



# Four Days in July: Tom Watson, the 2009 Open Championship, and a Tournament for the Ages

*Jim Huber*

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In July 2009, the sports world watched breathlessly as Watson, just shy of his sixtieth birthday and twenty-six years after his last Open title, battled Father Time through four amazing rounds at Turnberry. In *Four Days in July*, award-winning golf writer and commentator Jim Huber takes the reader from tee to fairway, from green to clubhouse, providing an intimate look at Watson's inspiring run.

Entering the tournament as a sentimental wild card and nine years removed from his last top-ten finish in any of the four majors, "Old Tom" proceeded to shock the golf world by shooting an opening round 65. Although commentators and fans doubted he could keep up the level of play throughout the entire tournament, Watson proceeded not only to grab the lead but carry it into the final day.

In Huber's hands, we can practically smell the wind blowing off the Irish Sea as we follow Watson and caddie Neil Oxman hole-by-hole along the Ailsa Course. A fascinating parallel narrative emerges as Stewart Cink, the fellow American more than twenty-three years Watson's junior who would be dubbed "The Man Who Shot Santa Claus," catches Watson in the fading sunlight that Sunday in Scotland and claims the British Open in a heart-wrenching four-hole playoff.

The first media figure to speak with Watson at the end of each day, Huber mines his exclusive interviews with this golf legend as well as Oxman, Cink, and many other luminaries to recount a heroic tale of resilience, grit, and determination. This unforgettable story of the greatest links player ever and his courageous refusal to go gently into that good night is an unforgettable story that redeems the aging athlete in us all.

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