



HAVING TO MAKE CHICKEN SOUP OUT OF CHICKEN POOP

By Kerry Schmidt March 1, 2009

On the excitement meter, very little to get hyped up over.

To prove it, for the second time in a week, USA TODAY had a large feature on women's curling. Breathtaking.

The one "big" event was the second coming of Jesus Christ, opps, I mean Tiger Woods. Well, some golf fans equate the two.

He was on the cover of the March 2 Sports Illustrated, and the jinx kicked in quickly. He was ousted on the second day by a near midget, Tim Clark (he is 5'5", 150 pounds) from South Africa.

The media covered every step, every sneeze Tiger took. On various visual media, ESPN covered every single second of whatever Tiger did!

Then the balloon busted quickly. Most of the fans promptly went home.

Tiger is not just the star of golf, Tiger IS golf. Mike Lopresti had a great comment in his column. "Many play. Few are champions. Very, very few are the oxygen of a sport."

One crazy Tiger tidbit emerged. Apparently some idiot bid one million bucks for an empty Gatorade bottle that Tiger drank from! What bad economy. But the sale was negated, because since there was likely some Tiger saliva in the bottle, that still counts as "part of his body," thus, no sale.

But he, along with the media millions, will return starting Thursday.

The next "important?" happening is the "NFL Combine," wherein a couple hundred prospects are dissected in every possible way.

Stop watches, tape measures, et al, along with interviews.

As usual, several of the biggest names did not attend, instead waiting for "their own" show, usually at their college campus.

QB's want to throw to their own receivers, and the others just want the one-on-40 exposure. Boring, but many millions of dollars are at stake.

One, apparently, wasn't worried, Alabama tackle Andre Smith. He showed up Friday night, then, sans telling anyone in the league, left Saturday morning. The same Smith that was suspended from the Sugar Bowl for unspecified rule violations.

SI's Peter King said, "He single-handedly dropped himself from third overall pick to 33rd". He cost himself millions. Another NFL Einstein.

One story was about the 0-16 Lions. One of their attendees gave a long list of what they were looking for. He could have shortened to a single word. "Everything." At least they cannot do any worse than last year.

Free agency began at 12:01 AM last Friday. The thrust of this is that a few of the really good players, Titans' tackle Albert Haynesworth, Ravens' Ray Lewis and the Bengalis' T.J.

Houshmandzadeh. Note: Some may shy away from him just because his name would not fit on his jersey.

These three, along with maybe one or two more could command huge bucks. But for all the others, the money won't be there. With the player's agreement ending in 2010 and no salary cap, not to mention the economy, middle range players will be in for a surprise.

The NFL revealed Wednesday they had cut 169 jobs and Commissioner Roger Goodell took a 25% pay cut.

Hey, maybe the league can ask congress for a bailout!



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

ESPN has ousted Emmitt Smith. Seems he had such catchy phrases as “rites of patches” for players, “got debaced” and “can’t change the stripes on a Leopard.”

Some speculate Brett Favre may take over, unless he decides to play until he is 60.

Cowboys’ owner Jerry Jones has put a gag order on any discussions re Terrell Owens. Hints abound he may be out. During the SB none other than Joe Montana said re TO: “If he complained about not getting balls thrown his way, as he did with Jeff Garcia and Tony Romo, I would have pulled out the video and said, “Here’s why (sic). You can’t catch the ball. You can’t catch, period.” He added, “And I would have done it through the media, just like he did to Garcia.”

SI’s Dan Patrick did his feature interview on announcer Marv Albert.

He glorified all of his accomplishments. But he forgot to mention the part where he sexually assaulted a woman in a hotel room and nearly raped her.

But nothing as trivial as that can keep him off the air. PUKE.

God this column is boring.

NBA. Mr. Trouble, former Knicks guard Stephon Maybury (he refused to play, sitting half the season saying he wasn’t appreciated enough, though he still got paid!), will sign as a backup with the Celtics. Potentially a very bad idea. Boston has great team chemistry, and Marbury’s reputation is as a rotten apple. It’s all about him.

MLB. Well spring training is upon us. But the only news is, for the millionth time, about A-Rod and his butt shots. 26 more redundant stories last week, including another big bit in SI.

How many times can you write about the same pile of s.t.?

And let’s not forget fun-loving Manny Ramirez, Dodgers. During the last month of the season last year, he led the Dodgers to the playoffs.

Now, at 36, he still thinks very highly of himself, a habit he repeatedly proclaimed while in Boston, which led them to get rid of him.

LA has offered him a 2-year contract. \$25 million the first year, guaranteed, then an option in 2010 for free agency if he wished to go that route.

He turned it down. Not enough money, says his agent, Scott Boras.

So far, no other team has made an offer, although the Giants have “had discussions” with Boras.

You have a very good final month, and 25 mill is not enough?! Oh yea, the economy is bad, so he needs more. Bor ASS and Me nny, the dollar bill twins.

X-Games sports are the new rage.

All sorts of wild, crazy stuff. Including freestyle motocross.

Like NASCAR and X-treme fighting, many fans come to see “great wrecks, etc.

Well, they got a biggie.

On February 7, Jeremy Lusk, a gold medalist, attempted a back-flip riding his specially built bike, on a 100-foot jump during a competition in Costa Rica. He failed to complete the flip, landed on his head and, boom, crash, he is dead. Fans sure got their monies’ worth. Crazy bastards and sick fans.

Seems the sports world has their own version of Bernie Madoff (the \$50 Billion dollar flim flam man).

Texas billionaire Allen Stanford, chairman of Stanford Financial Group. SFG.

“Sir Allen,” he calls himself, since he was knighted by the Antiguan government. Offshore money.

Last month, his ponzi scheme began to unravel.

His name is on PGA and ATP tours, stadiums and other events.

The total amount he is alleged to have stolen is somewhere between 10 - 12 BILLION bucks.

Tiger, Viji and many more athletes and some owners are in the loss column.



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

But THE story of the week, if not the year, is at the Combine!

There are so many coaches, scouts, management, media, current players and others, that it is quite easy for some people to go unnoticed.

I spoke with one of the coaches who was there (name will be withheld) and asked him about this story. He said it was true.

On about the second day, some noticed a man – he had some sort of credentials around his neck – who was paying rapt attention to the actual trials part: 40 yard dash, vertical jump, long jump, arm length, passing and catching, and running routs through mazes. He also was in the weight room when that aspect took place.

No one really noticed him at first, because he took no part in the interviews, face-to-face discussions, et al. He just was “someone in the crowd.”

But then it began to happen.

He was with a group of others who were standing there with stop watches, ready for the receivers/RBs, who should have the fastest times.

After a DB clocked a 3.38, 40, he requested that he run it again. On signal, the DB took off. The UG (unknown guy) waited about a full second then took off running along side the DB. He ended up beating the DB by almost 5 yards!

But before the astounded others could get in under 3 seconds!!!

He was later spotted at the vertical jump. Just before they got there, he jumped at the same time as a free safety, who measured 49 inches. UG jumped “at least” 2 feet higher!!

Then he was quickly gone.

They finally found him in the weight room, where a large number of prospects were bench pressing 225 pounds as often as they could.

The best was a 325 lb lineman, who was able to get in 44 reps.

Quietly, a few benches down, UG lay down and instantly, and easily, did an even 100 reps and still had a lot left.

They finally caught up with him and obviously wanted to know who in the hell he was.

He told them he was a rugby player/coach from “down under.”

He told them he was here to see if any of the players would be rugby boys.

But they obviously started asking re all the incredible stuff they had seen.

He declined comment and went back to the field.

They all followed him.

QB's were passing, and he asked rocket arm Matt Stafford to throw the ball as far as he could. As soon as Stafford let it fly, UG took off and was waiting to catch the ball when it got to him.

Stafford had thrown the ball 65 yards! UG caught it one handed.

Answering no questions, he went over to the 3-man blocking sled, where 3 behemoths were struggling together pushing it a few yards. As soon as they were finished, he stepped back, took a 5-yard run and pushed the 450 pound sled 20 yards down field. He then took one more rush at it and actually broke the end of the sled right off the steel bar.

For some reason, one large DT rushed at UG and blindsided him with a violent hit. He did not move an inch, while the DT was lying on the field, dazed and bruised.

He then jogged to the end zone, obviously being followed by everyone, players included.

The Combine had, basically, come to a complete stop.

He stood under the goal post, and, with a standing jump, leaped up enough to actually sit on the cross bar!

Speechless, the silence was broken when a QB asked him if he could catch a ball thrown from only about 15 feet and as hard as he could throw it.



OFF THE WALL SPORTS

While still sitting up there, the QB gave his all, and UG easily caught it – one handed. He then proceeded to quickly squeeze the football until it blew open!

By this time, word had spread and he was swamped by media nuts, lap tops buzzing.

He would not answer any questions, but said he was going back to the weight room, since the “contest” for who could bench the most on the incline press.

One monster put up an astounding 705 pounds. UG, good sized himself at about 6’5”, 270 pounds, went to the squat rack to get the stronger bar. He put that on the incline bench and asked how much weight the bar could hold.

He was told they had put over 1000 pounds on it.

He managed to get almost 1200 before he ran out of room on the end.

He sat down, and, with ease, pressed the 1200 pounds seemingly effortlessly – 25 times!!

Absolute bedlam had broken out by now, but UG was silent.

He walked out, and across the field saw a young boy, about 7 years old. He went over to him and handed him a card. He said it was only for him to read.

Then, within a matter of seconds, he raced the length of the field and was gone.

They then virtually stole the card from the kid, and on the back it had 2 phone numbers, both international.

They tried for two weeks to reach him, and finally he answered the phone.

Before the still flabbergasted American coaches and staff, he said he would not be back, that there were no players there that could even begin to play rugby here.

One finally asked, not “who are you,” but “what are you?” He calmly said he was from a virtual unknown tribe from the desert middle of Australia and that the tribe went back over 3 thousand years.

No one would believe this, but, on the conference speaker, one asked if any of the others could do the things he did.

He answered, “Oh yes. As a matter of fact, I am one of the slowest, weakest members of his “tribe.” He then said that was mainly because he was 107 years old!!

Speechless, they begged him to allow a group of them to fly down there to witness his tribal members, telling him that they could make him wealthy beyond his wildest dreams.

Quietly, he declined, saying that God had given his group these abilities, but not to enrich themselves with gold, but to live simply and quietly. And play rugby.

They finally tried to let it go.

Mainly because, it never happened. I made all this up, so any of you that actually thought this was true, well, you need help.

I’ve got my help. Mr. Single Malt.