

Comical, it was to some, for there was more than an iota of absurdity in it.

Consoling it was to the many hackers who are familiar with double-digit entries to scorecards.

However, realistically, commiserations should be in order, for the charismatic newsmaker is one who probably contributed more than any other professional golfer in globalising the game.

Dressed in his favourite Sunday red, Tiger Woods, the 15-time Major winner and only second to Jack Nicklaus (18), crumbled to a 10 on the par-three, 148-yard 12th hole on the final day of the US Masters at Augusta a fortnight ago.

His tee-shot spun off the green and rolled back into water. He went to the drop area and his ball got drenched again. He spun the fifth shot into the back bunker, and from a difficult lie, soaked another ball.

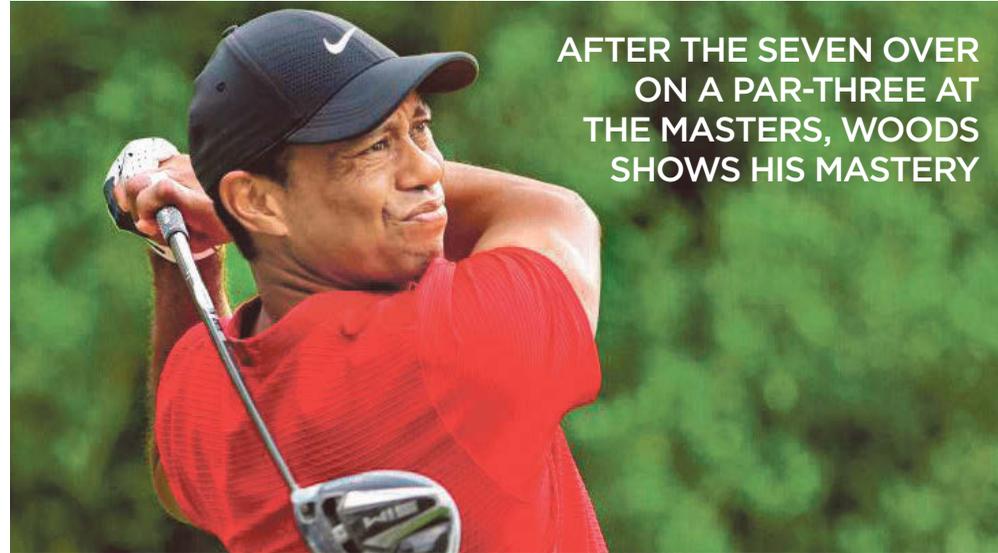
And when he left Rae's Creek, he posted the highest number he has shot on one hole in his Major championship history.

Disappointed he surely was. Dejection was evident in his demeanour as he ambled to the 13th tee-box. Immediately, while watching the live telecast, I received a whatsapp message from a fanatical fan. "Tiger's finished," it screamed. "Time to go," was the suffix in that reminder.

But Woods did not allow the mess to muddle his mind. Standing ramrod straight on

BY GODFREY ROBERT

# PERFECT CAN BE HIS MIDDLE NAME BUT THIS 10 WAS SO IMPERFECT



AFTER THE SEVEN OVER  
ON A PAR-THREE AT  
THE MASTERS, WOODS  
SHOWS HIS MASTERY

**Tiger Woods kept his head in the game despite a horrendous 10.**

the 13th tee-box, he threw his chest forward, inhaled venom and coughed up five birdies in the last six holes to bounce back with a red-numbered (minus one) total.

That comprised a makeable eagle-putt at the 13th, a chip close at the 15th, a stiff knock at the 16th and fabulous approaches at the last two holes.

My "fanatical fan" friend punched a new whatsapp

message quickly. It read: "No, he's not finished, he still has plenty in his tank."

Woods, who immersed himself in doubt by picking up the grass a few times to check wind strength and direction at the 12th tee-box, turned villain to hero as he walked off the 18th green.

And calm and composed, he told CBS's Amanda Balionis: "Well, I committed to the wrong wind," during an

interview after his round of 76, which left him in a tie for 38th.

Heroics, the five-time Masters winner and defending champion, have had plenty in Majors, notably when he won the 2008 US Open on an injured knee.

So what now for the once-teenage wonder turned elder statesman who hits 45 next month?

The horizon is getting

bleaker for the wounded man. Knee repairs, spinal fusion surgery and troubling back could dash his personal ambitions.

But he has already etched his name in the record books, not least with his Zozo Championships victory last year that put him on par with Sam Snead on a milestone 82 PGA triumphs.

Achieving more would be a huge bonus for the megastar. Motivation he has. Aura he demonstrates still. Confidence he oozes.

However, his body cannot take any more beating. That would mean not overdoing it and carefully picking his tournaments, cutting down on practice sessions so that physically he can remain in tune, and maintaining the focus he thrives on.

Like his caddie Joe LaCava said just after the Masters: "He drove it well this week for the most part, hit a lot of different shots, the high bombs, little low cutters. He's working the ball nicely. If he can stay healthy, there were some good signs this week."

And in the future, hopefully.