

SPORTS

Mickelson, Singh to play in Bell Canadian Open

Touring PGA pros begin to confirm plans to play in national championship at Angus Glen

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

The names are starting to filter in. And based on the initial confirmations of those touring Professional Golf Association professionals intending to visit the Angus Golf Club's south course links to play in the 2002 Bell Canadian Open, this year's event has the potential to be a highly entertaining affair.

On Thursday, Phil Mickelson, Vijay Singh, Jesper Parnevik, Mike Weir and Charles Howell III announced their confirmation to compete at the open, which has a total prize purse of \$4 million U.S. and will run at the Unionville public course from Sept. 2-8.

Known in golfing circles as "Lefty", the 32-year-old Mickelson will be making his first Canadian Open appearance in eight years. The winner of this year's Bob Hope Chrysler Classic and Canon Greater Hartford Open, the San Diego, California native is currently second on the 2002 World Golf Rankings, second on the 2002 PGA Tour Money Leaders through 18 events with \$3,653,426 U.S. in earnings and first on the 2002 PGA Tour Top 10 finishes.

Singh, 39, is no stranger to Angus Glen, as he captured last year's Telus Skins Game title that was played on the club's north course. A native of Fiji, Singh is ninth on the 2002 World Golf Rankings, seventh on the 2002 PGA Tour Money Leaders with earnings of \$1,884,035 U.S. through 18 events and sixth in top 10 finishes. The 2000 Masters champion captured this year's Shell Houston Open.

Weir, who hails from Bright's Grove, Ont. is also familiar with Angus Glen as he also joined Singh as a participant in last year's Telus Skins Game. The 32-year-old Weir is currently ranked 23rd in the World Golf Rankings and is 62nd on the tour money leading list having pocketed \$617,700 U.S. through 16 events.

A native of Sweden, the 37-year-old Parnevik is 21st on the 2002 World Golf Rankings and 38th on the 2002 PGA Tour Money Leaders list.

Howell III, 23, is 56th on the World Golf Rankings and 37th on the tour money leader list. A native of Augusta, Georgia, Howell III is tied in 29th place for top 10 finishes this year.

The five players will set out to dethrone last year's Canadian Open champion Scott Verplank, who is currently ranked 21st in the World Golf Rankings and 29th on the tour money leading list.

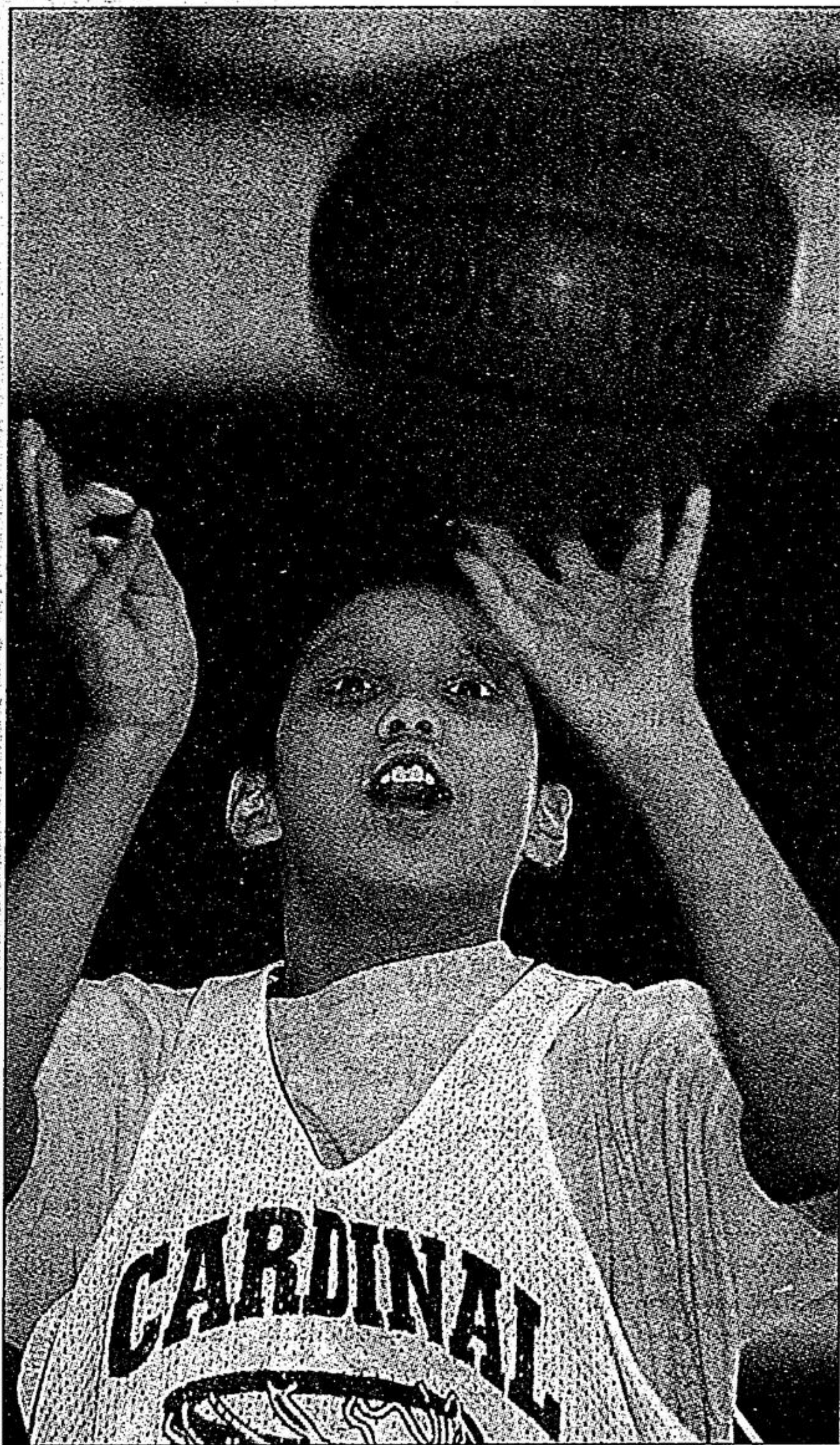
Although the entire field has yet to be completed, Kevin Thistle, Angus Glen's general manager and director of golf operations, feels this year's Canadian Open has the potential to be one of the most competitive in history.

"I think the 2002 Open will show this is one of the strongest fields in years. It's unbelievable. We're excited to have someone of Mickelson's calibre in the field and Singh is one of the best players today. And Howell is one of the most promising up and comers," he cited.

More competitors are expected to be announced by the Royal Canadian Golf Association in the near future on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.



VIJAY SINGH: Captured last year's Telus Skins Game title at Angus Glen Golf Club's north course.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Adrian Valenzuela, 14, practises his free-throw shooting at Brother Andre Catholic High School on Wednesday during the week-long Cardinal Sports Basketball Camp.

Mariners' win streak ends at 42 in tournament final

The Markham Mariners minor peewee baseball team saw a 42-game undefeated streak come to an end last weekend at a tournament in Mississauga when it dropped a 3-0 verdict to the Kitchener As in the title tilt.

The Mariners received excellent pitching efforts from Anish Bhide and Alliston Wong, who only gave up one earned run and four hits in the loss. At the plate, Bhide collected two hits while Ryan Murphy, Adam Velocci, and Peter Rodrigues each got one.

The Mariners opened the tournament on an impressive note as Daniel Mukai tossed a two hitter and Wong belted a solo homer to propel Markham to a 10-0 mercy-shortened win over Royal York.

Argenis Paz, Mukai, James Kottaras, Velocci and Murphy each got one hit and one RBI. Rodrigues, Aaron Caputo, and Steven Stamkos also collected one hit.

Buoyed by a three-hit, one RBI effort from Velocci and a solo homer from Wong, the Mariners won their second game over the Pickering Red Sox 10-5.

Kottaras picked up the win. Facing the North York Blues in their third game, the Mariners overcame a four-run deficit to prevail 9-6 and qualify for the playoffs.

Keying the seventh-inning comeback were a three-run homer by Velocci and strong relief pitching from Romano and Wong. The pair gave up just one unearned run in six innings with Wong posting the win.

Advancing to the semi-finals, the Mariners received a three-hit pitching effort from Kottaras and a homer from Wong to turn back the Guelph Royals 6-2.



SPORTS DIGEST

Raiders gain berth in NFC playoffs

The Markham Raiders clinched a playoff berth in the Northern Football Conference with an 18-13 win over the Oshawa Hawkeyes at Centennial Park last Saturday.

The Raiders jumped out to a 6-0 lead when Gifford Rose scored on a 25-yard run.

But the Hawkeyes rallied with a converted major before the half to take a 7-6 lead and padded it to 13-6 with an unconverted touchdown in the third quarter.

Rose then scored his second touchdown of the game when he hauled in a 30-yard pass from quarterback Danny Guster to cut the Raiders' deficit to 13-12.



With less than five minutes to play in the game, the Raiders took the lead for good when Andy Taylor took a handoff and ran 25 yards to the Hawkeyes' one-yard line. From there, Guster scored from one yard out.

Now 5-2 on the season and tied for second with the Mississauga Wolverines with two games remaining in the regular season, the Raiders will host the Belleville Panthers tonight at Centennial Park at 7 p.m.

James cages berth on junior national team

Shane James, 18, was one of 12 players named to the Canadian junior men's basketball roster that went to Venezuela earlier this week to compete in a COPABA world qualifying tournament.

The 6-foot-2 point guard who attends Milliken Mills Secondary School and will be entering his OAC year this fall, made the team after trials were conducted at Brock University last week.

The junior national team is vying for one of four berths that are up for grabs for the 2003 World Junior Championships in Malaysia next July.

The national team was scheduled to play three games this week against Venezuela, Brazil and Puerto Rico. After the first round of games, the top two in each pool play in the semi-finals. The third- and fourth-place teams play for classification.



SHANE JAMES
Milliken guard named to 12-man national team.

Stouffville wins two on the ball diamond

The Stouffville Mennos had a perfect week of action on the ball diamond as they took a pair of games in Oshawa City and District Softball action.

On Monday, the Mennos travelled to Markham and came away with a 10-1 win.

Scott Eyre and Rino Dambrosio led a 10-hit Menno attack with two hits apiece. Byron Baranieski belted a three-run homer in the fifth inning while Kyle Barbour and Shawn Boadway each had a triple.

Paul Boynton worked the first four innings and allowed just four hits to post the win. Baranieski worked the final two frames and didn't allow a hit.

Returning to Memorial Park on Wednesday to host Bradford, the Mennos almost let a seven-run lead disappear before emerging with a 7-6 win.

Eyre had two hits, including a three-run homer in the third inning, while Rich Burkholder and Chris Burkholder also collected two hits. Ed Kamerman also had two hits, one of which was a solo homer in the fourth inning, while Rich Burkholder and Chris Burkholder also collected two hits. Ed Kamerman also had two hits, one of which was a solo homer in the fourth inning.

Terry Reesor worked the first four innings before giving way to midget call-up Greg Dalgarno, who surrendered four runs in the sixth inning and walked a couple of batters in the seventh. Reesor then came back in to shut the door down to post the win and save.

Now 11-6 on the season, the Mennos will host Oshawa Mickey Finns next Wednesday at Stouffville Memorial Park starting at 8:30 p.m.