

Professional Sports

Tiger Reigns Victorious Once Again

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Tiger Woods tips his cap to the gallery at the Arnold Palmer Invitational after picking up his first victory after a 30 month drought.

(Photo Courtesy of eldespertadoramericano.com)

With all of the trouble and injuries circulating the former number one golfer in the world over the past two years, Tiger Woods seems to finally be back to his former self... for now. After winning the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill on Sunday evening, Tiger's victory marks his seventh at the event and his first PGA Tour victory in two and a half years.

Coming into Sunday, Woods had a one shot lead over Northern Ireland's

Graeme McDowell and had to battle with him throughout Sunday, just as they did in 2010 when McDowell beat Woods for the World Challenge title. But this scenario was different, Woods, wearing his "Sunday Red," was leading going into the final round and had a lot to prove to his critics on whether he could return to his former self, and he certainly was able to do so this particular weekend.

McDowell got off to a rocky start, but after an 50+ foot eagle putt on hole 6, he looked as though he was ready to make a run at Tiger. But after Tiger continued to birdie and par every hole from that point on, Woods had a five stroke lead going into the 18th hole and Woods walked down the fairway at Bay Hill with a giant smile on his face, knowing that he had already won the event.

The stage was set for his first victory in 30 months and the men and women who once turned their back on the Florida native, were soon making some serious cheers from the crowds as he sunk his final putt. As he picked up his ball from the hole he lifted his cap and acknowledged the crowd for their support the entire weekend, he then shook hands with McDowell and his caddy, and then gave a big hug to his own caddy, Joe LaCava.

As Woods then walked off of the green, everyone watching around the country heard the commentator say, "Watch out boys on the PGA Tour, Tiger Woods is back."

When it was all said and done Woods finished -13, McDowell -8 and Ian Poulter rounded out the top three with a score of -6 for the Invitational. The victory for Woods moves him from the 18th top golfer in the world to the sixth after just one victory, but his true test will come when he tees off at Augusta National at the Masters on April 5.

When he travels back to Augusta, Ga. where he had been practicing prior to the Arnold Palmer Invitational, he will once again be out to prove that he is indeed back, and will continue to move up in the world golfer rankings. Since his off of the course incidents, Woods has had lost many of his fans do to his lack of judgement, whether or not those people will be won back by Tiger's play remains to be unclear.

Utley Addresses Media, Will Miss Season Opener

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Chase Utley, the Philadelphia Phillies second basemen, has been rumored to be thinking about retiring from baseball due to a knee injury. For many Phillies fans, the news was disheartening. This is the second basemen we have come to know and love. The Phillies have won a World Series, the NL East the last several years, and the NLCS a few times with Utley at second base.

At a press conference on Sunday, March 25, 2012 Utley proclaimed that he will in fact not be retiring from baseball. Many fans heard the rumors because Utley went away from

the team for a week and asked to have his whereabouts held confidential. He left the team to seek medical treatment from an ailing left knee.

In his press conference he told the press that he is not seeking surgery or any type of shots for the pain unless a doctor can guarantee 100% that the surgery will fix the problem. The problem is also not what reports said it was. Utley fixed that misunderstanding on Sunday as well, telling the media that his knee condition is called chondromalacia, which is a roughening of the cartilage underneath the patellar. Utley made it clear

to the fans where exactly he has been, he was in Phoenix, seeing a physical therapist. He received strengthening routines that he is to instill into his daily routine.

Utley, 33, claims he has a lot of baseball left to play. Although no one is certain on his return to the team, one thing is clear, playing on opening day is out of the question. With there being no known return for Utley, the Phillies must find a replacement for him for the second year in a row. But as fans, let's hope that he returns much faster than his seven week stint on the DL last year.

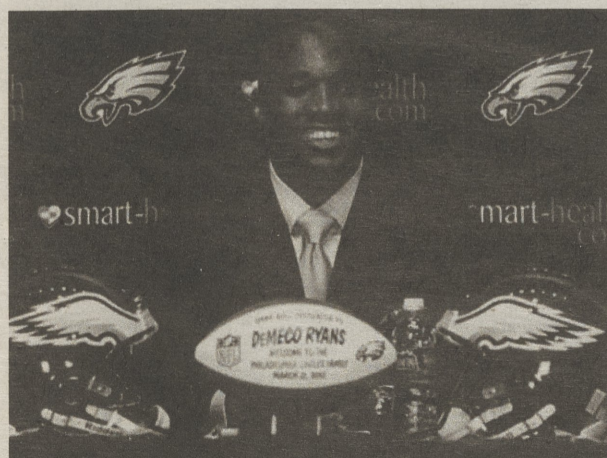
Utley is being very optimistic with his new routines. He has mentioned that he is already feeling a little better in the area around the knee since he has started doing the new workouts. He is going to have to wear something around his knee while he plays so he can eliminate some of the pressure on it. Baseball is a grueling sport on the body, having the longest season in sports at 162 regular season games. This number does not count playoffs. So players like who are on championship caliber teams are playing almost 180 games per season if they play the entire season. With not

having much rest between games most of the time, baseball players do not tend to play past 40 years old, if they make it that far. With Utley being 33 years old, his knees are going to be something the organization has to look out for in the upcoming seasons.

Hopefully Utley can get going in the right direction and make a full recovery on his bad knees. As Phillies fans we hope that he is able to and come back stronger than ever and help the Phillies push for another World Series title, alongside injured teammate Ryan Howard.

Eagles Finally Get a Man in the Middle

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Newly acquired Eagles LB, Demeco Ryans speaks with the media at his press conference held at the Nova Care Complex in Philadelphia on March 22.

(Photo Courtesy of thepigskinreport.com)

Not since the days when Jeremiah Trotter and Brian Dawkins lined up on defense in Philadelphia have the fans in this city been this excited for one individual on defense. Like those two players, newly acquired

linebacker, Demeco Ryans will bring a different type of tenacity that the Eagles defense has been lacking the past few seasons. Ryans comes to Philadelphia from the Houston Texans who traded the Eagles in exchange for a 2012 fourth-round draft pick and a swap of third-round picks between the two teams.

Ryans, 27, an Alabama native and an alum of the Alabama Crimson Tide, was named AP Rookie of the Year in 2006, as well as being named to the Pro Bowl in 2007 and 2009. But in 2010, Ryans went down with an ACL injury in Week 6 which sat him out for the remainder of the season.

Although Ryans' numbers have been declining since his rookie year, he still brings so much to a defense, whether he is pumping up his teammates or the crowd, or being a leader in the locker room, he is known around the league for his aggressive style of play.

Coming off a season in which he had just 64 tackles as opposed to 123 in 2009, expect the number of tackles and sacks to increase as a part of the Eagles linebacker corps. With the lack of experience the Eagles defense has shown the past three years, making the trade to acquire Ryans is right on so many levels.

At just 27 years old, Ryans still has a lot to prove after his injury and he feels as though Philadelphia

will give him the opportunity he needs to succeed and to hopefully bring this city a chance to compete for a Super Bowl.

With the 2012 NFL Draft just a few weeks away, it is still unclear what the Eagles will do with their pick No. 15. Before signing Ryans, many fans believed that the Eagles main focus would be to draft a linebacker, whether or not the franchise decides to do that, remains to be unclear.

With the recent re-signings of DeSean Jackson, Todd Herremans, Trent Cole and Evan Mathis, the next thing on the Eagles agenda should be to re-sign running back, LeSean "Shady" McCoy. Last year, he proved around the league what he is truly worth and Jackson has recently given him some advice. He said, "Don't act like me, don't do what I did." Eagles fans can only hope that McCoy would not go down the same route that Jackson did but McCoy does not have the same "baggage" that comes along with Jackson.

Recently spotted at a Sixers game, Ryans received a warm welcome from the City of Brotherly Love and he will continue to receive a warm welcome in Philadelphia and as fans, we can only hope he continues what he has done in previous seasons.