

Doug Hansen's

PGA PROSPECTIVE

(.....MY R A N T)



# THE ICEMAN RECOMETH

## A Masters champion at 21 with how many more at 41?

Poughkeepsie, New York

"Phenomenal" is what comes to mind these days watching young men and women taking on golf (a somewhat difficult game, I think) and playing the game in such a fashion that prompted a remark from **Bobby Jones** about **Jack Nicklaus** after Jack won the 1965 Masters: "Nicklaus played a game with which I am not familiar." Well into the back-nine of my life I can only watch in oftentimes utter disbelief on the kind of golf being played on courses as long and difficult as the ever-evolving Augusta National is. And with the way **Jordan Spieth** – he of ice water in his veins - dismantled the old Southern Belle, this year's U.S. Open at Chambers Bay ought to be great theater. These young lions play without fear; without intimidation. Young Mr. Spieth has been working to his Masters victory for a long time – no different than **Tiger Woods** had his goals set the moment he first used the interlocking grip. And watching the way the champion played, and the way **Justin Rose**, **Phil Mickelson** and **Rory McElroy** took the course apart I was left thinking this: How much

longer and more difficult will the great and secretive inner sanctum geniuses that comprise Augusta National's brute squad going to make next year's Masters? One can suppose all they need to do is keep buying more and more land so no one tears the place apart. That way of thinking to, at least to me, is going the wrong way. I believe the neatest way to make a golf course more difficult is the keep the ball rolling as much as possible. Augusta doesn't need rough – oh, excuse me, a "second cut." The Masters to me, and a lot of other people, is still about birdies and eagles and water on the back nine on Sunday. We watch for train wrecks, even though we bleed for them. That's why we love the 17<sup>th</sup> at Sawgrass. Really, it's as close as we can get to the ancient days of the gladiators, chariot races and lions getting a free lunch at the Coliseum in Rome. The only thing missing at that hole is another island on which sits **Pete Dye** and **Deane Beman** sitting on a pair of gold director chairs giving the thumbs up or down – just like Caligula.

I don't know how many jokes were created about 13 seconds after the Super Bowl ended in a fashion that heretofore I thought only my beloved Rams were capable of such a defeat. But the best one I heard was this:

"It was announced by the Vatican that **Pete Carroll** was just put on the Pope's staff. Seems Pete is the only person in history to make 100 million people stand up and scream the Lord's name at the same time." (I cleaned it up a bit.)

Speaking of the Rams, my winter was made when they shipped **Sam Bradford** to Philadelphia. My boys just might have a chance this year. Never did care that much for Sam. Nice to see **Alex Rodriguez** playing baseball again - but I think his and every other cheater's records should be tossed.

WWBGD?

That stands for, "What Would **Bart Giamatti** Do?"

If Giamatti never left us so soon the only one found juicing would have been **Lenny Dykstra**.

And my boyhood hero, **Roger Maris**, would still have the record. Loved Jack predicting his hole in one, by the way.

This mayor of New York City? Boy, he's something else, isn't he?

I was reading this media piece on **Sarah Palin** and how everything about her is good except when she opens her mouth and I get to thinking: Anyone ever record the stuff that comes out of **Joe Biden's** mouth?

Loved all of your comments on the survey – you guys are the best.