrington and the champagne corks have to be popping at the SST corporate offices. This success is the result of many years of hard work of educating the pros and amateurs about the difference PUREing makes by SST PURE founder and CEO Dick Weiss and his outstanding team.

So here is the money won total and it's astronomical: \$123 million won by SST players in 2008.

Let's go to Eastlake, the host course for the Tour Championship and hear from Arnie Cunningham, the SST PURE tour rep. Kenny Perry PUREs his clubs and has won three times this year and enjoyed a fabulous Ryder Cup but he had a problem with a new club just built for him by his club sponsor.

"Kenny Perry told me he was struggling with his 3-wood," Arnie said. "I asked him if I could retro PURE it (in the SST PURE Shaft Alignment Lab on the PGA Tour). Afterward I went on the course with Kenny to watch him hit it. It went much straighter and 13 yards farther than the backup TaylorMade built him. He said it was back in the bag and he also asked for a retro PURE of his 5-wood."

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