

All I Want for Christmas—2006*By: Nathan Crace Date: November 25, 2006*

I've actually received emails from readers who say they look forward to my annual Christmas wish list that appears in this column each December. What started a few years ago as a way to meet a deadline on the day before Thanksgiving has become, apparently, somewhat of a regular piece. So without further hesitation, herewith is this year's Christmas list (by the way, to date, no one has fulfilled any of these wishes over the years). As always, whether or not you celebrate Christmas, this list is primarily golf centered (world peace, etc. is a given each year).

8. **A Normal Life for Michelle Wie.** Although there may be no looking back unless she crashes and burns professionally, as the father of three I wish she could have the normal life of a teenager. At the very least, stop giving her exemptions into PGA Tour events. Not that it matters to me if a qualified woman plays golf with the guys, but she needs to do better on the LPGA Tour first. Annika Sorenstam doesn't even want to play with the guys all of the time.

7. **A Good Year for the Big Easy.** The guy and the City. Ernie Els needs to get back in the winner's circle and it's been too long since we've seen the Ernie of old with a mantle full of Major trophies and winning with style. And for the City of New Orleans and the entire Gulf Coast through Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, continued recovery, the return of snow birds, and another season with no hurricanes.

6. **A Wake Up Call for Morgan Pressel.** With 8 top 10 finishes in 23 starts and nearly \$500,000 in winnings for the year, she may be the only person disappointed with her rookie year—whether she admits or not. She is way too talented and full of fire to go a whole season without a win. Okay, it was her rookie year, but I look for big things from Pressel in 2007.

5. **Another Tiger Slam.** When he won the British Open, I wrote that there would be folks talking about the next Tiger Slam before the PGA Championship. Well, with Medinah behind him, he's halfway home and the exclamation point he put on 2006 could very well carry his momentum into 2007.

4. **A Champions Tour Major for Bruce Lietzke.** Here's a guy who has only missed two cuts on the Champions Tour in 119 starts (and went 22 for 22 in 2006). He finished He finished 26th on the money list with 5 top tens, a second place finish and a third place finish. But there are many guys on the Tour that the everyday golfer can identify with. Known for lack of practice and a desire to spend more time with his family than on the road, he's due for some more hardware on his mantle

3. **A President's Cup Win for the United States.** Like most golfers on this side of the pond, I'm tired of our guys getting pistol whipped in the Ryder Cup. There's some hope in the President's Cup, but hopefully a win in 2007 will get our guys pumped up for the 2008 Ryder Cup when they return to where I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky when the Ryder Cup comes to Valhalla.

2. **A Successful First Year for the FedEx Cup.** Much has been written by those who primarily cover the Tour on whether or not this experiment will be a success. I wonder if it will make much of a difference to the best players who take off the end of the season anyway and there's not much hope for putting a dent in football viewership. Like everyone else, I will have to wait and see, but I don't want to see it fall flat on its face.

1. **Something to Do for Those of You Who Actually Look Forward to This List Each Year.** I appreciate the readership, but I don't need the added pressure. Merry Christmas!

Nathan Crace is a golf course architect and member of the Golf Writers Association of America whose freelance "Lipouts" column appears in a number of regional and national golf publications. If you would like to read past columns from the archives, log on to www.lipouts.com. Copyright 2006.