

# Woods looking to increase Masters Hall in Augusta

**Ciaran Kohli-Lynch**  
SPORTS EDITOR

The world's best golfers will meet at the Augusta National Golf Course, Georgia Thursday to compete in the sport's most prestigious tournament. The US Masters is one of the four major tournaments in professional golf, with a prize fund of more than \$8,000,000.

Looking to win his fifth green jacket at Augusta, Tiger Woods has hit a rich vein of form going into the tournament. After a highly publicized scandal regarding his personal life, and a range of on-course issues, Woods has reclaimed the world number 1 ranking position for the first time since October 2010. On top of this, Woods has secured a number of tour victories at Torrey Pines, Doral, and Bay Hill.

14-time major champion, Woods will hope to build on these achievements as he chases Jack Nicklaus' 18-major world record. If he is able to continue showing flashes of the sort of form that made him a dominant force

in the sport for more than a decade, Woods will undoubtedly triumph at Augusta and take one step closer to the world record.

Standing in his way, however, are a host of talented golfers. 23-year-old Northern-Irish golfer Rory McIlroy, who currently sits at number 2 in the world rankings, is debatably the most threatening of these. McIlroy has played 2 weeks in a row, going into the tournament at Augusta in order to fine-tune his game.

McIlroy, an ex-world number 1, recently stated that he was confident he could leave a mark on the tournament, where he famously blew a 4-shot lead on the final day in 2011. He will be looking to avoid a repeat of that Sunday, where he recorded the worst round in history by a golfer leading on the last day of the Masters Tournament. Speaking after the Houston Open last month, McIlroy said: "My short game is sharp and I putted it pretty nice. If I can limit the sloppy mistakes I'll be fine."

In any case, the Masters is a staple of



Image courtesy of golf.com

any sporting calendar, attracting the some of the highest ticket-prices in world sports.

The action begins on Thursday morning, culminating in a final round on Sun-

day. Tune in to see if Tiger Woods can continue his impressive run of form, or if one of the many capable challengers in the field is able to slow him down.

# NBA teams reach play-offs, NCAA tournament heated

**Nathan McMahon**  
STAFF WRITER

This time of year is one of the most exciting for basketball fans as NBA teams desperately attempt to secure a playoff spot, while college teams try to make it through the NCAA tournament unscathed to become national champions.

The NBA playoff race is over for the Eastern Conference as the eight playoff spots with Miami at the top position and the Bulls unlikely to move far from their current fifth seed. Even after the impressive streak ended, the Miami Heat has not slowed down even in the absence of some of their stars. It seems like between the big three of Chris Bosh, Dwayne Wade, and LeBron James only one is needed to win, as the other two sit out, in order to be physically ready the playoff grind. They are ten games ahead of the New York Knicks and they are the definite favorites to repeat as NBA champions.

The Western Conference is a completely different story where the final three playoff spots are still up for grabs with Golden State, Houston, the Lakers, Utah, and even Dallas have a shot at a playoff spot. The Lakers have a very precarious hold on the eighth and final playoff position where they are only half a game up on Utah. The Lakers do have a favorable schedule with the majority of their remaining games to be played at home.

It would be extremely impressive if the Lakers make the playoffs after their horrid start to the season and would be an equally massive disappointment if they did not make the playoffs with the talent on the team. Kobe Bryant is on a mission to get them into the playoffs where he knows better than most that



Image courtesy of bostonherald.com

anything can happen.

In the world of college basketball, this past week led up to Saturday's national semifinal matchups for a shot at the national championship on Monday.

The first game was between overall number 1 seed, Louisville, and the team that has shocked the world; the 9 seeded Wichita State Shockers. The Shockers were expected by many to roll over to the ferocity of Louisville's chaotic style of defense, instead, they looked like tournament veterans and took control of the game where they led by as many as 13 in

the second half. However, Luke Hancock of Louisville had other plans as Louisville rallied behind his stellar shooting in the final minutes to move on with a final score of 72-68.

In the championship game on Monday, they will face Michigan, who took down Syracuse 61-56 in the second of the games on Saturday.

Michigan knew they were going to have to hit open threes against Syracuse's famed 2-3 zone, and in the first half they did, opening up a 36-25 lead at halftime. Michigan's Trey Burke, who has led them all season, strug-

gled from the field hitting just one field goal, but was picked up from the great shooting of Spike Albrecht and Caris Levert. The second half proved a tougher task for Michigan as Syracuse stepped up their defensive intensity and closed the deficit to just 1 point, but Michigan did not buckle under the pressure.

Monday's matchup between Louisville and Michigan is sure to be a good one where Louisville is the favorite, but Michigan has played as well as anyone this tournament. Look for Trey Burke to come out ready to make up for his poor performance against Syracuse.



### Wednesday, April 10

**Baseball**  
VS. Calumet College of St. Joseph  
Ed Glancy Field, 1 p.m.  
(game 1, game 2 to follow)

### Thursday, April 11

**Baseball**  
@ Robert Morris College  
5 p.m.  
(game 1, game 2 to follow)

### Saturday, April 13

**Baseball**  
VS. Olivet Nazarene University  
Ed Glancy Field, 12 p.m.  
(game 1, game 2 to follow)

**Men & Women's Track & Field**  
@ Benedictine University