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Is Redemption Possible For Tiger Woods?

17 12 2009



By [Timothy D. Naegele\[1\]](#)

Aside from his porn “stars,” escorts and other bimbos, the issue that may totally destroy Tiger Woods is drug use and abuse, with respect to which rumors have been swirling since his “accident.”

One of America’s finest sports writers, Bill Plaschke of the Los Angeles Times, has a lead story dated December 16, 2009[2], in which he asserts that Tiger’s credibility—already eroded by marital infidelity—could evaporate entirely if there is fire to go along with the smoke generated by his reported link to a doctor who promotes performance-enhancing drugs such as HGH. Plaschke’s comments about the alleged linkage echo a report by the New York Times.

As Plaschke writes: “If a guy is a chronic cheater off the course, what kind of leap is required to believe he could be the same sort of cheater on the course?” The doctor, Anthony Galea, is apparently under a joint U.S.-Canadian investigation for providing athletes with such performance-enhancing drugs. One of the athletes that has been under Galea’s care is Tiger, who was visited “at least four times” at his Florida home by the doctor.

Plaschke adds: “The public thinks, if there’s even a chance [Tiger is] guilty of running a harem while married with two young children, there’s a chance he could be guilty of anything. Once we realize we don’t know him, then we stop trusting him. And once we stop trusting him, then he becomes vulnerable to people ignoring the amazing flight of his ball and concentrating on the unsettling size of his neck”—a reference to the size of disgraced baseball star Barry Bonds’ neck.

Bonds is a central figure in baseball’s steroids scandal; and his agent pronounced his playing career dead on December 10, 2009, saying it is essentially impossible for Bonds to find work in baseball heading into 2010. Today, Bonds is remembered not only for his home runs and All-Star Games and Most Valuable Player awards, but also for a federal indictment that accuses him of lying to a grand jury about knowingly using performance-enhancing drugs.

Plaschke notes with respect to Tiger: “You know what’s really recklessly irresponsible? Dealing with a doctor who has a history of using and prescribing the banned HGH substance, that’s what.” Clearly Tiger is a sick human being. No “happily-married man” who cavorts with porn stars and other women with savory reputations—much less in his own home—is anything less.

His popularity is plummeting, according to the latest USA TODAY/Gallup Poll.^[3] Since admitting to “infidelity,” his “favorable” rating dropped to 33 percent in the latest poll versus 85 percent from his last poll in June 2005. His “unfavorable” rating climbed to 57 percent from 8 percent four years ago. Tiger posted the highest popularity rating in poll history, 88 percent, when Gallup first measured him in 2000. The swing is the largest drop between consecutive measurements since Gallup began tracking it in 1992, according to its managing editor.

The results of the USA TODAY/Gallup Poll are similar to those of the latest highly-respected Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey—announced on December 9, 2009^[4]—which found that just 38 percent of Americans now have a favorable opinion of Tiger. That is down from 56 percent, shortly after the stories first broke about his auto accident. Two years ago, 83 percent had a favorable opinion of him.

It is not surprising that women take a harsher view of him as well. Golf has been predominantly a men’s sport until recent years, and most women—certainly those who do not play or follow golf—probably view him as nothing more than another highly-paid athlete who got caught cheating on his wife. What is so tragic is that golf gave Tiger an opportunity to rise to its zenith; and he has abused his family, friends, fans, sponsors, and the sport itself.

Tiger has trashed the sport of golf like no other player in its history. Every American golf pro and others who earn a living from the sport worldwide will be hurt by his conduct. His golf swing cannot be separated from his reckless life style. He is a global disgrace. However, golf will live through the Tiger Woods era and survive. American golf existed long before anyone heard of him, and it will exist long after he is gone and nothing more than entries in the record books like Barry Bonds.

Tiger and his handlers have devised the ruse of a “hiatus” from golf because they want people to beg him to stay in the game. An acquaintance of mine has noted: “It’s a shrewd

political move. It makes him sympathetic. It makes the public and the PGA beg for his return. His alleged ‘indefinite’ leave from the game is no such thing, nor is it designed so he can ‘work on his family issues.’ Rather it’s a cynical way to try to regain favor with the public.”

For many of us, Tiger was never a hero—just a gladiator or human “machine” that his father had fashioned, much like the gladiators who were trained for combat in ancient Rome. Hence, we feel neither disillusioned nor betrayed, because Tiger is akin to so many other celebrities and politicians of our times, who have unbelievable feet of clay and should not be role models for anyone. Regrettably, lots of people of all different ages apparently needed a hero and found one in Tiger.

Many of us have enjoyed the game of golf before Tiger came on the scene, where he was certainly dominant at times. Vijay Singh and other fine golfers excelled too, and many of us applauded them, not Tiger. What none of us really knew was that Tiger is a fraud and a sick human being, as well as the hedonistic version of the “American dream” gone haywire.

There are reports that Elin has decided to leave him after Christmas, and that she is already talking with one or more divorce lawyers. Apparently she wants the holiday season to appear normal for her children, but will separate from him early in the New Year. Tiger is an uncontrollable narcissist who will never change, nor can he be “fixed” by Elin or anyone else. His marriage seems doomed regardless of what he does, which should not come as a surprise to anyone.

Bill Plaschke has noted: “As the public leaves him, so do advertisers, with global consulting firm Accenture PLC completely dumping him and Gillette pulling his commercials indefinitely.” Accenture’s termination of Tiger is presumably based on a “morals clause” in his contract. With Gillette and AT&T phasing him out of their ads as well, which means they are dumping him—after Gatorade has dropped him already—the rest of his sponsors may follow suit.

Plaschke adds: “Woods won’t just lose all his endorsements—when was the last time you saw Barry Bonds selling anything?—but he’ll also lose his last bastion of support, his galleries. Even those guys wearing plaid pants and [smoking] fat cigars don’t much tolerate golf cheats. If golf fans go nuts when they think a guy is using a juiced driver, imagine what they’ll think about a juiced body.”

Also, there are reports that Team Tiger is coming apart, and that those who have guided his career in recent years may be dropped. The real “hustlers” of Tiger are Steve Williams, his caddie; Bryon Bell, president of Tiger Woods Design; Mark Steinberg, his manager; and the other leeches who have made their living from him and knew exactly what was happening but kept taking his money.

Williams has said: “What people fail to realise is I [just] work for Tiger Woods . . . I am not with him 24/7. . . . When he is not competing, I am back in New Zealand. I have no knowledge of what he is doing” Williams claims the scandal has caused strife in his own marriage—perhaps because he lied to his wife like Tiger lied to Elin.

Bell allegedly arranged for the trip to Australia of Tiger’s bimbo, Rachel Uchitel, to join

him at the Australian Open. He even paid for her ticket and accompanied her on the flight. Steinberg has been Tiger's agent for 12 years, and the likelihood that he did not know what was happening is slim to none. Moreover, any notion that these men failed to spot the trouble as it was developing, of course, is naïve and a fantasy. If anything, it is likely that one or more of them served as high-class procurers or pimps for the golf legend.

When all is said and done, the media made Tiger a celebrity, and sadly it is unmaking him now.

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[1] Mr. Naegele was counsel to the U.S. Senate Banking Committee; and chief of staff to Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient and former U.S. Senator Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass), the first black senator since Reconstruction after the U.S. Civil War. He practices law in Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles with his firm, Timothy D. Naegele & Associates (www.naegele.com). He has an undergraduate degree in economics from UCLA, as well as two law degrees from the School of Law (Boalt Hall), University of California, Berkeley, and from Georgetown University. He is a member of the District of Columbia and California bars. He served as a Captain in the U.S. Army, assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency at the Pentagon, where he received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. Mr. Naegele is an Independent politically; and he is listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Law, and Who's Who in Finance and Business. He has written extensively over the years. See, e.g., www.naegele.com/whats_new.html#articles

[2] See, e.g., <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-plaschke16-2009dec16.0.3987424.full.column>

[3] See, e.g., http://www.usatoday.com/sports/golf/2009-12-14-tiger-woods-gallup-poll_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip

[4] See, e.g., http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/lifestyle/sports/december_2009/tiger_woods_favorables_fall_to_38

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8 responses

17 12 2009



Guardino (17:14:10) : [edit](#)

The Tiger Woods scandal (if you could call it that) has brought on the debate yet again regarding [black men date white women](#)

[Reply](#)

17 12 2009



naegeleblog (20:42:56) : [edit](#)

See <http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=9347623>

A fascinating article.

[Reply](#)

28 12 2009



Jayne (02:21:25) : [edit](#)

Sir – thank you for your interesting commentary on the WSJ blog pages. At the end of the day, none of us can read Mr. Woods’ mind, or that of his wife. Mrs. Woods will make a decision during the coming year – either to stay in the marriage and try to rebuild the shattered trust, or to divorce Mr. Woods. After she makes her decision, it will be up to Mr. Woods to react – either by genuinely working to rebuild his marriage, or by establishing a positive post-divorce relationship with his former wife and being the best parent possible for his children. If she returns to Sweden, he may decide to relocate to Sweden as well to be close to his children, and participate in the European tour. This would be in the best interest of his children.

I am saddened, but not surprised by some of the negative comments in the blogs nationwide on this story. Men assume Mrs Woods knew, and should put up with it, because as a billionaire, he has an ‘entitlement’ to this type of behavior. They resent her and assume the worst of her character, that she will greedily ask for half of Mr Woods’ fortune (though she’s never spoken in public or made any formal demands for a divorce). They do not seem to care that Mrs Woods was exposed to potential STI’s and STD’s (and based on the timing, so were her unborn children). They do not seem to care that the 2 children will grow up without the benefit of two parents

who demonstrate no a daily basis the commitment to marriage for better and for worse, and the stability of that loving marriage. Instead, they may get the tense negotiations of divorced parents who find fault in anything and everything the other parent says or does, fights over money, and derisive assumptions by their father's fans, towards both their father and mother.

I'm also saddened by the women who were happy to cheat with Tiger Woods, and who are reluctant to apologize to Mrs. Woods when asked by the media. In the days of yore, a woman felt shame to be involved with a married man. She would tell nearly no one. She certainly would not go to the media, nor would she negotiate for the proverbial '50 pieces of silver" to buy her story or her silence. Where are the parents of these women? How were they raised that they have such low self worth and lack of character and judgment? How are they received this holiday by their families, are they embarrassed? Their names are sullied forever, thanks to Google searches.

Mrs Woods and the children deserve far better. I hope they find it in the new year.

[Reply](#)

28 12 2009



[naegeleblog](#) (03:01:10) : [edit](#)

Thank you for your excellent and very thoughtful comments, Jayne. I agree with much if not most of what you have said, except for one comment: "Men assume Mrs. Woods knew, and should put up with it. . . ." I do not believe that at all. While she may have suspected, I doubt she knew for certain about his bimbos until shortly before Tiger's "accident." Also, I do not believe Elin should have put up with his behavior, which has gone beyond the pale. Over the years, I have had lots of male friends who had numerous relationships with women; however, I do not recall one who had a relationship with a married woman. Tiger is a serial adulterer, with lots of women who might have given him STIs and STDs, as you point out. In turn, he might have passed them on to Elin and his children. Such conduct is reckless, irresponsible, and sick. Add in the possibility of drugs, and the whole sad story about Tiger Woods has not been written yet. You concluded: "Mrs. Woods and the children deserve far better. I hope they find it in the new year." I agree completely.

[Reply](#)

29 12 2009



[naegeleblog](#) (19:26:31) : [edit](#)

On December 24, 2009, a friend of mine told me:

I have a friend who knows the whole Tiger Woods thing personally.
This is what he told me:

Right now, Tiger is staying with Arnold Palmer in his home (not far from his house) and [Elin] is at their home with the kids. They are

spending 6 hours a day together in marriage counseling sessions.

The entire incident began on Thanksgiving Day when Tiger was lying on the couch watching football games and texting someone (it was Rachel [Uchitel]). He went to the clubhouse and first deleted all the text messages. One came in after he left and he was not carrying his phone. His wife had suspected a lot of what had been going on and had been checking his phone messages when this latest one came in.

When he came back, they had a discussion which later turned into an argument. When it boiled over at night she took a golf club and hit him (he may have hit her too). She broke two of his teeth and did some real damage to his face. She started swinging the club and he got into the Cadillac and she kept swinging, breaking the windows. His facial wounds had NOTHING to do with the accident.

His wife called the agent, Mark Steinberg, when the ambulance came and Steinberg met him at the hospital. After Tiger's release, Steinberg went with Tiger to Phoenix to a well known cosmetics dentist and a plastic surgeon, where he was recovering for a week. Right now, [Elin] has no plans to divorce, although she has a divorce lawyer.

Here is an article that confirms much of what my friend told me, which I did not mention until it was confirmed—in whole or in part—by the media:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1239225/Tiger-Woodss-wife-Elin-battered-iron-caught-texting-mistress.html>

[Reply](#)

29 12 2009



Jayne (20:28:57) : [edit](#)

Just to clarify, I don't personally believe that Mrs. Woods "knew and should put up with philandering", what I should have written was "some men" feel this way and have expressed it in comments below online articles .

We react to sexual transgressions of men and women differently. I think if the golf shoe was on the other foot – the wife as the super star, with a loving husband and two young children, our society would judge that woman far worse if she had even 1/4 of the paramours that Mr Woods has taken on. I doubt anyone would say "The husband must have known what he was getting into when he married a super star billionaire athlete". A female athlete would be crucified in the media for breaking up her family and being a horrible mother, one of the worst insults of all. Somehow being a poor father by spending time away from the kids with the paramour(s) is not as bad in our eyes as being a poor mother. If the husband stayed with the wife to rebuild their marriage, men would lose all respect for him and deride him as a cuckold. As a society, it's been great ratings and large volume hits on websites to report on the Woods family, but very little media coverage has looked at the deeper issues.

I appreciate Counselor Naegele's attempt to look at this issue from a more sober perspective.

[Reply](#)

30 12 2009



[naegeleblog](#) (02:05:51) : [edit](#)

As stated above:

Here is an article that confirms much of what my friend told me, which I did not mention until it was confirmed—in whole or in part—by the media: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1239225/Tiger-Woodss-wife-Elin-battered-iron-caught-texting-mistress.html>

The plot thickens! It has just been pointed out that the link to the Daily Mail's article above is dead. The Mail must have pulled the story, which is interesting. A copy of the article is available though. See [DailyMail](#).

[Reply](#)

30 12 2009



[naegeleblog](#) (17:30:08) : [edit](#)

Fascinating. The Daily Mail's link above is working now. See <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1239225/Tiger-Woodss-wife-Elin-battered-iron-caught-texting-mistress.html>

However, the article has been “doctored.” For those who are interested, they can compare this version with the first one. See [DailyMail](#).

None of this affects my article above, one iota.

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