



BEST BETS

NCAA Men's Basketball
Minnesota at Iowa,
ESPN (34) 4:30 p.m.

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald

Court declares Martin will ride again

Commissioner
Timothy
Finchem said
the PGA Tour
will appeal
the decision
to allow carts

By Chris Hansen
Assistant Sports Editor

A judge ruled in favor of Casey Martin Wednesday afternoon, clearing the way for the disabled golfer to use a cart in Professional Golf Association and Nike tour events.

The PGA Tour will appeal the decision, said Commissioner Timothy Finchem in a written statement issued one hour after the ruling.

"I want to thank everyone who supported me through this," said a choked-up Martin in a news conference following the six day trial. "This has been a tough time."

It was a victory savored by Martin's family and friends as well.

"I'm so proud right now," Martin's mother, Melinda, said. "With every step there was always a mountain to climb."

Martin's lawsuit sought to invoke the Americans With Disabilities Act to force the PGA Tour to accommodate his rare circulatory disorder — Klippel-Trenaunay-Weber Syndrome — that makes it painful and even dangerous for him to walk. His doctors say too much stress on his withered right leg could cause it to break and may result in amputation.

PGA Tour officials countered that by say-

ing that allowing Martin to ride in a cart would give him an unfair advantage over other golfers and that walking the course is an integral part of the game.

Federal Magistrate Thomas Coffin acknowledged that the walking-only rule was "substantive" but said the PGA Tour failed to prove that waiving the rule for Martin would fundamentally alter competition.

As for the argument that walking the course is a test of stamina, Coffin said walking 18 holes over a period of five hours is "not significantly taxing."

"The fatigue level from his condition is easily greater than of an able-bodied person walking the same course," Coffin said.

"The public has spoken, the courts have spoken, you'd think they'd get it."

Casey Martin
Nike Tour golfer

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Men to test win streak on the road

The Ducks travel to Pullman where they have lost six of their last seven against the Cougars

By Chris Hansen
Assistant Sports Editor

Oregon has played the last week and a half in the rowdy confines of McArthur Court, proving it is a better team than expected by winning three straight, including its upset of then-No. 6 UCLA last Thursday.

Now it's time to prove it on the road. Oregon meets Washington State tonight at Friel Court in Pullman at 7 p.m.

"We are playing real well right now," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "We've stepped up our intensity, we've played real smart, we've played real hard, we've finished people off down the stretch, we're just in a good groove right now. So the next challenge for this program is to have success on the road."

That, considering the way Oregon has played outside of Eugene this season, is no small order.

The Ducks (10-10 overall, 5-6 Pac-10) are 0-4 on the road against conference opponents this season and 1-6 overall. Thrown into the mix also is the fact that Oregon has lost three straight and five of six against the Cougars in Pullman.

"I don't really look at what has happened in the last couple of years," Kent admitted.

Maybe that is for the best because it hasn't been pretty for Oregon. After starting the season 10-0 last year, the Ducks lost both games to the Washington schools to start their Pac-10 slide.

Oregon can take some solace in Washington State being the conference's last-place team with a 1-10 Pac-10 record and 8-14 overall. The Cougars have also lost seven in a row.

Despite having one of the best power forwards in the country, Carlos Daniel, who has racked up a conference-high 11 double-doubles this season, the Cougars are in sorry shape.

That doesn't mean they are to be taken lightly.

"They are going to be extremely tough at home," Kent said. "They're not deep, but the

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vs.
Mac Court
7 p.m.



EMERALD

Natascha O'Brien wasn't happy with her performance or playing time in the first half of the season.

On the Rebound

After struggling to regain the offensive presence she was known for, junior Natascha O'Brien has rebounded to become a dependable scoring threat

By Alex Pond
Sports Reporter

O h, the magic of confidence. Just three short weeks ago, Natascha O'Brien was mired in a big-time slump, failing to live up to enormous preseason expectations from herself, her fans and her coaches.

After serving a one-season suspension handed down by the NCAA for her participation in the Women's National Basketball League in Australia, the 5-foot-11 junior forward came into the season expected to be an immediate impact player.

But through the first 14 games, O'Brien

was averaging 3.5 points a game while only playing an average of 11.1 minutes. She was shooting just 32.6 percent from the field and 25 percent from three-point range.

"When I wasn't playing, I was really frustrated and kind of down in the dumps," O'Brien says.

Then something happened sometime during the Oregon women's basketball game against Arizona on Jan. 22.

That magical little element called confidence, invisible yet so alive and so instrumental to athletes, made an appearance.

O'Brien broke out of the season-long

slump with 22 points on nine of 14 shooting from the field, including four of seven from behind the three-point line, in a season-high 32 minutes as the Ducks upset the then-No. 7 Wildcats 68-66.

She has been on a roll ever since, averaging 14.4 points while hitting nine for 16 three-point attempts in the five games leading up to tonight's 7 p.m. matchup against Washington State (9-11 overall, 3-8 Pacific-10 Conference) at McArthur Court.

"I think it's been a long time coming," Oregon head coach Jody Runge says. "Obviously, it was a very challenging

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