

Metro/Sports

The Only Thing Missing Was the Golf

PALM DESERT, Calif. (AP) — Tiger Woods invited British Open champion David Duval and the best two women golfers into his prime-time arena. The only thing missing was the kind of golf that has made each of them a star.

"I would like to do it again," Woods said after he and Annika Sorenstam won in 19 holes Monday night over Duval and Karrie Webb. "Hopefully, we can play a little better next time."

That shouldn't be too much to ask.

The foursome of major championship winners managed only five birdies in the alternate-shot format. Eight of the 19 holes were won with a par.

The event was made for TV, and preliminary ratings

were down. Overnights on ABC Sports from major markets were 5.9, compared with 6.9 for Woods vs. Duval two years ago and



Annika Sorenstam and Tiger Woods pick up the winning check after the made-for-TV "Battle at Bighorn." The pair beat Karrie Webb and David Duval in the one-round, match play event.

7.6 for Sergio Garcia's victory over Woods last year.

Despite the ragged play brought on by brutally tough conditions, the Battle at Bighorn still delivered the largest audience to watch women play golf.

The rating was 1.1 when Sorenstam won the LPGA's first major of the season, the Nabisco Championship, as part of a great run in which she won four straight tournaments

and became the first woman to shoot 59.

Such opportunity was not lost on Sorenstam and Webb. They didn't play up to their standards, but had no regrets about skipping two important days of practice for the Women's British Open, their final major of the year that starts Thursday in England.

Woods and Sorenstam split the \$1.2 million winner's share from the \$1.7 million purse.

"It was a thrill to come here today and play with the best players in the world," Sorenstam said. "I didn't play as well as I would have liked, but that's the way it goes sometimes. I had a good partner."

Ultimately, these exhibitions are all about Woods, anyway.

Armstrong Wraps Up Tour de France

After three weeks of competing in the world's toughest cycling event, the recent winner was won by Lance Armstrong, an American. The 29-year-old Texan dominated the cycling event, winning the Tour de France, three times in a row. He overcame the biggest time deficit in the event's 98-year history. Other winning record holders have been Greg LeMond, the first American to win the Tour three times, but with a two-year gap between his

first and second titles. The Tour record of five wins is held jointly by four riders. Only Spain's Miguel Indurain won five consecutively.



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Blazers Sign Free Agent Patterson

The Portland Trail Blazers recently announced that they have signed free agent forward Ruben Patterson to an offer sheet, according to President and General

Manager, Bob Whitsitt. The Seattle SuperSonics have 15 days to match the Blazers offer. Patterson, who is 26-years-old, averaged 13.0 points, 5.0 rebounds

and 2.1 assists in 76 games with the Seattle SuperSonics last season. He has career averages of 11.0 points, 2.3 rebounds and 1.6 assists over three seasons.

Patterson was a second round draft pick (31st overall) in the 1998 NBA Draft by the Los Angeles Lakers. He signed a free agent contract with Seattle on Aug. 10, 1999.

Pros Take on the Fred Meyer Challenge

Top money winning PGA pros converge in Portland for the 16th Annual Washington Mutual Fred Meyer Challenge which begins Aug. 5-7 at the Reserve Vineyards and Golf Course in Aloha.

Since its inception in 1986, the Challenge has grown bigger, providing national coverage through ESPN. The intent of the game over the years has remained - to be fun for spectators and highly

competitive for the players. This year, British Open winner David Duval will compete, along with six of the world's top 26 players: Phil Mickelson, Sergio Garcia, Scott McCarron,

David Toms and Brad Faxon. They will be competing in a 36-hole, stroke play, two-player team best-ball for the \$1.15 million purse.

Sports Briefs

Deion Retires from Football

Deion Sanders, one of the most charismatic athletes in sports and one of the greatest cornerbacks in national Football league history, retired from football as part of an agreement with the Washington Redskins. Sanders, who turns 34 next month, forfeited a portion of the \$8 million signing bonus in his seven-year, \$56 million contract and agreed not to play for another NFL team. The club still owed Sanders \$2.5 million of the signing bonus, and sources

close to the situation said Sanders agreed to forfeit less than \$1 million of that.

Jones Gives Gonzalez Boxing Lesson

LOS ANGELES - Acknowledged as one of the best pound-for-pound fighters around, Roy Jones Jr. dominated Julio Gonzalez from the start in retaining his world light heavyweight championship before an announced crowd of 20,409 at Staples Center. The 32-year-old champion from Pensacola, Fla., won a unanimous 12-round decision to retain the WBC, WBA and IBF light heavyweight titles.

Agassi Overpowers Sampras for Title

LOS ANGELES - Top-ranked Andre Agassi won 11 of the match's final 13 games to beat Pete Sampras 6-4, 6-2 to capture

the Mercedes-Benz Cup title for the second time in four years. Agassi beat his American rival for the second time this year and fourth in five meetings. Sampras leads their career series 17-14. Agassi is 27-2 on hardcourts in 2001.

B. Labonte Ends Season-long NASCAR Drought

LONG POND, Pa. - Bobby Labonte slipped past Dale Earnhardt Jr. in late stages, registering his first NASCAR Winston Cup victory of the season in the 198th of 200 laps at Pocono Raceway. Earnhardt finished second in a Chevrolet, just behind Labonte's Pontiac. Tony Stewart, Bill Elliott and Johnny Benson completed the top five.

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