



Missed putts mean loss of big bucks on PGA Tour

U.S. company calculates lost prize money left on greens

BY RANDY PHILLIPS, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE JUNE 4, 2009



Mike Weir has lost \$3.5 million US in prize money because of missed putts, according to AimPoint Technologies. Jim Furyk's putting cost him the most among PGA golfers at \$10 million over the four-year period studied.

Photograph by: Getty, Getty

The old line about "driving for show and putting for dough" is gospel in professional golf.

The proof comes from AimPoint Technologies, a U.S. company that devised the award-winning technology seen on telecasts of PGA Tour events each week -- the overlaid graphic that shows the path of a player's putt and the amount of break that should be played.

Technology has also allowed AimPoint (www.aimpointgolf.com) to compose statistical data for each player on the PGA Tour, showing how much more money each one would have won if he had made just one more putt per event from 2005 to 2008.

Jim Furyk, a 13-time winner on the PGA Tour and fourth in career earnings with \$40,309,429 US, could have earned an additional \$10,019,759 over the four-year period had he made one more putt per tournament, according to AimPoint.

That includes \$2,457,884 in 2008, when he made 23 of 26 cuts before finishing with \$3,455,714 in earnings.

Completing the top six of those whose putting cost plenty: Vijay Singh, \$7,240,331; Sergio Garcia, \$6,814,266; Tiger Woods, \$6,813,513; Luke Donald, \$5,093,267; and Phil Mickelson, \$4,970,460.

Ontario's Mike Weir missed putts totalling \$3,523,052 (\$2,014,980 in 2008), while missed putts cost Calgary's Stephen Ames \$2,125,313 (\$1,096,694 in 2008).

Tim Clark has earned more than \$13 million on the PGA Tour since 2001, so there shouldn't be any tears shed after he missed a crucial putt in the final stages of last Sunday's Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial.

Clark and Steve Marino ultimately lost to Steve Stricker on the second playoff hole.

But anyone who has ever played the game can readily identify with the sinking feeling that goes with blowing a makeable putt, whether you're a duffer closing in on a personal-best round or playing a buddy for bragging rights or a few dollars.

Clark, a 33-year-old South African, was looking for his first PGA Tour win after going 0-for-183, and would have finally broken through -- despite coughing up a two-shot lead with five holes to play -- had he not missed a seven-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole.

Finishing tied for second, Clark took home \$545,600, or \$670,400 less than the winner's cheque.

Clark was seventh on AimPoint's list heading into this season, with \$4,888,446 missing from his bank account because of his failure to make one more putt in each of the 172 tournaments he's played over the period of the study. He made the cut 161 times during that period.

A dejected Clark told reporters after Sunday's debacle that he had "a lot of work to do when it comes to closing out golf tournaments."

Considering the amount of money even some of the game's best players have let slip through their hands, he's not alone.

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