



Metro / Sports

Remember April 17th is deadline for tax returns - 2 extra days from Uncle Sam

Recipe for a Master: Good breaks, great play

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vijay Singh was lucky. Two hours before putting on the Masters green jacket, Singh had to tiptoe out of trouble at Amen Corner in the final round. He made a bogey at No. 11 and a par at No. 12, scores that were a fraction away from being much higher.

It was not much different than his PGA Championship victory at Sahalee in 1998, when his approach at the par-5 11th ricocheted out of the trees and ended up 50 feet from the hole for a two-putt birdie that gave him control of the tournament. Singh was more than lucky. He was great.

Of the five players who had even a remote chance to win, only Singh hit the kind of shots required at Augusta National on the back nine Sunday, when the margin of error is slimmer than at any other major.

He saved par from the back bunker at the par-3 12th, one of the toughest shots in the world. He was the only contender to hit the green in two at both par 5s. He didn't miss a green over the final six holes.

The recipe for winning a major championship calls for good breaks and great play, and only Singh produced such a delicate combination.

What makes the Masters different than the other three majors is that Augusta can have a mind of its own. It's almost as if a wizard is hiding behind the curtain of azaleas, pulling levers to control the wind and change the script as he sees fit.

How else to explain what happened Saturday at the par-3 12th? David Duval, tied with Singh at 5-under, hit an 8-iron that was right on



Jose Maria Olazabal, from Spain, puts the green jacket on Vijay Singh, from Fiji, after Singh won the 2000 Masters at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga., Sunday, April 9, 2000. (AP Photo/Dave Martin)

line until a gust — from the opposite direction, no less — held up his ball just long enough for it to drop onto the bank and into Rae's Creek for a double bogey.

Singh hit the same club two minutes later and the ball landed 6 feet behind the hole for birdie and a three-shot swing.

"I just happened to catch a gust of wind that was not favorable for me," Duval said. "So, it's my bad luck." Bad luck, then bad play.

Duval was still only one behind Sunday when he chunked a 5-iron into the creek at the par-5 13th, essentially ending his bid.

He is now 0-for-4 in the majors when he was in contention on a Sunday, including the past three years at Augusta.

His game is too good to wait as long for his first major as Davis Love III (12 years) or Phil Mickelson and Colin Montgomerie (still waiting). But

Duval has yet to figure out how to close on Sunday.

Ernie Els knows how to get it done. He was a rock down the stretch in twice winning the U.S. Open, and he was the only player who made a serious charge at Singh. He gave himself birdie putts of 8, 15 and 12 feet at the last three holes and burned the edge on all of them.

"It just wasn't meant to be," Els said. That's far from what he was thinking at the 12th tee as he watched Singh's ball bounce off the side of the 11th green and into the water. Because it landed far enough on the green, and because the pin was cut to the back left, Singh had a sliver of grass on which to take his drop — a straight shot at the pin, instead of having to go the drop area and hit a delicate shot over the water.

"The angle was much easier to get up and down," Singh said.

NBA Standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE

| ATLANTIC DIV. | W | L | PCT | GB | HOME | ROAD | DIV | STREAK |
|----------------|----|----|------|----|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| X-MIAMI | 50 | 27 | .649 | - | 31-7 | 19-20 | 17-6 | LOST 1 |
| X-NEW YORK | 48 | 29 | .623 | 2 | 31-8 | 17-21 | 13-9 | WON 1 |
| X-PHILADELPHIA | 45 | 32 | .584 | 5 | 27-11 | 18-21 | 12-11 | WON 1 |
| ORLANDO | 39 | 38 | .506 | 11 | 25-14 | 14-24 | 11-11 | LOST 1 |
| BOSTON | 31 | 46 | .403 | 19 | 23-14 | 8-32 | 9-12 | WON 1 |
| NEW JERSEY | 31 | 46 | .403 | 19 | 22-17 | 9-29 | 9-14 | LOST 6 |
| WASHINGTON | 28 | 49 | .364 | 22 | 17-22 | 11-27 | 7-15 | LOST 1 |

| CENTRAL DIV. | W | L | PCT | GB | HOME | ROAD | DIV | STREAK |
|--------------|----|----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Y-INDIANA | 51 | 26 | .662 | - | 34-5 | 17-21 | 17-8 | LOST 2 |
| X-CHARLOTTE | 44 | 33 | .571 | 7 | 28-11 | 16-22 | 17-8 | WON 2 |
| TORONTO | 43 | 34 | .558 | 8 | 24-15 | 19-19 | 15-11 | WON 3 |
| DETROIT | 40 | 37 | .519 | 11 | 25-13 | 15-24 | 15-11 | LOST 2 |
| MILWAUKEE | 38 | 39 | .494 | 13 | 22-17 | 16-22 | 15-11 | WON 2 |
| CLEVELAND | 30 | 47 | .390 | 21 | 21-17 | 9-30 | 8-17 | LOST 1 |
| ATLANTA | 26 | 51 | .338 | 25 | 19-19 | 7-32 | 10-15 | LOST 7 |
| CHICAGO | 16 | 60 | .211 | 34 1/2 | 11-27 | 5-33 | 5-21 | LOST 1 |

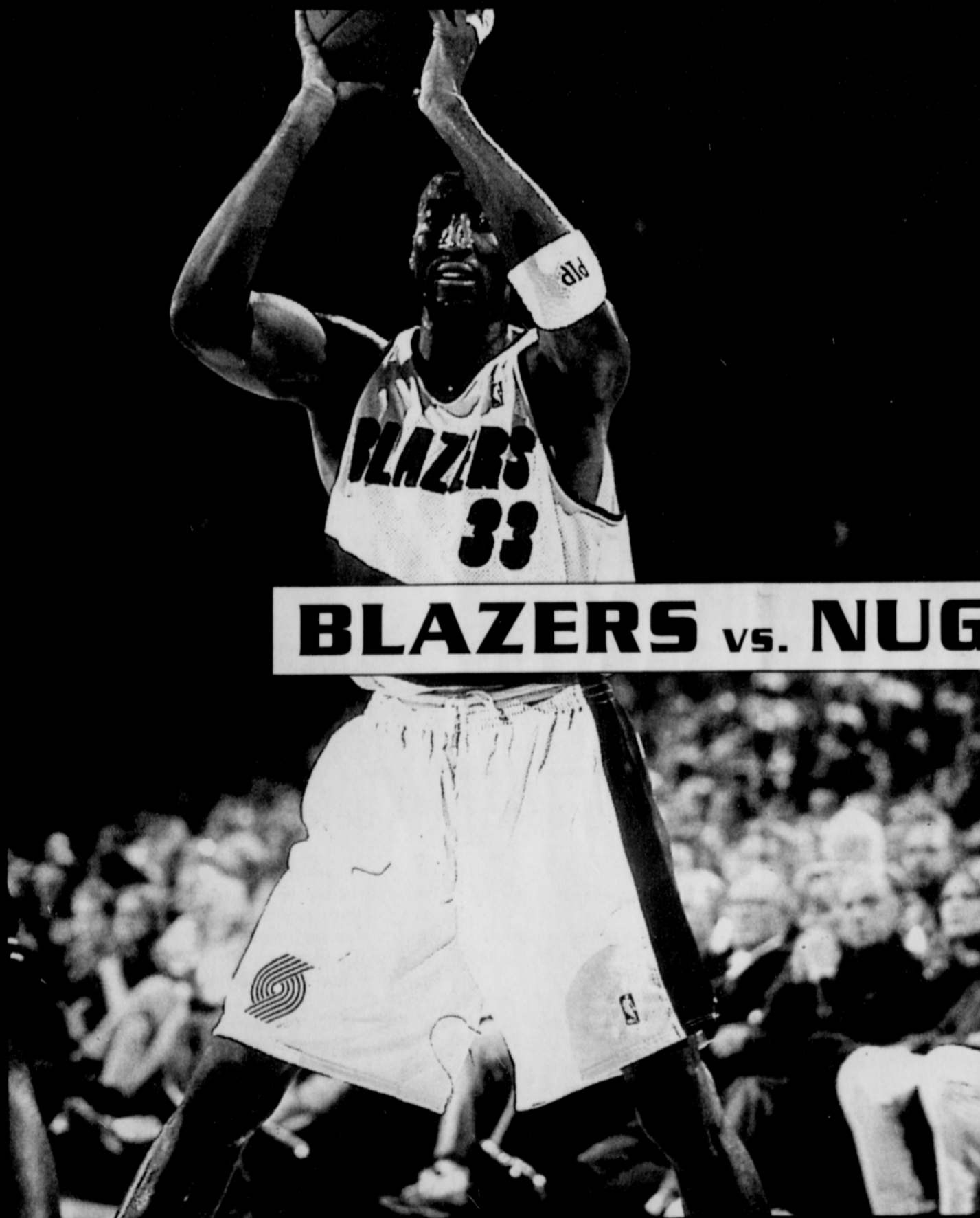
WESTERN CONFERENCE

| MIDWEST DIV. | W | L | PCT | GB | HOME | ROAD | DIV | STREAK |
|---------------|------|----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| X-UTAH | 52 2 | 5 | .675 | - | 29-10 | 23-15 | 14-8 | LOST 2 |
| X-SAN ANTONIO | 49 | 28 | .636 | 3 | 28-9 | 21-19 | 14-8 | WON 2 |
| X-MINNESOTA | 48 | 29 | .623 | 4 | 26-14 | 22-15 | 17-5 | WON 4 |
| DALLAS | 35 | 41 | .461 | 16 1/2 | 18-19 | 17-22 | 10-11 | WON 4 |
| DENVER | 31 | 46 | .403 | 21 | 23-15 | 8-31 | 9-13 | LOST 1 |
| HOUSTON | 31 | 46 | .403 | 21 | 21-17 | 10-29 | 6-15 | WON 3 |
| VANCOUVER | 21 | 55 | .276 | 30 1/2 | 12-28 | 9-27 | 5-15 | LOST 2 |

| PACIFIC DIV. | W | L | PCT | GB | HOME | ROAD | DIV | STREAK |
|--------------|----|----|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Z-LALAKERS | 65 | 13 | .833 | -3 | 4-5 | 31-8 | 19-4 | WON 1 |
| X-PORTLAND | 56 | 21 | .727 | 8 1/2 | 29-10 | 27-11 | 19-3 | WON 2 |
| X-PHOENIX | 49 | 27 | .645 | 15 | 30-7 | 19-20 | 12-9 | WON 1 |
| X-SACRAMENTO | 43 | 33 | .566 | 21 | 29-9 | 14-24 | 8-12 | LOST 2 |
| X-SEATTLE | 42 | 35 | .545 | 22 1/2 | 23-16 | 19-19 | 11-11 | LOST 3 |
| GOLDEN STATE | 18 | 59 | .234 | 46 1/2 | 11-27 | 7-32 | 2-20 | WON 1 |
| LACLIPPERS | 14 | 62 | .184 | 50 | 10-28 | 4-34 | 4-16 | LOST 12 |

X — CLINCHED PLAYOFF BERTH
 Y — CLINCHED DIVISION TITLE
 Z — CLINCHED BEST RECORD IN CONFERENCE

SCOTTIE PIPPEN



BLAZERS vs. NUGGETS

NEXT WEDNESDAY
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ROSE GARDEN



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