

SCHUSS! U.S. Skiers Make Downhill History

Sports Illustrated

Crowd Pleaser
Phil Mickelson thrills the throngs at Scottsdale—p. 56



SUPER BOWL XXXIX

Down Pat

The New England Patriots Celebrate Their Third Championship in Four Years

BY MICHAEL SILVER

After the game-clinching interception, Rodney Harrison and Mike Vrabel are all smiles

THE SHOW

From the sublime to the silly, there was something for every golfer at the season-



THE GOLF SEASON actually kicks off twice every year—during the second week of January when the pros tee it up at the Mercedes Championships, and a couple of weeks later when the golf industry gathers in Orlando for the PGA Merchandise Show. Two trends were obvious at this year's show: Supersized 460-cubic-centimeter drivers are now de rigueur, and long irons are going the way of the kiltie, replaced by easier-to-hit hybrid clubs. Otherwise, these items caught our eye:



HOT NEWCOMER You know a club is the real deal when the pros play it without compensation. Last year it took only two months for the **Nickent Genex** (\$89.99, golfsmith.com) to become the most popular hybrid on the Nationwide tour. The pros are especially fond of the 14-degree model.



BOTTOMS UP Unless you're one of those golfers who's always making an ass of yourself on the course, we're not sure why you'd want a baboon's butt on your bag, but **Buttheadz** (\$29.95, buttheadcovers.com) headcovers are so silly we couldn't resist showing them to you.

BOMBS AWAY! **BIG FIVE** A triple-flex shaft (MacTec NVG), a new version of a classic (Big Bertha 454), Tiger's stick (Ignite) and adjustable weights (Redline RPM and Big Ben CS-3) highlighted the category.



> Hogan Big Ben C-S3 (\$399, bent Hogan.com)

> Callaway Big Bertha Titanium 454 (\$299.95, edwinwatts.com)

> Nike Ignite (\$299.99, edwinwatts.com)

> Adams Redline RPM (\$299.95, theworldofgolf.com)

> MacGregor MacTec NVG (\$399.95, theworldofgolf.com)