

Tennis a match for Blakeney

Continued from 1B

bles. They made a good combination."

Blakeney has improved every year by refining the basics. Under Davis' tutelage, his serve has gone from OK to blazing and his returns pepper the court. That combination helped Blakeney in his singles win, where he kept Sharpe off-balance with service aces and winners from near-impossible angles.

"I'm serving the ball with a lot more pace," Blakeney said. "I was just getting it in before. Now I'm just hitting the ball with more pace. I'm also getting the

ball in transition from the baseline to the net and moving opponents from side to side."

He's also unflappable, an attribute Blakeney relies on when the stakes rise. No matter the score or how important the match, Blakeney's facial expression rarely changes. He prefers concentrating on the task at hand and keeping opponents guessing.

"That's one of my strengths. When you lose your cool, things start to fall apart," he said. "It's the type of person I am. Calvin and my dad teach me how to keep my emotions under control. I try not to let them see what's

going on inside."

With the high school season finished, Blakeney's attention turns to the junior circuit. First is the Tar Heel qualifiers, then the Southern regional competition, where the top 32 players move on to the nationals. Blakeney's goal is to move up among the America's elite juniors before his high school career ends. There's room for improvement, something Blakeney's worked on since he was a skinny seventh-grader.

"My ranking is OK, but I'd like for it to be better," he said. My goal before I finish is to get into the top 30. I guess I could get a little better."

Tiger awesome at pro-am

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FARMINGTON, Pa. - Tiger Woods gave a crowd estimated at 30,000 exactly what they paid for Monday at the third annual Mystic Rock Charity Pro-Am.

Woods entertained a huge part of that crowd for 18 holes, shooting a 7-under-par 65 to win the event. No prize money was involved, but the pros were paid appearance fees and their expenses were covered.

Woods, who finished in a tie for fourth Sunday at the Colonial as he tried for his third win in as many events, beat Michael Bradley and Senior PGA Tour player Jim Thorpe by one stroke.

John Daly, who will come back to the PGA Tour later this week at The Memorial after a two-month layoff for alcohol rehabilitation, admitted to being rusty and shot a 1-over 73.

"It was fun," Woods said. "It amazes me that in a one-day event, this many people would come out and watch. I think it goes to show you that this part

of the United States needs a PGA Tour event. People are kind of starving for a tour event here."

Joe Hardy, the multimillionaire founder of a chain of lumber yards, spent more than \$20 million to develop the Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort, including the championship course designed by Pete Dye. The 74-year-old founder of the 84 Lumber chain is spending millions more to attract stars like Woods to show off his course and attract a PGA tournament.

Over the first three holes, Woods was constantly signing autographs on the tees, mostly for volunteers and marshals. The teeing area became so congested that tournament officials postponed more autographs until Woods completed his round.

"People have to realize that I'm only 21 and I'm only human and that sometimes I need my quiet time out on the course," Woods said. "Just like I have to realize that when I'm out in public, I'm in the public eye."

Woods said that when he turned pro last August, he wasn't going to play in these types of events. But the big paycheck - Woods reportedly received over \$1 million to play in the event for three years - and a chance to combat leukemia convinced him to come after he had turned down several other offers.

"Going back to when I was a child, I used to go down to a children's hospital and speak to cancer patients as well as abused kids," Woods said. "It's something I liked to do, loved to do. Anytime I can give something back, I'm more than happy to."

Woods will return to southwestern Pennsylvania for another benefit, a skins game in August for Arnold Palmer that benefits a long-time Palmer charity, the Westmoreland County hospital.

Woods will join a foursome that includes Tom Lehman and Davis Love III for the match on Aug. 25 at Laurel Valley Golf Club in Ligonier.

Malone missing in Jazz section

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Monday - the first time in this series he has avoided the print media. He did so by bolting to his 4-wheel drive vehicle with more determination than he showed the previous day driving to the basket.

On Sunday, however, Malone acknowledged the ongoing debate over his MVP selection.

"Michael never said he had any problem with it," Malone said. "Some people didn't like it that I got it, but a lot of the great players acknowledged me when I got it. That's what's important to me."

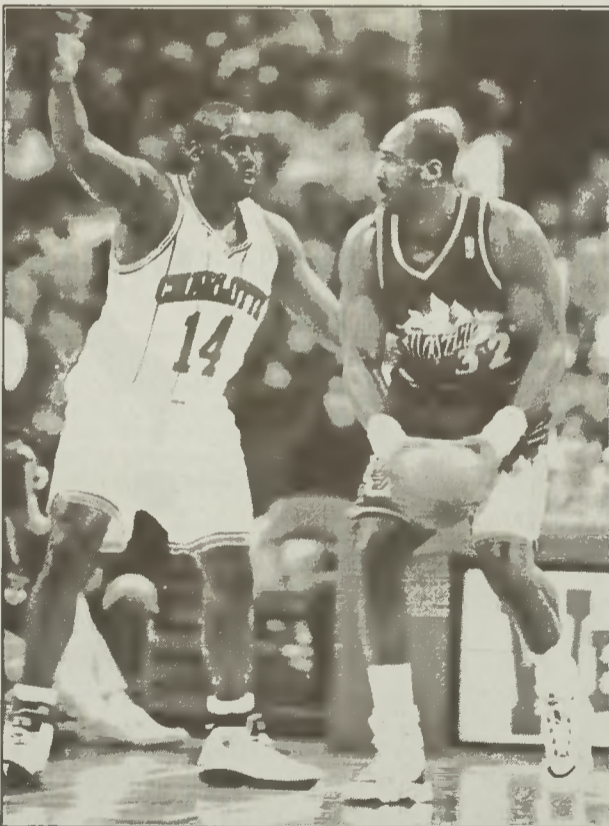
"A lot of guys that are jealous, they have nothing to be jealous about. They're jealous about the way I play."

Malone said he hadn't heard from Jordan, but he didn't think it was a big deal. He said the two are not close friends, although they occasionally speak to each other when the Jazz play the Bulls during the season.

Jordan has been nothing but complimentary about Malone's selection, although many people suspect Jordan wants to play the Jazz in the finals so he can prove the voters wrong.

Malone simply wants to get to the finals because he's never been there before. And he hasn't lost any admiration for Jordan despite beating him out for the MVP award.

"What he does every night, everybody guns for him and he comes out and still raises him game, even after all these years."



PHOTO/WADE NASH

NBA most valuable player Karl Malone has struggled in the Western Conference final against Houston.

So I have a lot of respect for him."

If Malone can lead the Jazz past the Rockets - Game 6 is Thursday at Houston and Game

7, if necessary, is next Sunday back in Salt Lake City - it might finally bring closure to the MVP debate.

Stock cars is new frontier for black team

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Erving said there are many reasons why African Americans have not been involved in racing over the years. He says that might change with more people of color becoming involved as owners and team personnel.

"The economics have been a deterrent and then maybe the personal interests," he said. "So much of the African American population in the country is urban and...you don't really have a whole lot of tracks inside urban areas that have been able to attract the young black kid to it."

Washington, a star running back with the Redskins in the early '80s, said the new team, which will run Fords next season, will likely have a white driver. Washington Erving has been in contact with some of NASCAR's top pilots about taking

on their ride, as well as hiring top-flight people to run the operation. Decisions will have to be made quickly to have the team fully operational by the season-opener next February at Daytona, Fla.

"If you can't do it, you get somebody who can do it. We are in that mode right now," Washington said. "We've got a list. I think you will be surprised when we do name a driver."

Although people of color won't initially be relied upon to staff the team, Washington Erving will ultimately try to move blacks and other minorities into positions.

"We do want to provide opportunities for minorities with this program, and we fully intend to," Washington said, "but we want to do it in the context of having a successful team as quickly as possible."



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