

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Monday, June 17, 2002

## Woods halfway to Grand Slam with Open win

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. (AP) — A runaway winner again in the U.S. Open, Tiger Woods is halfway home to the Grand Slam and still miles ahead of anyone trying to stop him.

Challenged only briefly by two of his biggest rivals, Woods became the first player since Jack Nicklaus in 1972 to capture the first two major championships of the year with a three-stroke victory Sunday at Bethpage Black.

Next stop on his incredible ride: The British Open in Muirfield, five weeks away. "I just want to celebrate this one," Woods said. "None of them are easy, but this one was real tough."

He made it harder with three-putt bogeys on his first two holes that quickly cut his lead to two shots. But Woods was rock-solid the rest of the way and simply

couldn't be stopped — not by Phil Mickelson, Sergio Garcia or even a 49-minute rain delay that threatened to put off the inevitable until Monday.

The only sour note — bogeys on two of his final three holes for a 2-over 72, the first time he has won a major with a final round over par.

He still finished three strokes ahead of Mickelson, who is now 0-for-40 in the majors but hardly felt like a loser.

"It's certainly a difficult challenge, five back to the best player in the world," Mickelson said after closing with a 70.

Woods already has won his own version of the slam. A year ago, he became the first player to win four straight professional majors, although purists have argued it must be done in a calendar year.

Don't bet against him. "I would like to win the slam," he said. "I've done it before. Hopefully, I can do it again."

The question remains: Can anyone stop him?

His greatest asset, as always, is his mental toughness, a lesson his father taught him long ago.

"I told him, 'I promise you one thing: You'll never meet another person as tough as you,'" Earl Woods said during a telephone interview from his hotel room near the course. "He hasn't. And he won't."

At 26, Woods won his eighth major championship and now has claimed seven of the last 11 — unprecedented in golf's four biggest events.

It was the first time the U.S. Open was played on a truly public golf course, but the Black Course at Bethpage State Park certainly held its own. Woods was the only player to break par over 72 holes, finishing at 3-under 277.

Perhaps when the New Yorkers get their course back next week and pay \$39 greens fees on the weekend, they'll have an even greater appreciation of how

good this guy is. "It's awesome, winning your national title and, on top of that, on a public course in front of these fans," Woods said.

He has played only 22 majors as a pro, and five of those eight victories have come by at least three strokes.

Mickelson and Garcia each got to within two strokes at times, but not for long.

Woods simply gave them no chance. He missed only two fairways in the final round and putted for birdie on 17 out of 18 holes.

Mickelson showed plenty of heart, but it wasn't enough — not with Woods in the lead and on top of his game.

Mickelson closed to within two strokes of the lead with a two-putt birdie from the fringe on the par-5 13th to reach 2-under par.

Woods answered. He reached the 13th green with a 2-iron from 263 yards and narrowly missed the eagle putt. Still, his three-stroke lead was restored, and Mickelson made it easier for him with bogeys on the 16th and 17th holes.

It was Mickelson's seventh top-3 finish in a major, tying him with Harry "Lighthouse" Cooper with the most among players who have never won one.

Jeff Maggert had a 72 and finished third at 282, although he was never a factor.

Garcia was the only other player to make a run at Woods.

He got to within two strokes after Woods three-putted the first two holes, and stayed on his heels until the 22-year-old Spaniard

See **Open** on page 4

## Juiced muscles, big salaries killing pro baseball

The death of baseball is rapidly approaching, and recent statements by two former players about rampant steroid use among major league athletes might just be the nail in the coffin for the sport that was once "America's Pastime."

Already facing falling attendance, team contraction and an impending player strike, the comments of former all-stars Jose Canseco and Ken Caminiti have brought into question the integrity of the game, which might push the business of baseball into bankruptcy among American sports fans.

The real question is not how many players are using, which



KEVIN ESPENLAUB

Caminiti and Canseco place at 50 to 85 percent of MLB players, but who should be blamed for the use of illegal substances by players?

While the final decision to take the drugs rests with the individual players, do not ignore the benefits these players might attain if they can find just enough edge over their competition to reach the elite status among major league stars.

Owners such as the Texas Rangers' Tom Hicks have written increasingly higher payroll checks to players in an attempt to boost ticket and merchandising sales, driving up the desire of baseball players to be noticed as an asset to a major league franchise.

Hicks signed all-star shortstop Alex Rodriguez to an absurd 10-year, \$252 million dollar contract before last season and Yankees' owner George Steinbrenner shocked no one when his team, which holds the league's highest payroll, bought another trip to the World Series.

How can the players be blamed for taking drugs to increase their performance when one year with an eight-figure salary could set their families' financial future and get them a World Series championship to boot?

Not many people would turn away from the opportunity to make eight figures for taking some pills or a shot once a day.

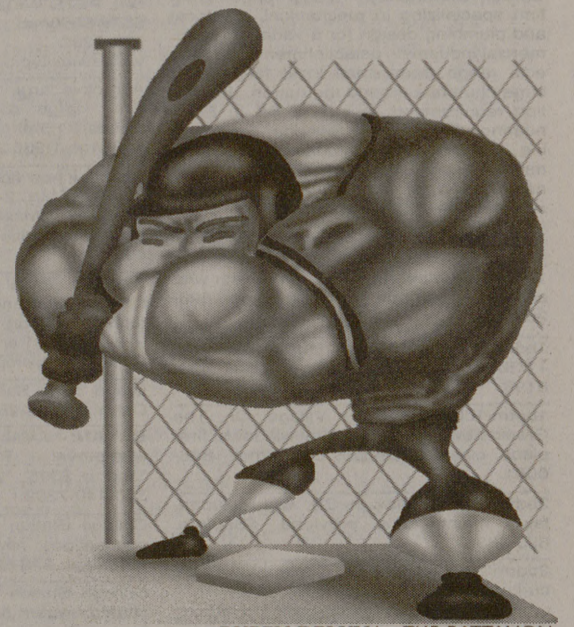
However, players and owners alike must face the reality that base-

ball needs to rethink the direction the game is going.

Players must wake up and realize that the average salary among major league athletes is close to \$2.4 million per year for playing a game as a career. The Players' Union must agree to random drug testing even if it means nobody will be chasing the home run record next year and even if it prevents any player from receiving eight-digit salaries.

Owners must stop offering record setting contracts to players until they agree to accept random steroid testing. In what has become more business than sport, it is the only way to prevent these high dollar investments

See **Steroids** on page 4



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

# WHY PESO MUCH?

**Sterling University Village offers the luxuries of home without having to PESO much! Call us now and get your money's worth on our 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom apartment homes starting at only \$365/person/month. You CAN afford the lifestyle you deserve!**

- 2 bdrm 2 bath starting at \$450/person
- \$150 Cash to you upon lease completion
- 0 Deposit
- 0 App Fee

**STERLING UNIVERSITY Village**

117 Holleman Dr. West College Station www.suhvillage.com

Office Hours 9-6 Mon-Fri 10-5 Sat 1-5 Sun

Revised 4/22/02

### Brand New Apartments for Today's Students.

# Free Rent.\* Zero Deposit.

The ultimate move-in gift from Crossing Place Apartments!

Compare and Lease Now!

	Crossing Place	Sterling University	University Commons
<b>4 Bedroom/2 Bathroom Furnished Apartment</b>			
Rent (Monthly)	\$385.00*	\$385.00	\$335.00
Cable-ESPN/5 HBO/MTU	\$0	\$15.00**	\$15.00**
High Speed Internet	\$0	\$0	\$22.00**
Water/Sewer/Trash	\$0	\$10.00	\$10.00
<b>TOTAL (for 1 year)</b>	<b>\$4,235.00</b>	<b>\$4,920.00</b>	<b>\$4,584.00</b>
Brand New Apartments	You Bet!	A Few	They Wish
24-Hour CA Staff	Definitely!	Could Have	Maybe
Great Location	Yes Sir!	Yeah, Right	Who's to say?
New Contemporary Furniture	Yes!	Some	Not Close
Covered Parking	Yep!	Sorry	No Again
Gated Community	You Got It!	Yeah	Not

All rental rates and other expenses based upon a per person, per bedroom status and subject to change. Rates given by competitors 5/22/02. Cable/Internet rates are based upon quotes from Cox Communications. \*First month free! \*\*Free at Crossing Place. Optional amenities & costs at other communities listed.

Check it out—verify the above—things change.

Call Now for details 979-680-8475

**Zero deposit!**

**NEW Clubhouse now open till 7 p.m.**

www.crossingplace.com  
680-8475  
400 Southwest Parkway

**Crossing Place™**  
You asked for it. You got it!

Offers subject to change. Not valid with any other offers.