

Tiger deserves all he can get from PGA Tour

by J.A. Adande
Los Angeles Times
November 08, 2000

Tiger Woods is not the first athlete to transcend sports. What makes his little tiff with PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem noteworthy is that Woods is the first athlete who has the opportunity to compete and draw attention outside the normal parameters of his sport.

In the latest issue of Golf World magazine, Woods complained about his relationship with Finchem and, more seriously, said he was unhappy with the way the tour and its partners use Woods for marketing without his consent.

According to the article, a rift opened up when the PGA wouldn't allow Woods' father to follow him in a cart during the exhibition duel with David Duval at Sherwood Country Club last year. But the promotional usage is the main issue, and in the interview Woods said the conflict was "Serious enough that if we don't make everyone aware of it now, it could escalate into a bigger situation."

Don't expect much to come of his remarks that Finchem talks to him only when he wants him to play in a tournament. What would they have to talk about if they held a longer discussion?

But Woods sounds intent on getting what's his.

"I believe in what I believe in," Woods said. "I understand the whole picture."

It's always good to see athletes think like businessmen, because all too often they get the short end of the corporate dynamics of professional sports.

Woods is entitled to try for as much as he can get.

Everyone from the sponsors to the greenskeepers makes money off him. The dollars have poured into the sport since he turned pro in

1996.

Just look at one case of the trickle-down effect (or, if you prefer, the "Mickel-down" effect). Phil

Mickelson won four tournaments in the pre-Tiger year of 1996 and collected \$1,697,799. Winning four PGA events this year helped him earn more than \$4.7 million. Phil, Amy and little baby Amanda Mickelson can all thank Woods.

Mickelson's bank account is only one sign of how Woods' popularity has brought millions of dollars to the game.

The tour, the networks and affiliated sponsors (some of them competitors with Woods' sponsors) use

lion from the Chicago Bulls in the last two years of his NBA career.

Jordan fought similar battles over his valuable name and image, and he was able to maintain control of the use of his likeness to a large degree. Jordan's face wasn't on those caricature shirts that were so popular in the late 1980s and early '90s. He didn't appear in NBA-licensed video games that featured other players from the league.

Like Woods, Jordan became bigger than the sport he played. The difference was, Jordan was more reliant on the NBA than Woods is on the PGA Tour.

Watching Jordan without high-

maintaining on the exemption he secured for winning the 1997 Masters and will have five-year exemptions for winning the U.S. Open and British Open and the PGA Championship this year. So he could fill his calendar with exhibitions around the world for the next couple of years and still show up when it counts.

Ryder Cup? Woods was so successful this year that he has more than twice as many qualifying points as second-place Mickelson, and could probably finish among the top 10 even if he were shut out next year. And if he didn't happen to qualify in 2001 or beyond, don't you think the TV honchos would be calling every day with certain "suggestions" about who should be chosen with the captains' picks?

There are too many dollars at stake.

Is it all about money? On the PGA Tour, the answer is:

- a) yes.
- b) yep.
- c) you betcha.
- d) all of the above.

The value of the purses on the PGA Tour has swelled to \$170 million, from \$96 million in 1998. Television ratings have soared (the final round of the PGA produced the highest TV ratings for that event since 1971 and was watched by an estimated 38.5 million viewers. On the other hand, what made Tiger Tiger was his participation in the PGA Tour, with all of its established marketing tools, and the chance to prove himself by beating the best players in the world.

He has leverage, which is why the PGA will listen to him. And he has brains, which is why he'll realize the tour is the best place for him to be, the two sides will work something out, and they'll all walk away with even more money.

-Tiger Woods

"I believe in what I believe in... I understand the whole picture."

Woods in promos every chance they get.

Should Tiger be getting the, uh, lion's share of all this money, including the next TV contract that should top \$500 million?

"In a perfect world, I would be," he said. "Arnold (Palmer) would be. All the great ones would be. Arnold is the one who got it all started."

And Woods is simply the latest superstar athlete who won't ever recoup his actual worth.

Yes, even though he has a chance to win more than \$10 million on the tour this year, plus endorsement deals that will bring him \$100 million from Nike alone, Woods is underpaid - just as Michael Jordan was when he made more than \$60 mil-

lion from the Chicago Bulls in the last two years of his NBA career. Jordan fought similar battles over his valuable name and image, and he was able to maintain control of the use of his likeness to a large degree. Jordan's face wasn't on those caricature shirts that were so popular in the late 1980s and early '90s. He didn't appear in NBA-licensed video games that featured other players from the league.

Like Woods, Jordan became bigger than the sport he played. The difference was, Jordan was more reliant on the NBA than Woods is on the PGA Tour.

Watching Jordan without high-caliber teammates such as Scottie Pippen wouldn't be the same, nor would it be as exciting if he weren't playing against the Lakers, Pistons and Jazz.

But people will tune in simply to watch Tiger vs. the course. That was evident by the strong TV ratings for the final rounds of this year's U.S. and British Opens, which were practically victory laps for Woods.

And more than 10 million people watched him go one-on-one against Sergio Garcia in an exhibition in August, making it the 15th-highest rated TV program of the week.

Woods knows that his place in history will be judged by how many majors he wins.

He still has seven more years re-

When bad teams happen to good players

The Sporting News
November 08, 2000

As a George Washington freshman, Sir Valiant Brown lived every player's dream: He shot the ball whenever he wanted. It was fun, he admits, but not as much as it would have been if his 738 points resulted in an NCAA Tournament bid instead of a 15-15 record.

It can be easy to overlook or underestimate those gifted players whose teams are unsuccessful. Their numbers may be dismissed because they don't add up to victory; their production can be diminished because there's not enough help from teammates.

Dean Oliver entered last season as the Sporting News' No. 15 point guard after averaging 11.9 points and 4.5 assists and guiding Iowa to the 1999 Sweet 16. But when his shooting percentage dropped to .369 and his assists fell 4.2 per game as a junior — and the Hawkeyes fell to 14-16 — he was left out of this season's top 20. It's conceivable he played as well or better but was a victim of his team's struggles.

"You've got to have a positive attitude, and you have to take it as a learning experience," says guard Will Solomon, who averaged 21.1 points for 10-20 Clemson. "I learned that you work hard every time you step out on the floor. We didn't feel sorry for ourselves; you can't feel sorry for yourself in this league. If you're down, they're going to keep you down."

Nearly every major-conference player is used to winning when he arrives. So dealing with defeat can be a huge adjustment, one few players want to make.

"I think I can do many things on the court as an individual, but what are the things I can do to help Josh Steintal get an open shot, or stretch the defense so Jason Heide can go one-on-one," says Oregon State senior Deandra Tanner, who averaged 14.2 points and 5.1 assists for a 13-16 team.

"When you're a point guard, the responsibility falls on you. If our team were Top 10, I'd be first-team All-American and all that, considering the numbers I have. Considering that's not so, it's not able to happen."

Top Five Questions for 2001 for NCAA Men's Basketball

The Sporting News
November 08, 2000

1. What could keep Duke from winning the national title?

If it's anything other than injury, it would be defense. It sounds funny to say that about a Duke team, but even the Blue Devils have been saying it. They recognize they were too easy to score against last year. The three teams that beat them after February 1 averaged 89 points and .502 shooting, and opposing guards (Florida's Brett Nelson, Maryland's Juan Dixon and St. John's Erick Barkley and Bootsie Thornton) did much of that damage. Guard Jason Williams has to get better at the ball, and center Carlos Boozer must fight harder to defend the post. But they were only freshmen last season. Now, they're veterans.

2. What could make Arizona's Wildcats as good as they think they are?

We've heard clear signals from the Wildcats they are not pleased any one would consider Duke as the favorite to win the national title. The Wildcats recognize their individual talent, but fail to remember they lost seven games last season, with one of those to a USC team missing big man Sam Clancy and another to LSU in a 26-point humiliation.

Three of Arizona's seven losses came after center Loren Woods was injured, but what all of them had in common was errant (and frequent) shooting by guards Gilbert Arenas and Jason Gardner. When Arizona won, Arenas and Gilbert combined to shoot 20 times a game and hit .435. When Arizona lost, they averaged 26 shots and hit .377. If the guards remember their talented teammates, the Wildcats could be nearly unbeatable.

3. What will North Carolina and Wisconsin take from last year's Final Four trips?

If they didn't gain confidence from that experience, it'll have been nothing but a wonderful memory. Both teams broke down completely during stretches of last year's conference play and a tournament run was only the first step in restoring their confidence. The next step must come from the coaching staff and be reinforced through solid conditioning and practice.

4. How many teams will the ACC get to the tournament?

Since the output of each of the previous years. Teams in the ACC have grown up - and they've scheduled well. We'll see Duke, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, Wake Forest and NC State on the board next March.

5. Will Roy Williams still be glad he stayed in Kansas come March?

Maybe more so. Even KU folks don't seem to understand how much of a difference point guard Kirk Hinrich might make. As a starter in the season's final months, he averaged 8.5 points, 4.5 assists and .439 3-point shooting, and he dramatically improved the Jayhawks' on-ball defense. Hinrich and big men Nick Collison and Drew Gooden figure to be more mature as sophomores, and center Eric Chenoweth and guard Kenny Gregory are talking a lot about ending their careers in style.

Wouldn't a trip to Minneapolis for the Final Four make Williams feel right at home?

BEST WINGS USA
QUAKER STEAK & LUBE®

ONLY \$8.99!

ALL YOU CAN EAT WING-NITE EVERY TUESDAY 5-9PM SEE YOU AT THE LUBE PEACH & I 90