



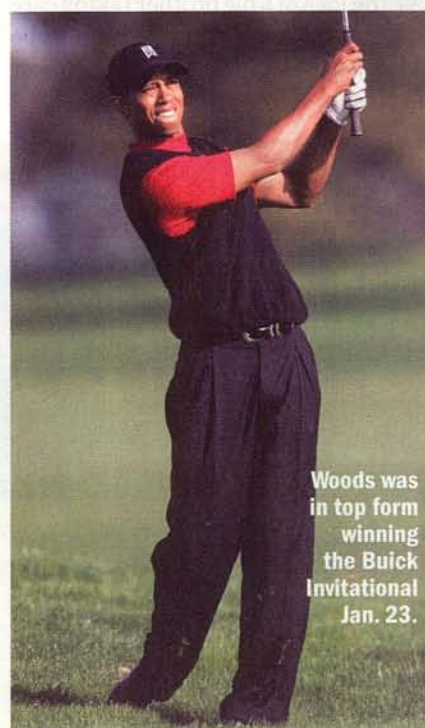
"We're still at the beginning of our life together, and that's an exciting place to be," says Woods (with his wife, Elin, at the '04 Ryder Cup).

One Happy Tiger

Tiger Woods—usually golf's most private cat—opens up about marriage, kids and his pimped-out golf cart

When Tiger Woods went into a slump, winning only once in over a year and losing his No. 1 world ranking in 2004, some golf fanatics fretted that his Swedish-model girlfriend, Elin Nordegren, may have diverted Woods's superhuman focus. Piffle, said Woods, and proved the point after the couple's October wedding, winning three of his next four events—including

most recently the Jan. 23 Buick Invitational. The year of the Tiger? "My game is starting to come around," says Woods, 29. "A lot of different things are nice and balanced. I'm in a very contented period in my life, and I'm making a point to enjoy it all." In Orlando filming his Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2006 video game, he spoke candidly with PEOPLE reporter Steve



Woods was in top form winning the Buick Invitational Jan. 23.

Q&A

Helling about being married, having kids and turning 30 later this year.

You're a newlywed. How's it going?

I couldn't be happier. I knew that Elin was a special woman pretty soon after I met her. I knew that she was the one for me, so I was pretty calm about marrying her. I know how lucky I am to have her. I knew I was doing the right thing.

What do you hope for your marriage?

I love the idea of growing together. I want to have a relationship where we change for the better and continue to get closer. It's great when you see people who've been married for 20, 30, 40 years and they're still in love. That's what I want for us.

How about children?

We're definitely going to have kids soon. We certainly want to do it, because obviously I'm not getting any younger. The hardest part with an athlete, especially in my sport, is that I'm never home. Both of us are going to have to make some sacrifices to have kids. I don't want to be a father who is never home with his children, so we'll have to make some adjustments.

Do you want boys, girls or a mix?

I'd like to have a boy first, then a girl. I like the idea of a big brother taking care of his little sister. I want them to be close in age too. I want my kids to grow up close.



"I married Elin because I see a long future with her," says Woods (with her in September).

Who will be the stricter parent?

Well, Elin was raised with two siblings and I was raised with none. She has a better understanding of how siblings react and how to deal with them. I've never dealt with that in my life. So she'll probably be a lot more easygoing. Things won't freak her out like they will me. I'll be the one who is overprotective. I'm willing to learn, though.

How does it feel coming up on 30?

Things change as you get older. I'm different than I was as a teenager or in my early 20s. I'm more serious and

introspective. There's a part of me that realizes I'm not a kid anymore. So I've decided to really enjoy this year, because it's my last year in my 20s.

How do you and Elin spend your little free time together?

We relax. We'll go out to dinner with some friends. More often, though, we'll stay home and she'll cook and we'll just kind of hang out and watch movies. We're really mellow. Because I travel so much, I value being at home with Elin. I'm probably happiest during those times.

And now for something completely different: We hear you have a completely tricked-up golf cart.

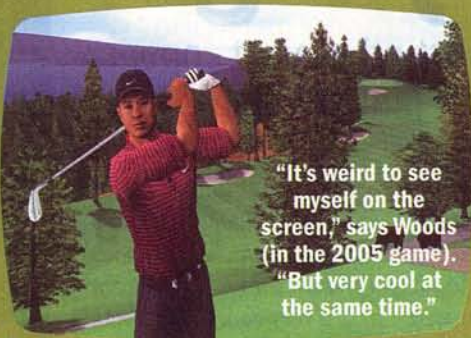
I love my cart. It has satellite radio, a CD player and a bunch of speakers on it. Got the neon running lights underneath. I'm thinking about one day putting hydraulics on it—I don't know if it'll have enough power, but I think it would take my golf cart to a whole new level.

What's the secret to a happy marriage?

That's a good question. I hope to be able to answer that in 30 years. ●

SHOOTING TIGER

On Jan. 26 in Orlando, Tiger Woods donned a black spandex suit dotted with reflective balls. Luckily it wasn't a fashion statement: The odd getup allowed 20 infrared cameras to precisely capture his new-and-improved swing—designed to put less strain on his surgically repaired knee—for his new video game Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2006 (slated for fall release). So is the avid video-gamer any good at his own game? "Not really," Woods says. "I guess it's because I don't practice it as much as I do my real sport."



"It's weird to see myself on the screen," says Woods (in the 2005 game). "But very cool at the same time."