

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## Shaky, But Back On Top

Pete Sampras reclaimed the No. 1 ranking when Carlos Moya suffered an early-round loss at the Lipton Championships. However, Moya, who was No. 1 for two weeks, is only nine points behind Sampras, the second-smallest margin in ranking history. In 1992, Stefan Edberg held a three-point advantage over Jim Courier for three straight weeks, while in 1996, Thomas Muster led Sampras by nine points for one week.

## Butyrskaya Dethrones Her Own Idol

Maria Butyrskaya beat the skater she regards as an "idol" when she dethroned Michelle Kwan as world women's figure skating champion on Saturday. In the greatest moment of her skating life, the glamour girl from Moscow became the oldest women's world champion at 26 years 272 days and the first from Russia as she capped the first title sweep by one country at the world championships.

## Orioles 3, Cuba 2, 11 Innings

It's not as if Cuban president Fidel Castro revealed a well-kept secret when he casually told Baltimore Orioles manager Ray Miller, "This is a good baseball town." Good baseball town? No question. Very good baseball players, too. Cuba proved Sunday it can compete with just about any team in world, amateur or otherwise, giving the Orioles all they could handle in a 3-2 loss.

Harold Baines, only 6 days old when major league teams last played in Cuba, singled in the tiebreaking run in the 11th inning to help Baltimore avoid an embarrassing defeat.

## King Caught in Tyson Hoax

Boxing promoter Don King apparently was the victim of prankster claiming to be jailed former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, the New York Post reported Saturday. The newspaper said King received a telephone call Thursday night from someone with a high-pitched hissing voice claiming to be Tyson. The caller said he was at the Montgomery County Detention Center in Maryland, where Tyson is serving a one-year sentence for assaulting two motorists. The caller told King that, despite their falling out last year when Tyson slapped the promoter with a \$10 million lawsuit over lost earnings, all was forgiven. The caller said he desperately need to see King. "The guy was asking for help," a King spokesperson told the newspaper.

## Purdue Students Cheer NCAA Title

Looking weary after a long flight home, Purdue's NCAA women's basketball champions appeared to be re-energized after being greeted at the airport by about 75 screaming fans today. Some of the Boilermakers headed into the crowd, where they hugged family members, friends and fans, signed autographs and proudly showed off their championship rings. Purdue defeated Duke 62-45 at San Jose, Calif., to win the title Sunday night. The plane arrived about 2 1/2 hours late at the university's airport after being fogged in and briefly rerouted to Indianapolis International Airport for refueling.

# When will Venus and Serena meet again?

Tennis fans, tournament promoters and Serena Williams are ready for a rematch.

Richard Williams wants to recover from Sunday first.

As the father of the finalists at the Lipton Championships, Williams admitted that the occasion was emotionally wrenching. He led the cheers at the start of the match and was in his seat at the finish, when Venus completed a 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 victory for her second consecutive Lipton title.

But during the match, Richard's thoughts turned to the poor neighborhood in Compton, Calif., where the family lived before moving to Florida in 1991. The memories stirred his emotions and sent him out the stadium tunnel for a calming cigarette.

Williams' hands shook during a news conference the day before Serena played big sister Venus, and he wasn't much calmer at a news conference after the match.

"We're used to being on the corner in Compton where people are shouting and doing drugs," he said. "This is very strange to me, sitting up here and you people talking to me. I actually feel like a fool."

The sibling showdown attracted attention from the international media. They're eager for a rematch, but they'll have to wait, because Serena and Venus aren't scheduled to play the same tournament again until the Italian Open in early May.

The consensus, however, is that Sunday's Williams-Williams final could be the first of many.

Venus, 18, is ranked sixth this week. Serena, 17, is a career-high 11th. Dad predicts they'll eventually be 1-2, and his opinion counts, because he said years ago that his daughters were

destined for greatness.

"The first time I ever took Venus to the tennis court, I walked home and told my wife, 'Baby, we have a champion. This girl is rough, tough, strong and mentally sound. Those are the four qualities all champions have.'"

How old was Venus at the time? "Four years, six months and one day," her dad said. "At 5 years old, I took the racket out of her hand. I wouldn't let her play for a year because she loved it too much."

Serena started playing at about the same age, and she benefited from such practice partners as John McEnroe and Pete Sampras.

"Because Serena couldn't beat those guys with power, she had to learn to do angles and drop shots," Richard Williams said. "Right now, I think Serena is hitting angles and drop shots better than anyone."

But will she overtake Venus? Serena trails 3-0 in the sibling rivalry, and there's division within the family regarding how many tournaments she and Venus should enter together.

Richard Williams said he once paid a psychiatrist to study the effects when sisters play each other.

"We learned that tennis is the only game that's extremely rough on a family," he said.

But he said his daughters are old enough to decide for themselves which events to enter.

"We'll be in a lot of the same tournaments," Venus said.

"We're Jehovah's Witnesses, and we really believe that family comes first," Serena said. "No matter how many times we play each other, I could never say that it would affect my relationship with Venus."

# Duval Replaces Woods as World #1

LONDON, March 29 (Reuters) - American David Duval took over from Tiger Woods as golf's world number one after his victory by two shots in the Players Championship at Ponte Vedra on Sunday.

Woods had been number one for 41 weeks.

Duval becomes the 11th player to head the official world rankings since the list was launched almost 13 years ago.



## Top 20 rankings

(U.S. UNLESS STATED)	POINTS AVERAGE
1. David Duval	12.75
2. Tiger Woods	12.62
3. Davis Love III	10.33
4. Mark O'Meara	9.96
5. Ernie Els (South Africa)	9.15
6. Lee Westwood (Britain)	8.89
7. Vijay Singh (Fiji)	8.85
8. Nick Price (Zimbabwe)	8.33
9. Colin Montgomerie (Britain)	8.22
10. Fred Couples	7.43

## His Airness Breaks Silence on Possible Hornets Ownership

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Michael Jordan is used to conquering challenges.

Turning around the Charlotte Hornets appears to be his next mission.

Jordan went on record Monday that he's had preliminary talks about co-owning the Charlotte Hornets, but he wasn't saying much more about his plans. He did confirm that he has been in touch with Hornets and NBA officials.

"In response to reports, I can con-

firm that I have been contacted by George Shinn and (NBA commissioner) David Stern regarding co-ownership of the Charlotte Hornets," Jordan said in the statement issued Monday through agent David Falk's office in Washington.

Jordan spoke with Shinn earlier this month about buying a 50 percent share of the NBA franchise, according to officials with the Hornets and the league.

# Hamilton Leads UConn to NCAA Title

Richard Hamilton thought the 27 points he scored in leading Connecticut to its first national championship were no big deal.

See the basket. Shoot the ball. Score the points.

He makes it sound so simple.

"I don't think it was hard," Hamilton said in his low-key style. "I've been doing the same thing all year. Give credit to my teammates. They set extra screens for me. They just get the ball to me when I'm open and I hit the shots."

"The same thing has been going on all year. I got open opportunities and I just took advantage of them."

There's nothing complicated about any of that, if you believe Hamilton. There's something more involved, though, according to coach Jim Calhoun.

"The first thing is, he's a great basketball player," he said. "Great scorers score so many different ways and can beat you so many different ways. He has a tremendous mind for the game."

It added up to an All-American season for Hamilton. He also shared the Big East Conference Player of the Year award, joining Patrick Ewing and Chris Mullin as the only players to win that award twice. And when he went over the 2,000-point mark in Saturday's semifinal victory over Ohio State, it made him the second highest scorer in UConn history.

All very nice, but Hamilton was really after a national championship. To do it, the Huskies would have to beat a Duke team that had lost just once all season and won 32 games in a row.

"We felt we had a chance," Hamilton said. "If we came in and played our game, we had a good chance to win."

"We knew we had to attack. We didn't want to be jumper happy. If we got to the paint, we wanted to take advantage."

He and the Huskies did that in the 77-74 victory.

Calhoun knows what a special player Hamilton has become.

"He scored 27 tonight," the coach said. "Sometimes he puts up 30 and I'll ask him if his mom and dad were keeping score."

No need for that. Hamilton had all the help he needed from his teammates.

"We played with a lot of heart," he said. "Everybody's got the mentality of refuse to lose."

Hamilton struggled a bit with his shot in the first half, making five of 13 attempts. But was 5-for-9 in the final 20 minutes, including a pair of 3-pointers. The second one was perhaps his most impressive shot of the night.

With 3:50 to play and the score tied at 68, Hamilton took a shot to the mid-

section from Chris Carrawell and was doubled over, trying to catch his breath. After a moment, he walked to the foul line and hit both free throws for a 70-68 lead.

Then, 12 seconds later, Connecticut got the ball back and Hamilton's 23-foot shot gave the Huskies a five-point lead. Duke never quite recovered.

As time ran out Monday night, Hamilton reflected on what had happened.

"You really can't describe that feeling," he said. "I still don't understand what we did. I'm just happy to put a smile on coach's face."

He did the same thing last spring when he decided to stay at Connecticut for his junior year instead of leaving for the NBA. At the time, he thought Calhoun was using some of

old fashioned Irish blarney to convince him to stick around.

"I'm glad I stayed for my junior year," he said. "He told me, 'Rip, you've got a chance to win a national championship.' I really didn't believe him. Now that we've won it, I'm very appreciative."

So is Calhoun.



Coach Jim Calhoun wins first NCAA Championship in 27 years of coaching.

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