



ONE ON ONE

Do the NFL overtime rules make the league look like amateurs?



Billy O'Riordan
Sports Commentator

What was the last decision that you made by a coin flip? It might be hard to remember, since you are most likely a college student and therefore have not left a decision to random chance in some time.

My last coin toss decision, however, was fairly recent. (I barely count as a college student. My relationship to college is similar to Shaq's relationship to being a professional basketball

player: it is a lot of fun until I am reminded I have to work.)

I had to decide whether to have lunch at Taco Bell or Subway.

Did this decision affect my day? Yes. Did this decision affect anyone else's? No. Did it affect anyone who gets millions of dollars to go to lunch? No. See where I am going here, kind of?

Professional sports have been forced into evolution lately, with the creation of the challenge rule in the NFL, replay in MLB, the hand check rule in the NBA, new boundaries for goalies in the NHL, etc. So why is it that the NFL refuses to change the Neanderthal practice of flipping a coin to more or less decide an entire game?

Sure, it is just a game of football, and games rarely go to overtime. This thought process worked in the NFL for decades because of a few important points: (1) The rule was first used in 1955 when televisions were still black and white and the creators of ESPN were still in elementary school, (2) the NFL is a notoriously stubborn fraternity and rule changes would mean admitting that their rule is irrational, and (3) it is easy and no thought into a legitimate rule is necessary.

Sounds like some good reasons to me.

Fortunately for all of us sports fans out there in the world, ESPN came along and changed the way that sports are judged.

Now that every snap, every down, every player is meticulously and painstakingly evaluated by the great analysts of the all-day sports programming network (is there more than one? Does anybody still watch the local news or something?), the NFL is no longer able to get away with these outdated and illogical rules.

About time, right? I will, though, agree with one or two points the stubborn pundits who disagree with me bring up.

Yes, the college system isn't perfect. Believe it or not, the professional overtime system should probably be a little more comprehensive than the college version.

Giving an NFL team a 25-yard field in overtime is ridiculous. If the NFL ever switched to college overtime rules, I am pretty sure Peyton Manning would simply die of laughter (do I have to say Drew Brees now? Has SportsCenter decided who the best quarterback is yet?).

Another reason the naysayers like the current NFL system is a simple numbers game: it is quick. As many of you sports fans out there know, the college overtime can drag on for quite some time.

This is fine for Saturdays at 3:30 or whenever the serfs play their games, but Sunday at prime time? CBS and Fox don't have that kind of programming ability.

I'm not saying there is a perfect overtime system. But I am saying that the current NFL system (the part where you decide anything at a professional level with a coin toss) is downright stupid.

Oh, and I was going to throw in here something about how since 2000 the team that has won the coin toss has won 60 percent of the games, or how 37 times since 2000 the losing team hasn't even touched the ball in overtime, but I figured my audience to be smart enough to know that.

I have my own thoughts on how the rules should look, so I'll write exactly how it should look next week. If you think you know better than I do, e-mail me at woriordan@elon.edu so I can tailor my correct answer in the right format for all of you to understand.

If you aren't sure whether to e-mail me, flip a coin. It doesn't bother me.

Men's golf beats out Samford for first title in nearly two years

Pam Richter
Editor-in-Chief

It has been more than a year and a half since the Elon men's golf team won a tournament, but this past weekend at the Sea Trail Men's Intercollegiate tournament, the Phoenix found itself on the podium once again.

Junior Tanner Norton led the team with a three-day score of 210 and earned the second-overall spot in the tournament. As a team, the Phoenix won by six strokes with a score of 850. Southern Conference rival Samford University finished second overall.

"We like to win a few tournaments every year, and it's been a few years since we've won one," head coach Bill Morningstar said. "It's pretty good for us this early on (in the season). We (still) hope to get a whole lot better."

Senior Stephen Dressel finished tied for sixth, freshman Leif Neijstrom finished tied for 28th and redshirt freshman John Somers finished 33rd for the Phoenix.

"Everybody tried to go out there and beat the golf course," Dressel said. "That's the one thing that our coaches stress to us. Just beat the course."

On Sunday, Samford shot a low round score of 280, while Elon shot a 291 in the final day. The team needs to work on finishing the last day stronger, Dressel said.

"We need to keep our foot on the gas pedal," he said.

Dressel is one of the seniors who look to fill the void left by last year's key seniors Jayson Judy and Phil Bartholomew. When players graduate, there is someone always looking to take their spot, Morningstar said.

"There's always someone else there moving up the ladder," Morningstar said. "There's always people that seem to grow up from year-to-year. This year Dressel is a senior, and he has come a long way to leadership from a year or two years ago."

On the other side of the spectrum, there are a few freshmen that both Dressel and Morningstar said have performed well early on this year.

"We got four or five of them (freshmen) playing well this early," Morningstar said. "If they can play this well this early, they will get better as the year goes on."

The golf season is split into two seasons — the fall and the spring. But Morningstar said the team still treats the fall as the regular season, and the spring is often referred to as the "championship season," with the SoCon tournament taking place during the spring.

"You know that the Southern Conference tournament is the most important because if you win that, you automatically move on to the regional playoffs," Morningstar said.

As the upcoming weeks unfold, Morningstar said the team is currently playing qualifying rounds as he is looking for the top-8 to fill out the roster. He said he picks two other players as coach's picks to round out the roster to 10 spots.

Women's golf captures Sea Trail Intercollegiate

Led by senior Tara McFadden, the Phoenix women's golf team took the top honors in Sunset Beach, N.C. at the Sea Trail Women's Intercollegiate tournament.

McFadden posted a one-under-par 215 after three rounds (73-69-73) to capture an eight-stroke individual medalist victory.

The team championship was won by more strokes, as junior Virginia Mayer and sophomores Diana Davis, Martyna Mierzwa and Shannon Prunty compiled a score of 894 for the three day event. Jacksonville University was the second place finisher, with a team score of 911.

Finishing in third place was Southern Conference rival Appalachian State University, with a team score of 918.

Davis finished fourth as an individual with a score of 225 (73-78-74), and Mayer finished in a tie for seventh with a score of 227 (76-75-76).

Mierzwa ended up tied for 14th with scores of 77-73-80 (230), and Prunty finished in 25th place with scores of 80-79-77 (236).

Playing apart from the team as individuals, juniors Meghan Green and Lauren Lebak also competed. Green finished tied for 18th with a score of 233 (81-77-75) and Lebak finished tied for 39th with a 246 (84-86-76).

The team's victory was the first tournament victory since April, when the team gained a victory in the Mimosa Hills Intercollegiate tournament.

Next up for the Phoenix is the Lady Pirate Intercollegiate, which will take place Oct. 10-11 in Greenville, N.C.

The Phoenix has started its season on a strong note, as the team finished tied for third place in a 24 team tournament in its first action of the year at the Great Smokies Intercollegiate.

ELON ATHLETICS THIS WEEK

Wednesday 9/29
Volleyball vs. North Carolina A&T — 7 p.m.

Friday 10/1
Women's soccer vs. Davidson — 7 p.m.

Saturday 10/2
Cross country (Louisville Classic) — All Day
Cross country (Hagan Stone Classic) — All Day
Football vs. Samford — 1:30 p.m.
Volleyball at Appalachian State — 4 p.m.
Men's soccer at UNCG — 7 p.m.

Sunday 10/3
Women's soccer vs. Georgia Southern — 2 p.m.
Volleyball at Western Carolina — 3 p.m.

ATHLETIC RESULTS

SEPT. 24 — SEPT. 27

Football
Sep. 25
Elon 21
Georgia Southern 38

Men's Soccer
Sep. 28
Elon 4
Davidson 1

Women's Soccer
Sep. 24
Elon 1
Samford 0

Sep. 26
Elon 2
Chattanooga 3
Volleyball
Sep. 25
Samford 1
Elon 3

Sep. 26
Chattanooga 0
Elon 3

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