



Tiger hangs on for Doral win

By DOUG FERGUSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI

Tiger Woods knew he had to keep making birdies to stay ahead of the pack, and he delivered the kind of shots that make him so difficult to beat.

Everything changed on the 18th hole Sunday in the Ford Championship.

All he needed was a bogey. He did that, too.

With a one-shot lead, his ball in the rough and a 9-iron in his hand, Woods watched from 170 yards away as David Toms ran his 60-foot putt to the bottom of

the green, then missed the next one to fall two shots behind.

"I just said, 'Anything in the back bleachers, right bleachers, just anything over there to the right and over the water was all I had to do,'" Woods said. "I was just trying to play for 5. I wasn't even trying to make par."

Despite a bogey-bogey finish on the Blue Monster, Woods closed with a 3-under 69 for a one-shot victory over Toms and Colombian rookie Camilo Villegas. It was the 13th time he has successfully defended a title on the PGA Tour, and he became the first player in 25 years to win back-to-back at Doral. Even more frightening for his

peers is that Woods appears to be hitting his stride.

He now has won four of his past six tournaments (two overseas), with the exceptions being a third-round loss in the Match Play Championship and withdrawing from the Nissan Open with the flu when he was 11 shots behind.

"I've put myself there in virtually every event, which is nice," Woods said.

And he keeps getting plenty of help, not that he needs it.

In all three of his victories this year — the Buick Invitational, Dubai Desert Classic and Doral — his closest challenger made bogey on the final hole.

"I look at it this way, I put myself there," Woods said. "If I put myself there enough times, those things are going to happen, as well as other guys are going to make birdies to beat me. That's the way it goes. As long as I'm there each and every time, it's not a bad place to be."

He hit a 9-iron so far to the right that it wound up in a bunker, nearly 100 feet from the hole, slightly against the back lip. The ball sat up on a rake mark, making the shot slightly easier, and Woods blasted out to 12 feet.

Woods finished at 20-under 268 and earned \$990,000.

It was his 48th career victory,

and it enhanced his reputation as the best closer in golf. Woods now is 34-3 when he has at least a share of the 54-hole lead on the PGA Tour, and he has never lost in 20 tries when leading by at least two going into the final round.

Toms and Villegas each shot 67 to finish at 269, and they left in a different frame of mind.

Villegas was a darling before this largely Latino gallery in south Florida, and while he challenged Woods briefly on the front nine, his two birdies over the final five holes pushed him up the leaderboard. He was three shots behind playing the 18th, and realized there was little hope of catching Woods.

• Pacers

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

"We didn't make the correct switch," Sixers coach Maurice Cheeks said without singling out which player made the defensive mistake. "Whoever didn't make the switch didn't do it on purpose. This isn't about placing blame, it's about figuring out how to do it right at the end."

Iverson has scored 120 points and dished out 31 assists in three games since he was snubbed for the U.S. national team. He reached 40 points and 10 assists in consecutive games for the first time in his 10-year career, but fell short of doing it again.

After a turnover by Peja Stojakovic, Iverson sank a fadeaway jumper to give the Sixers a 91-90 lead with 2:26 left. John Salmons forced Fred Jones to commit another turnover, but Iverson's jumper was short and the Pacers reclaimed the lead on Johnson's turnaround shot.

Webber made two free throws with 50.3 seconds left to put Philadelphia ahead 93-92. Jackson then missed a long jumper



The 76ers' Kevin Ollie, left, makes contact with the Pacers' Stephen Jackson during the fourth quarter of their game Sunday in Philadelphia.

from the corner and Korver grabbed the rebound, but the Sixers couldn't get another shot and gave it back to Indiana.

In Sunday's other action

**Wizards 117
Kings 107**

WASHINGTON — Antawn Jamison had 31 points and eight rebounds, and the Washington Wizards beat the Sacramento Kings to snap a three-game losing streak.

Ron Artest led Sacramento with 30 points, five assists and three blocks before fouling out with 1:14 remaining. Kevin Martin added 20 points for the Kings, who have won nine of their past 13 games.

**Suns 115
Mavericks 107**

DALLAS — Boris Diaw had 24 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for his second career triple-double, and the Phoenix Suns extended their winning streak to a season-high 10 games with a victory against the Dallas Mavericks on Sunday.

Steve Nash had 25 points and 11 assists, Shawn Marion had 22 points and 10 rebounds, and Leandro Barbosa scored 20 points to help the Suns end the Mavericks' club-record 16-game home winning streak.

**Timberwolves 103
Warriors 90**

MINNEAPOLIS — Kevin Garnett scored 23 points and tied his season high with 21 rebounds as the Minnesota Timberwolves overcame a superb scoring performance by Jason Richardson and defeated the Golden State Warriors.

Minnesota won its second in a row by sending the Warriors to their sixth loss in seven games.

**Raptors 111
Celtics 105**

TORONTO — Morris Peterson had 27 points, and Chris Bosh added 24 as the Toronto Raptors ended a six-game losing streak with victory against Boston.

Mikes James scored 11 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter for the Raptors, who hadn't won since Feb. 13.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SCOTT ROBERSON@roberson@thejournalnet.com

Center Grove coach Eric Howe talks with gymnast Megan Roller as she prepares to perform on the uneven bars during Saturday's gymnastics sectional at Columbus East High School. Roller won the event and the all-around title.

• Title

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

The top six individual finishers in each event and the all-around, from both the regional and the previous state meet, will also move on to state.

"I think we have a really good chance (at state)," Roller said. "Whatever team hits that day will win it."

Roller, Blakenship and Elaine Maurer achieved a Center Grove first by going undefeated in regular-season meets throughout their four-year careers.

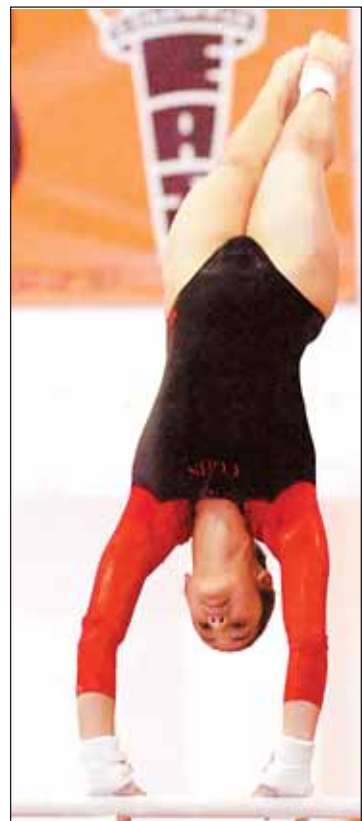
But their accomplishments don't stop there.

After winning both the sectional and regional the past three years, they have placed one better in each appearance at state with a fifth, fourth and third-place finish.

They must improve on those performances by two spots if they want to win a state title before their Center Grove careers end.

The team is in high spirits heading into regional, and coach Eric Howe is confident about what his team can accomplish.

"I think we have a good chance to advance and place well throughout the postseason," Howe said.



Center Grove's Katelyn Fernandes performs on the uneven bars during Saturday's sectional at Columbus East.

"I really think that we could pick up a few more points as we move on. We haven't peaked yet, so hopefully we hit it at state on March 11th."

Turin medalist wins again

The Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea

This time, Ted Ligety got out of bed. There was no problem with the alarm clock, and he made it to the course.

The Olympic champion discovered the benefits of a sensible morning routine: He won a giant slalom despite strong wind Sunday for his first World Cup victory.

"To be able to pull this off today in a GS is beyond words," he said. "It's pretty crazy."

It was crazy in another sense a


day earlier. He overslept and his coach failed to wake him, making him the only nonstarter in Saturday's giant slalom.

Ligety, winner of the combined event at the Turin Games, surged from seventh place after the first of two runs and finished in 2 minutes, 18.54 seconds. Sweden's Fredrik Nyberg and Finland's Kalle Palander shared second, 0.03 seconds behind. World Cup leader Benjamin Raich of Austria finished fourth.

"This surprised me more than the Olympics," Ligety said. "I've been skiing pretty good GS lately, but not like this."

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