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HALE IRWIN SHOOTS 64 TO TAKE FIRST ROUND LEAD

VALENCIA, CA – Hale Irwin carded an 8-under 64 to take a two shot lead after the first round of the AT&T Champions Classic at Valencia Country Club today.

Starting from the 10th tee, Irwin had a bogey five on his first hole and then birdied three straight holes, all par fours to set the tone for the remainder of the round. After finishing his first nine holes with a 34, the World Golf Hall of Fame member had four birdies and an eagle over the last nine holes for a 30. Irwin's 64 is the lowest first round score since the event moved to Valencia Country Club in 2001.

“It was absolutely ideal scoring conditions today,” said Irwin, who opened the 2007 Champions Tour season with a victory in the MasterCard Championship in Hawaii. “I started with a three-putt and left a few out there on the first nine. We have a great field, and it's harder to win out here now with all the new players. You have to stay more focused now. I'm delighted to play like this and want to continue it the next couple of days.”

Irwin leads a trio of players at 6-under, including Isao Aoki, David Edwards and Jim Thorpe. Three shots back from Irwin is another group of three players with John Jacobs, Loren Roberts and Fuzzy Zoeller, all with 5-under 67s for today. For Roberts, the 67 marked his 33rd consecutive round of par or better, breaking Larry Nelson's previous Champions Tour record. Roberts started his streak at the 2006 Wal-Mart First Tee Open at Pebble Beach last September.

Friday's scoring average of 71.227 was the lowest scoring average for a round since the tournament moved here in 2001. The previous low was 72.078 during the second round of the 2004 event. In all, there were 15 eagles made in the first round, nine of them coming on the par-5 9th hole.

Tickets are for sale at the tournament main gate entrance for \$15 daily through Sunday.

(more)

2007 AT&T Champions Classic

1ST Round Notes

- Loren Roberts set a new Champions Tour record by posting his 33rd consecutive round par/better, breaking Larry Nelson's record of 32. Nelson set the mark in 2000. Roberts shot a 5-under-par 67 on Friday. During his current streak, Roberts has posted 23 rounds in the 60s and is a combined 110-strokes-under-par. Roberts started his streak at the 2006 Wal-Mart First Tee Open at Pebble Beach last September.
- Hale Irwin's 8-under-par 64 was the lowest first-round score since the event moved to the Valencia CC in 2001. The previous low was 65 by Jose Maria Canizares and Bob Charles in 2001 and later matched by Gil Morgan in 2003. Irwin's 64 also matched the tournament course record set by Larry Nelson (2nd round) in 2001 and later tied by Walter Morgan (final round/2001), Joe Inman (final round/2004) and Tom Kite (2nd round/2006)
- Jay Haas, Fuzzy Zoeller, Tom Jenkins, Morris Hatalsky and Ed Dougherty all posted bogey-free rounds on Friday. Going back to last week's tournament (Toshiba Classic) where he was a record-setting winner, Haas has made just one bogey in his last 72 holes (No. 8/final round) and just two in his last 87 holes going back to the ACE Group Classic.
- Peter Jacobsen (back), Scott Hoch (hand) and R.W. Eaks (back) all withdrew during Friday's rounds due to injuries.
- Los Angeles native John Jacobs continued his strong play. He finished T9 last week (his first top-10 since 2005) and shot a 5-under-par 67 on Friday and is currently T5. Jacobs shared the distinction of the fewest putts in Friday's round (24) with David Edwards and Joe Ozaki.
- Defending champion Tom Kite shot a 3-under-par 69 and is currently T11.
- Friday's scoring average of 71.227 was the lowest scoring average for a round since the tournament moved here in 2001. The previous low was 72.078 in 2004 (2nd round). It was also more than two strokes lower than the opening round in 2006 (73.615). A total of 23 players in the 75-man field finished with rounds in the 60s and 46 posted sub-par rounds. Last year only 23 players finished with rounds under par in the first round and eight had rounds in the 60s. However, weather conditions were much different on Friday with sunny skies and temperatures in the low 90s. A year ago, the highs were only in the upper 40s on Friday.
- Dale Douglass bettered his age (71) for the fifth time in his career when he shot a 2-under-par 70 on Friday. The last time he accomplished the feat was in 2005 when he shot a 66 in the second round of the 2005 Commerce Bank Championship at age 69.
- Eduardo Romero has now recorded seven straight rounds in the 60s, the best current streak on the Champions Tour. It also matched Loren Roberts string earlier this year.
- Tom Purtzer had the day's long drive of 341 yards on No. 10.

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