

SPORTS

Surfing

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good it feels."

Irons, 24, was eliminated in the quarterfinals of the Rip Curl, but his closest competitor in the World Championship Tour rankings, Australian Luke Egan, was also cut in the quarters, giving Irons the world title.

"He's been the most complete surfer all year by far," Egan said. "He highly deserves what he got today."

Irons took the ratings lead in the second event of the year by winning the Rip Curl Pro in Australia and never lost the lead. He went on to win two other tournaments, giving him 13 career victories. Irons has earned \$160,375 this season.

"My goal in the beginning of the year was to do better than last year, and that was 10th, so if I got ninth, I would've been happy with that," he said.

But Phil Irons, who introduced the sport to his son, said the world title was "due."

"He was focused the whole way," Phil Irons said. "It's something the kid worked for since he was little. To do it here at home... it's overwhelming."

Derek Ho was the first surfer from Hawaii to win the world title in 1993.

Ashes

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published a now famous mock obituary for English cricket.

Although there is some argument about the exact nature of the Ashes, the most generally accepted story is that months later a group of Melbourne ladies burnt a set of balls and presented their ashes to a touring English team, who took them home where they have remained ever since.

Howard said the Ashes urn was the most treasured sporting trophy in the eyes of most Australians, who take their cricket seriously.

The Ashes are currently housed at the Marylebone Cricket Club at Lord's in London.

Earlier this year English and Australian officials held discussions with a view to sending the urn to Australia for display but after advice from conservation experts, English officials decided the trophy was too delicate to survive the journey.

The Australian Cricket Board has a replica of the trophy, presented in 1948 after the 4-0 series victory by Don Bradman's "Invincibles."

Howard said it would be a real gesture on the part of the English cricket authorities for the urn to come to Australia, and a welcome piece of symbolism that would not be lost on the cricketing world.

"While the location of the Ashes trophy is certainly not going to strain diplomatic relations between Australia and the United Kingdom, I strongly support the Australian Cricket Board's efforts to allow the nation's cricket fans to view the hallowed trophy," he said. ■

Jordan inspires win

WASHINGTON — Michael Jordan started for the second successive game and performed like his old self to inspire the Washington Wizards to a 103-78 pasting of the Milwaukee Bucks Tuesday.

"We needed to stop the bleeding," said fivetime MVP Jordan after Washington snapped a six-game losing skid.

"Hopefully, we can feed off this."

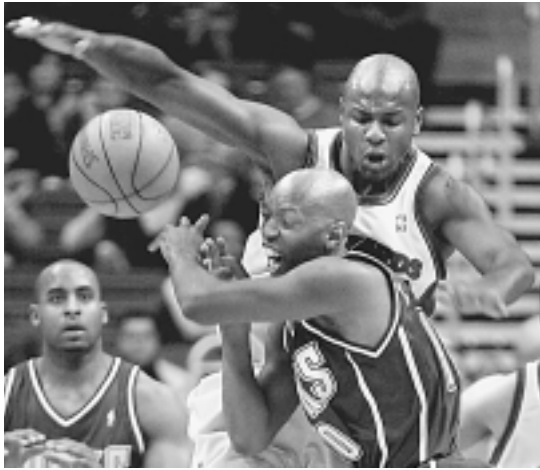
The victory was never in doubt, the Wizards riding a 32-16 second quarter to a 56-39 halftime lead. Jordan had 15 points and five rebounds in the half, finishing with 25 points and seven boards.

He played just 30 minutes, giving the younger players some floor time.

"This league don't allow anybody to grow up fast," said Jordan.

The 39-year-old said he would continue to start as long as he stayed healthy, adding that he was good for 37 to 38 minutes per game.

Tim Thomas led the Bucks with 17 points.



WASHINGTON WIZARDS' Brendan Haywood (top center) collides with Milwaukee Bucks' Sam Cassell during Tuesday's game.

Cubs sign Remlinger

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs completed the signing of Atlanta Braves relief pitcher Mike Remlinger Tuesday.

The 36-year-old left-hander, who was a free agent, reached agreement with the Cubs on a

three-year deal believed to be worth \$10.65 million, according to a report on the team's official Web site.

"We feel like we have one of the finest left-handed relievers in baseball and, in our opinion, the best available free agent," Cubs general manager Jim

Hendry was quoted as saying.

Remlinger, who appeared in 73 games for the Braves last season and was 7-3 with a 1.99 ERA, said new Cubs manager Dusty Baker was an important factor in his decision to move to Chicago.

"Having Dusty Baker come here made it a lot easier for me to make that decision," said Remlinger, who came into the major leagues with San Francisco in 1991 when Baker was hitting coach for the Giants.

Charges dropped

HILLSBORO, Oregon — Felony domestic abuse charges won't be filed against Trail Blazers forward Ruben Patterson after his wife asked prosecutors to drop the case.

Patterson was arrested at his home Nov. 25 after his wife, Shannon, called 911 and reported that her husband had assaulted her. He was released from Washington County Jail after a teammate posted \$1,000 bail.

Shannon Patterson spoke with the Washington County District Attorney's office Monday and said she did not wish the prosecution of her husband to proceed.

— Reuters, AP

Islanders: New York defeats Canucks 2-1

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corner and drove to the net.

Marc Denis stopped his shot but left the rebound for Lindros, who flipped it in for his sixth goal to make it 4-3.

Dale Purinton also scored for the Rangers. David Vyborny, Matt Davidson and Andrew Cassels countered for Columbus against Dan Blackburn.

Red Wings 2, Mighty Ducks 1: In Detroit, Curtis Joseph made 29 saves, and streaking Brett Hull and Sean Avery also grabbed goals in Detroit's win over Anaheim.

Joseph, who has allowed just three goals in his last two games, stopped Steve Rucchin from the slot and Paul Kariya from the left circle in the last two minutes.

Avery scored with 2:24 remaining in the opening period, getting his second goal in two games when he banked a shot in off Jean-Sebastien Giguere as he tried to cover it up just outside the crease.

Hull made it 2-0 2:19 into the second period. Kariya scored on the power play for Anaheim with 3:40 left in the period.

Capitals 4, Penguins 1: In Pittsburgh, Jaromir Jagr scored his 13th goal, and Olaf Kolzig made 16 saves as slumping

Washington beat Pittsburgh.

The Capitals, 3-7-1 in their past 11 games, beat Pittsburgh for the first time since acquiring Jagr from the Penguins in July 2001. Washington also snapped a five-game winless streak against Pittsburgh.

Kolzig's bid for his first career shutout of the Penguins and first shutout of the season was ruined by Mario Lemieux, who directed Alexei Kovalev's pass behind Kolzig with 2:53 to play for his 12th goal of the season.

Former Penguin Robert Lang, Ivan Ciernik and Jeff Halpern also scored for the Capitals, who fired 32 shots at Johan Hedberg.

Maple Leafs 4, Lightning 3, OT: In Toronto, Karel Palke scored at 3:48 of overtime as Toronto stayed on a roll by rallying to beat Tampa Bay. Jonas Hoglund, Mats Sundin and Robert Reichel scored third-period goals for the Maple Leafs, who have won a season-high four consecutive games and eight of 10 overall.

Nikolai Khabibulin made a season-high 44 saves for the Lightning, who have won just one of their last seven games.

Tampa Bay blew 2-0 and 3-2 leads. The Lightning got goals from Martin St. Louis, Fredrik Modin and Vincent Lecavalier

against Ed Belfour.

Hurricanes 2, Predators 1: In Nashville, Tennessee, Rod Brind'Amour and Erik Cole scored the goals, and Arturs Irbe made 24 shots saves for Carolina.

With Carolina playing with a two-man advantage Brind'Amour took a tap pass from Ron Francis and shot the puck under the left arm of a sprawling Mike Dunham with 54 seconds remaining in the first period.

After a scoreless second period, Vernon Fiddler tied the game for the Predators early in the third. But Cole won it with his goal midway through the period.

Flames 2, Avalanche 1: In Denver, Al MacNeil won his first game as interim coach for the Flames, who ended a four-game losing streak after firing head coach Greg Gilbert and assistant Brad McCrimmon before the team's morning skate.

Roman Turek stopped 30 shots for the Flames, who ended a four-game losing streak after firing head coach Greg Gilbert and assistant Brad McCrimmon before the team's morning skate. Calgary won for just the second time in 13 games.

Turek, who had allowed 16 goals in the previous four games, made several spectacular saves in the first two periods before allowing a goal by Radim Vrbata with

3:17 left in the game.

Sharks 3, Coyotes 2, OT: In Phoenix, Teemu Selanne tied the game with less than four minutes remaining and scored the game-winner in the final 42.6 seconds of overtime as San Jose beat Phoenix in Cap Raeder's coaching debut with the Sharks.

Marco Sturm also scored for San Jose, which played its first game since Darryl Sutter was fired Sunday. The Sharks were playing without Owen Nolan, who needed about 10 stitches to close a cut on his head after being hit by a stick in Phoenix's 3-2 win in San Jose on Saturday. Phoenix is winless in seven of its last eight games (1-3-4) and is 2-6-3 at home.

Oilers 2, Wild 1, OT: In Edmonton, Alberta, Mike York scored at 1:29 of overtime as Edmonton beat Minnesota for its fourth consecutive win.

Seconds after failing to convert on a breakaway, York picked up a centering pass from Ryan Smyth and converted his own rebound past Manny Fernandez for the winner, which was also the 7,000th goal in franchise history.

Tommy Salo stopped 30 shots and Anson Carter also scored for the Oilers, who extended their unbeaten streak to seven games (6-0-1-0). ■

United: Team marches on with Burnley win

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But the home side were undone after 35 minutes when Uruguayan striker Forlan, scorer of two goals against Liverpool on Sunday, raced on to John O'Shea's pass and calmly beat goalkeeper Marlon Beresford with Burnley's offside trap in tatters.

O'Shea, playing as a makeshift midfielder, should have made it two just before the break put sent a free header wide.

Young midfielder Danny Pugh

also missed two chances for Alex Ferguson's team and it was left to substitute Solskjaer to smash home their second after 65 minutes.

Sunderland manager Howard Wilkinson fielded an inexperienced team in front of a big 27,000 crowd in Sheffield and the home side took advantage with two quickfire goals at the start of the second half.

Murphy scrambled in the first after 54 minutes and Allison's header made it 2-0 soon after as Sheffield United added another

premier league scalp to their tally, having beaten Leeds United in round three.

Black's looping header gave Palace an 11th-minute lead against Oldham before Palace midfielder Danny Granville was red-carded just before halftime for a two-footed tackle.

But the Londoners defended capably in the second half and the diminutive striker scored a second 16 minutes from time to see off Oldham, who knocked out West Ham United in the last round.

The win was a welcome boost for Palace manager Trevor Francis, who was fined 1,000 pounds (\$1,566) by the Football Association earlier on Tuesday for hitting his Latvian goalkeeper Alex Kolinko at a game in August. Kolinko played on Tuesday.

Wednesday's highlights include the clash between premier league high-fliers Chelsea and Everton at Stamford Bridge and the visit of Ipswich Town, managed by former Everton boss Joe Royle, to premier league Liverpool. ■