

Recreation for the disabled

Special to Sentinel-Voice

A disability does not have to stand in the way of participation in sports and recreational activities. Sports and recreation have become an important lifestyle choice for people with all degrees of disabilities.

"Some people with disabilities find inspiration from mountain climbing," said Lex Frieden, professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. "Others may enjoy playing board games with family and friends."

Recreation does not have to mean exercise. It is getting away from work and finding things to do that can inspire people both mentally and physically. Building recreation into the lives of people with disabilities often begins during rehabilitation.

"Most rehabilitation facilities and programs incorporate recreational therapists who are skilled at teaching people proper techniques and approaches to recreation," said Frieden.

They may start by pitching a ball to a therapist and move on to shooting baskets. Other patients, including those with spinal-cord and traumatic head injuries, might begin their rehabilitation with pool-based activities. The water has a calming effect and the buoyancy can help people with disabilities stand upright and increase mobility. Since there is no impact on joints, water-based exercises allow patients to be active after leaving the hospital.

"There is a whole range of recreational therapy, including sports," said Frieden. "We try to match individuals with activities they enjoyed before they were injured."

"Recreational activities are important," said Frieden, "since they help improve self-esteem and provide a sense of accomplishment."

"A disability doesn't have to mean the end of an active life," he said. "With proper guidance and modifications, many people can participate in virtually any activity."

For further information about recreational programs for people with disabilities, contact the National Sports Center for the Disabled at (970) 726-1540 or Disable Sports USA at (202) 393-7505.

Rodman ventures to Vegas

After another bad game Sunday in the NBA finals, Dennis Rodman decided to take some time off and come to Las Vegas to get his mind off of his nightmare of a finals. With the permission of Chicago Bulls coach Phil Jackson he took the overnight trip to Southern Nevada. When he came to practice Monday he declined to say how much money he had won or lost.

"It's no big deal," Rodman said. "I was just enjoying myself, trying to get ready for the game (on Wednesday)."

When asked about Rodman's trip Michael Jordan said it doesn't matter as long as Dennis is ready to play.

"If that's his way of getting away and getting a renewed attitude ... I don't have a problem with it - as long as he comes back ready to play Wednesday."

"You would think he would want to evaluate what's going on on the court," said Bulls forward Scottie Pippen. "But off the court, as a teammate, we don't have anything to say about it."

Bettors putting money on Woods

Tiger Woods wanted to set the golf world on fire but little did he know that he would set the golf betting world in flames. Woods is credited with

dramatically increasing interest in golf and helping the PGA Tour negotiate a record television deal because of his meteoric rise to the top of the golfing world. Because of Woods, says Las Vegas sports book operators, betting on golf has increased. It is minuet compared with football betting, but during a slow betting time of the year they don't mind.

"It's gone up 30 percent," said Jay Komegay, race and sports book director at the Imperial Palace. "But about 95 percent of that increase is all money on Tiger. He's the only guy the public wants to bet on. They love him."

At the Las Vegas Club, Woods is 3-1, Greg Norman is 7-1, Nick Price is 8-1 and Fred Couples is 12-1.

Interleague play begins

When the first pitch is thrown in the San Francisco Giants and Texas Rangers

Pratt

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Pratt, 49, was standing next to his lawyer Johnnie Cochran, who earlier had asked Judge Everett Dickey to set bail at \$25,000 — \$1,000 for every year of his 25 years to life sentence. The judge agreed.

Pratt also served two years in jail before beginning his sentence.

Dickey ruled last month the jury may have come to a different conclusion had they known the main prosecution witness against Pratt was a police and FBI informant.

Los Angeles District Attorney Gil Garcetti did not oppose bail, though he has said he will appeal Dickey's decision to overturn the conviction. The case had become a cause celebre and

game on Thursday night, major league baseball will be changed forever.

Love it, hate it or right in the middle of the issue for the next couple of years interleague play will be in full effect. Every team will be playing 15 or 16 games against American or National League foes this year. Not since the first major league was formed in 1871 have teams from different leagues played in a regular season game.

Kevin Brown pitches a no-hitter to the Giants

Within a week Kevin Brown has been on a rollercoaster ride.

Last Saturday he was rocked by the Colorado Rockies for seven runs and nine hits in five innings, his worst outing as a Florida Marlin. He

also gave up the longest home run in the major leagues in over thirty years, a 529-foot rocket off the bat of Rockies All-Star, Andres Galarraga.

But in his next outing, he was near-perfect.

Kevin Brown pitched a complete game, no hitter as the Florida Marlins defeated the San Francisco Giants 9-0 Tuesday.

"I've never pitched a game like this," says Brown who struck out seven and walked none. "Not even in Little League."

He also could have thrown the 15th perfect game in league history if he had not hit pinch hitter Marvin Benard, just near his calf.

Giants hurler William VanLandingham had a no-hitter going for 7-1/3 innings until Marlins catcher Charles Johnson hit a two run homer to end his no-hit bid.

Compiled by Sentinel-Voice intern Diamond Ross

Pratt was designated a "prisoner of conscience" by the human rights group Amnesty International.

About 200 of Pratt's supporters crowded into the hallway outside the Santa Ana courtroom and a loud cheer went up when they learned he had been ordered free on bail. Pratt entered the court wearing an orange jail jumpsuit accompanied by Cochran and his other attorney, Stuart Hanlon.

In asking for his client to be freed on bail, Cochran said Pratt was a decorated war veteran who had served his country in Vietnam.

He also said Pratt's son was graduating from junior high school Tuesday night and asked that Pratt be freed in time to attend the ceremony.

Cochran pledged to personally give Pratt a job and a place to live. The lawyer represented Pratt in his 1972


trial and has relentlessly fought for his freedom ever since.

"Today we are here to talk about righting a wrong," said Cochran, who gained fame in 1995 for defending O.J. Simpson on murder charges.


Pratt has consistently claimed he was the victim of a political frame-up and was attending a meeting of the Black Panthers in Oakland, Calif., when the murder occurred 400 miles away in Santa Monica, Calif.



He was arrested for the 1968 murder of Caroline Olsen two years later on information provided to the authorities by Julius Butler, a police and FBI informant who was later the chief witness against him.

Dickey, in his May 29 ruling overturning the conviction, said the prosecution erred in not telling the jury Butler was an informer who had infiltrated the Panther movement for the FBI.

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