

The Pundits Speak: Casey Martin

In May, the Supreme Court ruled that disabled golfer Casey Martin has the legal right to ride in a golf car during PGA play. Here's what the nation's sports columnists said about the ruling:

John Eisenberg, *The Baltimore Sun* — The PGA Tour's motives weren't as terrible as they appeared, but it got what it deserved in the end: a legal loss amounting to a flogging in the court of public relations. Next time, the guys in the PGA office will have a heart.

David Whitley, *The Orlando Sentinel* — Sports are by nature discriminatory. The fastest and strongest win. The weak and injured don't. Except in America, where they sue. ... Bill Glas-son has had 10 surgeries on various ailments and almost filed for permanent disability because of back problems. Scott Verplank struggles through every round with an insulin pump. Isn't diabetes a handicap? Should we be less

sympathetic to a golfer with a slipped disc than a circulatory problem?

Gerry Callahan, *The Boston Herald* — Most of the top tour players — including Tiger and Phil Mickelson and David Duval — were children of privilege who were playing the finest private courses when most of us were begging Dad to stop for a round of mini golf. It is an image the PGA Tour executives would love to shake, and Martin hasn't helped the cause. Maybe that's why they fear him so and treat him as if he scratched their courtesy cars. ... [Martin] would love to walk. He can't. But he can play now, and it doesn't matter if he ever wins again. He took on the entire PGA Tour and won, and it wasn't even close. Way to go, Casey. You the man — the bigger, better man.

Terry Pluto, *The Akron Beacon Journal* — Judge Stevens, did you ever play golf? Did you ever have to walk a hilly course in the middle of August when

the humidity is high and the temperature is over 90 degrees? That nearly six-mile walk in those conditions will make you tired, period. And if you're competing against someone in a cart, who will have the advantage?

Bill Plaschke, *The Los Angeles Times* — It's not enough the PGA Tour has just been ruled out of bounds. It should also now be penalized for slow play. For taking nearly four years to do what it could have done in four minutes. For turning Casey Martin's last four years into a ride through hell. ... We should not forget that [the PGA] treated him like mud on a Titleist.

Bud Shaw, *The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer* — Golf is a game of honor. It's ridiculous to suggest that golfers with chronic bad backs or other physical ailments will suddenly take advantage of Casey Martin's victory in the Supreme Court to petition the PGA to ride in a car.



Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews www.drkoop.com

(All sites are preceded by <http://> unless otherwise noted)

www.drkoop.com — Former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop lends his name to this online clearinghouse for general health information. Its front page allows you to scan the latest health-news headlines. Since I currently suffer from rheumatoid arthritis and battled testicular cancer two years ago, I entered each into the site's search engine to test how in-depth the site is.

The rheumatoid arthritis search produced 11 pages of results containing 101 articles. The articles covered such varied topics as using yoga to lessen the symptoms to the latest drug therapies (although it took me a while to find any pages on Arava, the wonder drug that

has allowed me to walk normally again).

My search for testicular cancer produced only one page of articles (10 in all) on the subject. It included only basic information, and the articles didn't discuss treatment options in any depth. Still, it wouldn't be a bad place to start, and the site provides links to other medical Web sites that may provide you with more in-depth information.

You can also check potential drug interactions. The "Drug Checker" feature compares the medications you designate to see if they react adversely when used together. You can also discover other substances (such as alcohol or over-the-counter drugs) that you shouldn't use while

on a medication. As someone on multiple medications, I found this section invaluable. (My medications checked out fine.)

But my favorite part of the site was the risk-factor calculators, which allows you to calculate your ideal weight, your risk of chronic heart disease and whether you're getting enough sleep (among other subjects). In all, www.drkoop.com is an outstanding site that provides health information in language easily accessible to the lay person.

Golfdom's associate editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. compiles Scanning the Web and spends more money on arthritis medication each year than Augusta spends on azaleas. You can reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.