

Tuesday's results

MLB

White Sox.....	4
Tigers.....	6
Orioles.....	10
Red Sox.....	6
Twins.....	0
Indians.....	1
Mariners.....	1
Blue Jays.....	3
Phillies.....	4
Marlins.....	6

Commit Griffey visits Illinois

Forward recruit chats with Weber, Illini at Shootout

BY JEREMY WERNER
STAFF WRITER

Illinois commit Tyler Griffey has participated in two AAU basketball tournaments in Arkansas and Ohio. He has also traveled to Portland, Ore., and New York City for training with the adidas Nations team.

With a trip to Senegal, Africa, planned for next week with adidas Nations, you would think Griffey would take a well-deserved week-end off.

But the 6-foot-8 forward from Wildwood, Mo., took a 210-mile road trip this weekend to watch his future teammates at the University of Illinois Team Shootout.

"I'm keeping busy," Griffey said.

Griffey did not participate in the shootout but chatted with Illinois coach Bruce Weber and future teammates Brandon Paul (Warren) and Joseph Bertrand (Sterling), senior guards with verbal commits to the Illini.

Griffey will not participate in as many AAU tournaments this summer to free up time for working on his strength in the weight room.

"I've done all the major tournaments before, at least twice the past couple summers," Griffey said. "With me being committed, there's really no point in doing the tournaments where colleg-



STEVE CONTORNO THE DAILY ILLINI
Tyler Griffey, a high school basketball player from Ballwin, Mo., and his father, Chris, talk with Illini basketball coach Bruce Weber at the Illinois basketball shootout Sunday. Griffey has verbally committed to Illinois for the class of 2009.

es come and see me play. Coach Weber's been to my games ... so he's happy."

Griffey has spent much of his time with the adidas Nations team working on rebounding drills with former NBA head coach Paul Silas. He said learning from Silas has been the "highlight" of the summer.

"He teaches us assets of the pro game we've never experienced

before," Griffey said. "He makes us get after it. He knows the game so well. If you ask him a question, he'll answer it. That's what I've been trying to take back from it, get as much knowledge out of it."

Griffey, Bertrand, Paul and Peoria guard D.J. Richardson constitute ESPN.com's No. 2-ranked recruiting class, behind North Carolina. The Illini have also received verbal commits from two of Scout-

com's top-15 juniors in the nation, Waukegan's Jereme Richmond and Rich South's Crandall Head, younger brother of Rockets guard and former Illini Luther Head.

Griffey said he's not setting any goals for his college career quite yet, but said it will likely be a fun experience.

"I can't wait to get up there to start playing with those guys," Griffey said.

Three former Illini prepare for 108th U.S. Open

Points, Chaussard, Stricker to compete

BY WES ANDERSON
COPY CHIEF

When the 108th U.S. Open begins on Thursday, all eyes will undoubtedly be fixed upon the mega-group of Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Adam Scott, which tees off at 8:06 a.m. Pacific Time. Massive throngs of spectators and media are expected to follow the group, making pedestrian gridlock a serious concern at Torrey Pines.

D.A. Points will be more than happy to beat the rush. The former Illini standout will be in the tournament's first group at 7:00 a.m.

"I want to put all my energy into having a great week," Points said in a press release.

Points, along with 2005 alumnus Garrett Chaussard, earned spots in the year's second major championship the hard way — through local

and sectional qualifying tournaments in late May and early June.

With PGA Tour veteran Steve Stricker also in the tournament, there will be no shortage of Illini orange in San Diego.

The U.S. Open is just that — open. Any player with a handicap of 1.4 or better can attempt to qualify, meaning congested fields of amateurs, college players and tour professionals often jockey for only a handful of available spots in the tournament.

Last week, Points shot rounds of 69 and 70 to earn one of six qualifying spots in a field of 55 at a sectional qualifier in Lake Forest, Ill. For his part, Chaussard was one of seven qualifiers out of 85 players at another sectional in Daly City, Calif.

Chaussard will tee off with the last group of the day at 11:42 a.m. As a result, Thursday's opening round will be bookended by Illini.

"The feeling is more than I could have imagined," Chaussard said in

a release. "To be playing with some of the best players in the world and seeing my game come together in such a short time is almost unbelievable."

Current men's head coach Mike Small just missed out on adding his name to the list of Illinois alumni competing at the tournament. After cruising through local qualifying, the 42-year-old lost in a five-way playoff for the final spot at the Lake Forest sectional.

However, while he won't be competing, some of Small's advice will be heading to California. Chaussard said he considered quitting competitive golf after scuffling on the Canadian Tour in 2006 until his former coach helped him find a new approach to the game.

"(Small) taught me that although many people feel golf is a white collar sport, to be successful it's really blue collar in terms of the work required," Chaussard said.

Chaussard is writing a blog throughout the week and played a

practice round with 2003 U.S. Open champion Jim Furyk on Monday.

As for Points, the opportunity presented at golf's national championship is compelling. A win at the U.S. Open provides a five-year PGA Tour exemption, among other benefits. The 1999 graduate is currently competing on the Nationwide Tour after losing his PGA Tour card in 2005.

"More than anything, I'm playing in (a) major where anything can happen and where my life could change in a week," Points said.

He added that although he currently resides in Florida, Points, who is known to don orange attire at tournaments, will make sure that the tournament starter recognizes his roots before he begins the tournament.

"I always wear my Illini orange with pride," Points said. "I want to make sure when I'm introduced on the first tee of the Open that they announce my hometown as Pekin, Ill."