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AP

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That was the case even this year when he won the Korn Ferry Tour points list.

During a month break in the schedule in late spring, Steelman was so frustrated with his driving that he went on eBay and bought a driver shaft, a 3-wood shaft and a hybrid head. He also bought a putter, an old TaylorMade

Rossa Daytona, that he used the rest of the season.

And he wasn't done.

“Two weeks later, I bought off True Temper's website a steel fiber graphite iron shaft and put it in an 8-iron and messed around with it on the range at home,” Steelman said. “I took it out on tour and showed the guys this is what I want. They said: ‘This is terrible. It’s too light, it's no good, you're going to hate it.’ The swing weight was five weights too light. I said: ‘Perfect. Can you build a set?’”

He said his approach statistics improved two shots the rest of the year. He figures it worked in part because “I did it myself so I trust it even more.” But it was how he found it that showed that Steelman isn't afraid to try anything.

He loved the driver shaft he bought on eBay so much that he went on ChatGPT and wrote, “Is there an iron shaft that has a similar feel?”

“It was perfect,” Steelman said. “I cut it, glued it, put it in and it felt great. I trust it because it came from me. I swing fast, I hit it a long way, I hit it high. No rep in his right mind would say, ‘I think you should use this graphite shaft in your irons.’”

He is the ultimate gear head, developed from his high school days when he worked in a club repair shop in the winter and learned how to build, grind and bend clubs. He got away from it while at Missouri and Georgia Tech, but it never really left him — especially this year.

“That's the romantic part of golf, finding something you're really excited about and knowing you have a special connection to it because it's something you found,” he said. “It gets lost as a professional because we can text somebody and it (a club) will show up in two days. That's never been my path in golf.”

Rosters are filling up with youth

The youth are starting to emerge in the fun part — formally “silly season” — in golf, whether it's the Skins Game or the TGL indoor league or even the mixed-team Grant Thornton Invitational.

Jackson Koivun, who went from Auburn to the Presidents Cup in a little under four months, already is part of all three — the Skins Game with Justin Thomas, Brooks Koepka and Wyndham Clark; the Motor City team on TGL; and the Grant Thornton with LPGA newcomer Kiara Romero of Oregon.

Romero and Koivun were No. 1 in the amateur ranking before turning pro.

TGL, meanwhile, is expanding its teams to five players to allow for strategy and time off (mostly the latter), and with the new Motor City team, the indoor league has 35 players.

Ben James, who turned pro out of Virginia as No. 1 in the PGA Tour University ranking, is playing for Los Angeles; 19-year-old Blades Brown, who got his PGA Tour card through the Korn Ferry Tour, has joined The Bay Golf Club; Michael Brennan, who went from the PGA Tour Americas to three PGA Tour titles in the span of a year, is playing with Atlanta Drive.

Other newcomers include Alex Fitzpatrick joining brother Matt for New York, and Michael Thorbjornsen going from alternate to part of the roster for Boston Common.

Tiger's field in the Bahamas announced without Tiger — yet

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The 20-man field has nine of the top 12 in the world ranking, missing Masters champion Rory McIlroy, U.S. Open champion Wyndham Clark and Tommy Fleetwood.

Also missing — for now — is Woods .

The field has reserved three spots for exemptions for players from the top 50 in the world ranking published after the Tour Championship, with an exception made for the tournament host.

Eugenio Chacarra is going places

Eugenio Chacarra has gone from a tie for third in France, a runner-up finish in Spain and a victory in India to take over the lead on the Race to Dubai on the European tour. He is the only player from the top three in the points race who is playing in South Korea this week .

Now it's about far more than just securing a PGA Tour card for 2027, which he already has locked up. Chacarra is up to No. 39 in the world, strengthening his bid to finish the year among the top 50 to earn an invitation to the Masters.

If he were to win the Race to Dubai, Chacarra would be exempt into the two early \$20 million signature events next year on the PGA Tour at Pebble Beach and Riviera.

It's quite the turnaround for the Oklahoma State alum, who was No. 2 in the world amateur ranking when he started his pro career with LIV Golf for three years until his contract wasn't renewed. He has four European tour wins in the last two years.

"I know what I'm capable of," Chacarra said. "I was one of the best amateurs in the world and I wanted to be one of the best professional players in the world."

Bill Murray in new documentary on Irish golf

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Stat of the week

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Final word

"I think no matter what happens ... the rest of the year, I'll sit down at Christmas and have the Irish Open trophy on the table and I'll be happy with what I have." — Shane Lowry.

See AP's full golf coverage [here](#)

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