

Woods should do the right thing and pass on Augusta

Yet another prosperous golf season recently wrapped up for Tiger Woods, allowing him to add another \$6,912,625 to his personal kitty. Add to that all the endorsements, special appearances and challenge match money Woods has accumulated over the past 52 weeks and he's gone above and beyond ensuring that his future sons, and the sons of those sons, will be living large for decades to come.

Now it's time for Woods to decide what he can do for the game besides dominating the PGA's scoring average (68.56) or hitting 75% of his greens in regulation. Now is the time for Woods to stand up and make a statement that will be heard throughout the golf world and well beyond.

In a recent poll published by the Associated Press, 75% of respondents decided Woods, a three-time winner at Augusta



Karen Hanson It's Only a Game

National, should go on and compete in the 2003 Masters as if unaware of the current controversy brewing at one of the nation's most hallowed golf grounds. If you too are out of the loop, the brief synopsis is that Augusta National has some 3000 members, many heads of state or of industry, but none who happen to be women. When this glaring bit of discrimination was made public by women's advocate Martha Burk, Augusta National's good ol' boy leader Hootie Johnson couldn't understand all the hoopla. Better yet, he refuses to change the club's statistics.

But Tiger Woods can make it happen.

Woods is the most recognized face in golf, possibly in all of sports. He is loved by men, women and children alike, for his good looks, his rise to stardom through hard work, and for the impossible golf shots he makes on a regular basis. If Woods were the one to take a stand, to refuse to play a course whose beliefs have not changed since the 1930s, wouldn't everyone listen?

Earlier this week, Thomas H. Wyman, a 25-year member of Augusta National and the former chief executive officer of CBS, became the first member to turn in his card. Why? Because Johnson's position to not admit women is unacceptable and "pigheaded." According to Wyman, at least 50 to 75 other members feel the same way.

And then there is Tiger Woods. The Master himself is wondering why he should

be expected to go out on a limb. Why should he step up to the plate? Why put himself on the line and possibly miss a chance at another coveted title?

Well, Tiger, that's the price you pay for being a sports icon. That's the responsibility that comes with being one of the most talented, best known and highest paid athletes in a country where sports figures are held above all else. It's also being not just a man, but a good human being.

As a man of mixed race, it's hard to imagine why Woods wouldn't want to stand up against a club which allowed its first black member just 12 short years ago. One has to wonder what Woods' action might be if Augusta were still discriminating against race, rather than merely gender.

Through surveys like the one collected by the AP, Woods may feel that the public is on

his side when he says he will try for yet another Masters crown. But the fine print shows that 59% percent of those polled admit they follow professional golf "not at all."

Despite on-going efforts of the LPGA, women's golf still lags far behind the men's game in prize winnings and sponsorship. LPGA star Annika Sorenstam won 11 tournaments this season but netted a mere \$2,863,904, well behind Woods' pace. And maybe, because of the public's demand for men's golf over women's and the advertising revenue poured into the men's game, that is something that can't be changed and shouldn't. If the men bring in more money they deserve to be paid out more money.

■ HANSON

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Bruins can't beat the Blues, winning streak snapped

BOSTON (AP) — In a matchup of the league's top offenses, it was a low-profile goaltender who ended up with the top billing.

Fred Brathwaite made 33 saves and Keith Tkachuk and Scott Mellanby each had a goal and an assist as the St. Louis Blues snapped the Boston Bruins' eight-game home winning streak with a 4-0 victory on Tuesday night.

"Fred was big for us tonight," Blues center Doug Weight said. "We needed our goalie to make some big saves and that's exactly what he did. In the third period, there were some point-blankers and he held his ground."

The Bruins, who entered the game with the best record in the league, lost for the first time at the FleetCenter since a 4-1 setback to Anaheim on Oct. 31. Boston also had its five-game winning streak snapped while St. Louis improved to 7-3-1 on the road and 6-0-0-1 against Eastern Conference teams.

The two teams entered the game tops in the

league in scoring. Boston was averaging 3.57 goals per game and the Blues were at 3.48. It was just the second time this season the Bruins failed to score a goal, with the other coming in a 2-0 loss to Toronto on Nov. 19.

"We just didn't get many quality shots," Bruins coach Robbie Ftorek said. "They played a good game and we just weren't as sharp as we had been."

The Blues got the only goal of the first period when Petr Cajanek's shot from outside the right circle was deflected off the far post by Eric Boguniecki and trickled past Boston goaltender Steve Shields.

The Blues added a pair of goals in the second period. Mellanby's seventh of the season on a point-blank shot midway through the period made it 2-0 and Weight's backhandier less than four minutes later gave the Blues a three-goal advantage. Tkachuk scored his sixth goal of the season with 4:33 remaining in the game.



Blues player Scott Mellanby (19) celebrates after scoring against Boston goaltender Steve Shields (31) during the second period in Boston Tuesday.

Brathwaite recorded his second shutout of the season and 15th of his career against the most potent offense in the NHL.

"Tonight was just a good night for me," said Brathwaite, who is in danger of being sent to the minors with

starting goaltender Brent Johnson on the verge of returning to an injury. "But right now I can't do anything about the situation. All I can do is

■ BRUINS

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Libby offered full-season contract with Pirates

By Journal Tribune Staff

PORTLAND — Saco's Matt Libby, a former Thornton Academy and Providence College hockey player has solidified his role with the Portland Pirates of the American Hockey League.

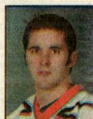
Libby, a second-year pro, had been skating here in Maine on a 25-game contract and on Tuesday morning he was told that his efforts thus far had been good enough to land him a full-season offer.

Rookie center Brad Parsons reportedly got the same news as the team had its final practice before a weekend road trip. Terms of the two standard AHL contracts had yet to be finalized at press time.

Libby is a 24-year-old defenseman for the Pirates and in his first 20 games this season he had notched seven assists. Last season he spent time skating for four different teams. He'll now be working longer to impress the parent club — the NHL's Washington Capitals.

Parsons, who played at Princeton, has scored two goals to go with 10 assists.

The team has a 7 p.m. game against the Albany River Rats tonight and will be in Newfoundland on Friday.



Matt Libby