SPORTS HISTORY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 9. WINTER 2021

TRACY EDWARDS

BABE ZAHARIAS

WOMEN IN SPORT

LIBBY RIDLES

MICHELLE AKERS

PIONEERS AND TRAILBLAZERS

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Breaking Rules and Shattering Myths

Dr. Fiona Skillen

LET'S BEGIN WITH A QUESTION.

Write down the top five sports stars of the 20th century.

I would guess that the majority of names that would appear on that list would all be male. And that is because the history of sport has tended to focus on male experiences and male stars. However, things are changing and in the last 30 years women's sport has taken on an increasingly important role within popular media. As a result, if we asked school kids today to name their top five sport stars, it is more likely that women would feature in their rundown.

Traditionally, it's not just the media that has tended to focus on male sport. Sports history has also given more time and space to men, leaving out the rich contributions made by their female counterparts. In this issue of Sports History Magazine, we interview 6 prominent female athletes from different disciplines. Some are gifted sports figures who reached the top of their game like Annika Sörenstam (golf) and Michelle Akers (soccer). Others are celebrated for their courage and pioneering spirit like Kathrine Switzer (running) and Diane Crump (horse racing). But what they all have in common was their success in bringing women to the forefront of sport.

The athlete ladies we celebrate today did not emerge fully formed in the 20th century. Many of them have long roots that can be traced back for well over a hundred years. For those women participating in sport in the 19th century there were significant barriers to overcome. There was a lack of understanding about how their bodies worked and a belief that overexertion on the field, or court, or track could do irreparable damage to their reproductive organs and their mental health. Early pioneers who disregarded these concerns challenged those myths and combined with medical advances, ensured that attitudes changed.

By the middle of the 20th century there was an understanding that playing sports was in fact a good way of creating healthy bodies and minds. Women such as Helen Wills, Gertrude Ederle and Babe Zaharias, tennis, swimming and athletics stars in the early 20th century, helped transform the public's perception of what a sportswoman could achieve by engaging in large scale events like the Olympics and Wimbledon. They highlighted on the world stage the amazing physical capabilities of the female body.

Another significant barrier was society's attitudes about how women should spend their leisure time. Long established norms dictated that women should stay home taking care of their families and managing household tasks. In contrast, sport took place outside the home. It also did not easily fit with the image of the delicate female. As a consequence, the sports which became popular for middleclass women in the 19th century were those which fitted best within these narrow ideals. Games such as croquet, skating, tennis and golf were expected to be played at a gentle pace, not at a high velocity competitive level. While these recreations gave women access to the sporting arena, it was on limited terms. They played in exclusive private clubs and were often accompanied by, or under the watchful gaze of their husbands, fathers or brothers.

The everyday clothing of the period also proved

American tennis star Helen Wills Moody.

problematic. Restrictive corsets, which made breathing and digestion at the best of times challenging, became dangerous on the field. This was coupled with long voluminous skirts, high heeled shoes and hats, none of which was readily conducive to the physical exertions associated with playing sports. Yet women who wished to participate were expected to do so wearing exactly these types of clothing in order to maintain the ideals of femininity. Though, by the late 19th and early 20th century things had begun to change. The trends in fashion shifted towards less restrictive designs that were more open to movement. Gradually, specialist sportswear for women also began to emerge.

Social changes brought on by the emancipation of women helped pave the way for greater levels of participation in sport at all levels, from grassroots local teams right through to international competitions. Nevertheless, barriers still remained. For example, as late as 1967, the Boston marathon organizers still believed that women were physically incapable of completing the course. Kathrine Switzer publicly and directly challenged these dogmas by taking part in the race and starting a conversation about the inclusion of women in endurance sports. This ultimately led to a change in rules such as the introduction of Title IX in 1972, which marked a significant shift in public and government attitudes towards equal access to sports.

While we have come a long way since the days of playing tennis in whale-boned corsets and high-heeled shoes, women today still face hurdles around athletic participation. Cultural barriers persist in traditional societies and inequality of pay remains a big challenge. Nevertheless, there is plenty of hope as young women continue to push the boundaries of sports, transforming the landscape and inspiring new generations to follow.

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Greatest Athlete of All-Time? A Case for the "Babe"

By Professor Kevin L. Burke

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SETTLE THE QUESTION of who was the greatest athlete of all time, though it certainly makes for a lively and interesting debate. But before we plunge into the discussion, we define the 'greatest athlete' as an individual, man or woman, who was able to play a variety of sports at an extremely high level.

Therefore, certain athletes who may have been the greatest in their sport, (i.e., Wilma Rudolph, Michael Jordan, Mia Hamm, Bill Russell, George Herman Ruth, Serena Williams, Jack Nicklaus) will not qualify due to this standard.

Certainly in the running for the G.O.A.T. were Jim Thorpe (football, baseball, track & field, baseball) and Jackie Robinson (baseball, football, basketball, track). Both excelled in a variety of sports and were top performers in each. However, my selection for the greatest athlete of all time - male and female - was Mildred Ella "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias.

Born in 1911 to a family of Norwegian immigrants who settled in Texas, Babe played and excelled in various ways in the following sports: baseball, basketball, billiards, bowling, >>

Babe urges the ball into the cup on the 18th green of Chicago's Tam O'Shanter Country Club in the women's All-American Golf Tournament on August 4, 1950.

BABE DIDRIKSON WAS VOTED THE 'ASSOCIATED PRESS FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR' A REMARKABLE SIX TIMES.

Right: Babe throwing the Javelin at the 1932 Olympics where she won her first gold.

Above: Second from right in the 80m Hurdles where she would claim her second gold.

boxing, cycling, diving, golf, handball, roller skating, swimming, tennis, track, and volleyball!

By the way, Babe also learned to play the harmonica, starred in a vaudeville show, and appeared in a film with Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn!

After successfully participating in several high school sports (basketball, baseball, golf, swimming, tennis, and volleyball), Babe became a standout basketball player in the Amateur Athletic Union where she was recognized as the league's best player and selected as an All-American for three years in a row from 1930 to 1932.

In 1932, Babe participated as the ONLY member of her team in the United States Women's Track and >>

On the course with fellow pro-golfer, Gene Sarazen.

ARGUABLY, BABE'S MOST PROLIFIC SPORT WAS GOLF WHERE SHE WON 82 TOURNAMENTS.

Field Championships.

She competed in eight different events - winning five -and claimed the overall championship by herself!

Again in 1932, Babe participated in three events in the Olympic games held in Los Angeles. She finished in first place in all three events, (world record in the hurdles, Olympic record in the javelin, and high jump), but was relegated to a silver medal in the high jump due to a questionable technicality.

Arguably, Babe's most prolific sport was golf where she won 82 tournaments. In 1946-7, she was reported to have won 14 successive golf tournaments. In 1950, Babe helped to form the Ladies Professional Golf Association. Babe was also the first woman to appear in a PGA event, which was normally reserved for men.

Possibly her most outstanding athletic accomplishment occurred in 1954. Babe had been diagnosed with colon cancer just a year earlier which required her to have emergency surgery. While wearing a colostomy bag, she won the United States Women's Open by 12 strokes!

By the way, over the course of her life time, Babe

Above: The 'Wonder Girl' in a 1933 chewing gum ad.

Didrikson was voted the 'Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year' a remarkable six times.

The great Babe Didrikson Zaharias unfortunately passed away in 1956 at the tender age of 45. Although Babe's life was relatively short, her list of sports accomplishments - in my humble opinion - make Babe the greatest athlete of all-time. ●

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The hurling 'wonder girl', Jackie Mitchell, pictured in New York in July 1933.

The Girl Who **Struck Out** Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig

By Russ Cohen

"RUTH AND GEHRIG STRUCK OUT BY GIRL Pitcher". That was the New York Times sports headline on April 3rd, 1931. So, who was the mysterious young woman who retired baseball's most fearsome hitters? Her name was Jackie Mitchell, a spirited athlete with baseball in her blood. She played in the 1920's and 30's, encouraged by her father who introduced her to the sport at an early age. A lefty with a sidewinding pitch, Jackie was also fortunate to have as her next-door neighbor Dazzy Vance, a future Hall of Famer who spent most of his career with the Brooklyn Robins/ Dodgers. Vance taught the young girl his "drop ball", a hard to hit sinker.

At 17, the talented hurler worked her arm for the Engelettes, a women's squad run by Joe Engel who owned the Chattanooga Lookouts, a AA professional team. Looking to raise gate receipts at his stadium during the depression, Engel signed up Jackie to a one-year professional contract, among the first for female ball players. The young prodigy got her fame when the press announced that the New York Yankees were stopping in Chattanooga on their way back from Spring training to play an exhibition game with the Lookouts. Engel was orchestrating one of his publicity stunts and the papers ran headlines to the tune of "Girl Will Hurl To Babe Ruth". >>

Jackie Mitchell with Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig and Joe Engel.

The match was scheduled for April 1st but it rained that day, so Jackie pitched her first professional game on April 2nd, becoming just the second woman to accomplish that feat. She took the mound in the first inning, relieving starting pitcher Clyde Barfoot, and immediately faced Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, the third and fourth place hitters.

At the plate, Ruth tipped his cap to her and the lady went to work. She quickly had a 1-2 count versus "The Sultan of Swat" and her next pitch was a called third strike. Legend has it the side-armed youngster threw all sinkers and the umpire checked the ball during the count. Ruth also got into a verbal spat with the umpire and threw his bat on the ground in fury. The crowd of 4,000 was entertained to say the least, delivering a long-standing ovation.

Next up, Lou Gehrig struck out on three pitches as well. After walking her third batter, Jackie was removed from the game. The Lookouts lost the match 14-4 and Ruth said the next day that women are "too delicate" to play baseball and it would kill them. Some thought the two sluggers struck out on purpose. Teammate Tony Lazzeri said they were legit at-bats. How could a woman strike out two of the best players in Major League Baseball? Was it an April Fool's hoax cooked up by Engel, the "Barnum of Baseball"? The publicity stunt turned into a great preseason story.

Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Landis wasn't amused and voided Jackie's contract shortly afterwards, claiming that women were unable to play the game because it was "too strenuous".

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 1931

RUTH STRIKES OUT

Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, mighty Yankee batters, struck out like gentlemen Thursday afternoon at Chattanooga when Miss Jack Mitchell went into the box for the Chattanooga team in an exhibition game with the Yankees. Ruth, after missing two swings, made the

Above: The Omaha Bee-News of Nebraska reports on Ruth's strikeout with Jackie in photo.

The young heroine was undeterred and later barnstormed with the "House of David", an eccentric group of ballplayers who had long hair, beards and claimed to abstain from drink and sex. But Jackie was a serious player and she was frustrated with her reputation as a side-show antic. On occasion, she even wore a fake beard when playing with the "House of David". Disillusioned, she retired at 23 and later refused to play for the All-American Girl Professional Baseball League when it was formed in 1943.

Professional baseball remained a glass ceiling for women and in 1952, MLB outright banned women from playing, a policy they maintained for the next four decades. In 1993, Carey Schueler became the first woman to be drafted into the league when the Chicago White Sox picked her up. Jackie Mitchell is still talked about today as one of the female pioneers in the sport. In 1982, at the age of 68, she threw the ceremonial first pitch at the opening game for the Lookouts. Jackie always insisted that her pitching genuinely put away Ruth and Gehrig. But whether it did or not, the lore makes for an inspiring slice of Americana. ●

Russ Cohen is a sports radio host and the author of "Pioneers of Baseball".

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Looking Back with LPGA Legend, Annika Sörenstam

SHMagazine

WITH 94 PROFESSIONAL WINS TO HER name, including 10 LPGA majors, Annika Sörenstam is one of the greatest golfers in the history of the game. Born and raised in Sweden, the athlete prodigy held the world's No. 1 ranking for most of 2006, won multiple awards on both sides of the Atlantic, and topped the money list with career earnings of over $22 million. Annika made her splash in the U.S. at the University of Arizona when she won the 1991 individual NCAA Division I championship. She turned professional the following year and by the early 2000s, she was firing a consistent and steadfast game that averaged below 70. In 2003, she was invited to play at the PGA, the first time a woman participated in a men's tournament since Babe Zaharias qualified in 1945. Retired today and living in Orlando, Florida, Annika keeps busy with her foundation and various business interests. Sports History Magazine asked the Swedish golf wonder to share her story with us.

You grew up in Sweden and started playing golf at a young age. At what point did you realize that golf is your calling?

I grew up playing all sports in Sweden. Tennis was my first love, followed by downhill skiing. >>

Above: Displaying her card at the 2001 Standard Register Ping where she shot a 59, the first woman to break 60 in competition (Getty Images).

Below: At the 2003 PGA Tour where she became the first woman to play in a men's tournament since 1948 (Getty Images).

MY GAME HAS NEVER BEEN FLASHY. I JUST HIT FAIRWAYS AND GREENS AND TRY NOT TO MAKE MISTAKES.

I didn't pick up a golf club until I was 12, which is late by today's standards. By the time I was 16, I knew I wanted to focus on golf and in college, I knew I wanted to play professionally.

Who were your golf heroes and heroines?

Growing up in Sweden, we didn't get much coverage. My hero was Bjorn Borg. I saw Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player and Tom Watson on TV. When Liselotte Neumann won the US Open, she became one of my favorites.

Your younger sister picked up the game and eventually went professional too. Were you Sweden's golf version of Venus & Serena?

We didn't think much about it at the time, but I suppose so to a lesser extent. We both played in college, won the NCAA's and went on to successful professional careers. She's a great teacher now. The game has certainly been good to our family.

At the University of Arizona where you enrolled, you became the first non-American, and freshman, to win the individual 1991 NCAA Division I championship. What talents, or skills, do you think you had that overwhelmed the competition?

I think I was just consistent. My game has never been flashy. I just hit fairways and greens and try not to make mistakes.

Throughout your career, you won 94 professional tournaments, of which 10 were LPGA majors. What are some of your most memorable finishes?

I was fortunate to accomplish a lot throughout my career. My first US Open was very special, as was my last in 2006. Completing the career grand slam was special. Playing against the men

ANNIKA SÖRENSTAM
PROFILE OF A GOLF PRODIGY

BORN	Stockholm County, Sweden October 9, 1970
COLLEGE	University of Arizona 1991-92
PROFESSIONAL WINS	94 (72 LPGA Tour)
MAJOR WINS	Women's PGA Championship (2003, 2004, 2005) U.S. Women's Open (1995, 1996, 2006) ANA Inspiration (2001, 2002, 2005) Women's British Open (2003)
ACCOLADES	2003 World Golf Hall of Fame 1994 Rookie of the Year 8x LPGA Player of the Year 8x LPGA Money Winner 6x LPGA Vare Trophy

at Colonial was special, and of course shooting 59. Being inducted into the LPGA and World Golf Hall of Fame I suppose was the ultimate honor.

What golf courses did you enjoy playing most?

I like traditional, tree lined courses with small greens and I also like playing links golf overseas.

Your career overlapped somewhat with that of Tiger Woods. Did you ever meet with him and exchange ideas about the game?

I used to practice with him when we were both number one. We played together in some events too. I always enjoyed our conversations about getting better physically, mentally, and on the course.

Looking back, did you have trainers, or even caddies, who you think made a difference in your performance?

I had one trainer named Kai Fusser and one swing coach named Henri Reis. I worked with them both many years and they helped me transform my game.

In 2003, you were invited to play at the PGA Tour's Bank of America's Colonial event. It was the first time a woman participated in a men's tournament since Babe Zaharias qualified for the Los Angeles Open in 1945. What prompted the invite and what was the general reaction among players and the press?

I just wanted to challenge myself against the best players in the world. I had been number one in the world for several years and I thought that playing against the men would make me better. The journey was wonderful, and I did get much better as I got comfortable being uncomfortable. The guys were 99% very positive and supportive. >>

Above: Annika Sörenstam holding the 2006 Women's U.S. Open trophy after winning the tournament in Newport, Rhode Island (Getty Images).

Besides raw power, do you think men have a natural edge over women in the sport of golf?

They are more aggressive around the greens and on the greens. They don't mark their short putts, they just go up and bang them in. They generate tremendous speed out of the rough and in the bunkers.

What advice do you have for young women who want to pursue golf competitively?

My ANNIKA Foundation has seven global events for junior girls. We have 600 girls per year from 60 different countries playing our events. I really enjoy seeing them and spending time answering their questions. They are great players, but our grass roots girls I just tell to have fun and find friends and encourage them to play too.

Today, you keep busy with multiple charity and business enterprises ranging from a golf academy, to fashion, wine, and golf course design. What do you enjoy most?

I enjoy everything I do. First and foremost, being a Mom and wife are my priorities. I enjoy the great work we do and lives we touch through my Foundation. I enjoy working to design and promote my clothing line, the ANNIKA Collection with Cutter & Buck. I always enjoy doing Course Design work and I'm lucky to still do a lot of corporate and sponsor days. ●

WORLD GOLF HALL OF FAME

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ANNIKA SÖRENSTAM

NANCY LOPEZ

DINAH SHORE

BABE ZAHARIAS

PATTY SHEEHAN

KARRIE WEBB

The First All-Female Yacht Racing Crew

SHMagazine

IN 1989, WHEN TRACY EDWARDS MADE it known that she was entering the 32,000-mile Whitbread Round the World Race with an all-female yacht crew, she was ridiculed and dismissed as a dreamer. Few even gave her a chance of finishing the first leg of the six-leg race around the globe. But the determined 26-year old and her team of 12 women defied all expectations. Not only did they complete the ocean-going tournament, but twice in the dangerous southern seas they placed first in their division class. Following that remarkable feat, Tracy became the first woman to receive the Yachtsman of the Year Trophy and her boat, 'Maiden', was inscribed in the pages of seafaring history. Changing the perception of women in ocean racing, Tracy went on to write a book, 'Maiden', and a documentary of the same name was also made about the crew's adventure. Sports History Magazine asked Tracy to look back and share her inspiring story with us.

You grew up in a small town in England and then moved to Wales after your father passed away. Tell us a little about your early teenage years.

MY FATHER WAS A SAILOR AND HE HAD TAKEN MY BROTHER AND I TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT ON HIS FRIEND'S BOAT WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG.

After my father died when I was ten my life fell apart. My Mother married an abusive alcoholic and we did not get on. We fought constantly and I was bullied at school so in the end I just ran away to Greece. I was angry and aggressive and, I >>

Below: Tracy Edwards (left) at the helm of the 'Maiden' with one of her crew members.

THE MOST CHALLENGING PARTS OF THE WHOLE RACE ARE THE SOUTHERN OCEAN LEGS...CONSTANT FREEZING TEMPERATURES, HUGE SEAS THAT THROW YOU AROUND LIKE DOLLS, SLEEP DEPRIVATION, HUNGER AND CONSTANT STRESS.

Above: The 'Maiden' with its all-female crew during the Whitebread Round the World Race.

would imagine, deeply unpleasant!

At 16, you found yourself working as a stewardess on a yacht in Greece. Was that your first introduction to life on the water?

My father was a sailor and he had taken my brother and I to the Isle of Wight on his friend's boat when we were very young. We both hated it and I vowed never to go anywhere near the sea ever again! I must have forgotten that when I got onto my first yacht in Greece.

A chance encounter brought you in touch with King Hussein I of Jordan, who later helped sponsor your race. Tell us about that fortuitous meeting.

I was in Newport, Rhode Island in 1985 looking for work when I was given a day's work as a Stewardess on a charter yacht called Excaliber. We had to sail to Martha's Vineyard to pick up the mysterious guests and it turned out to be King Hussein and Queen Noor. We got on really well (King Hussein was a Collector of People!) and we stayed in touch over the years.

How did the idea of launching the first all-female yacht racing crew come about?

I ended up in the 1985/86 Whitbread Round the World Race on the only boat that would take me - Atlantic Privateer - as a cook and one of only 3

girls in a fleet of 260 men! I decided then that this had to change and I had to change it by proving that women could do the race.

What did folks say when they heard you were trying to raise money to enter the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race with an all-female team?

There was much laughter and derision! But, that really just made us more determined. What really surprised me was the aggressive feel to the reaction. I see it now on Social Media when people attack each other.

Where did you find your crew and why did they believe in you, given that you never skippered through rough seas?

It was difficult as there were very few ocean-racing female sailors. This is how we ended up with 9 nationalities in the 12 crew members. They found me when they heard about Maiden! I think we all just believed in each other and we did train for a year before we left.

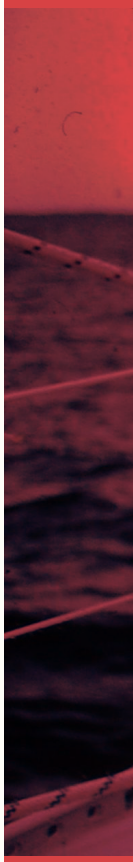
You entered the 'Maiden' in the 1989 Whitbread race, which was 32,000 miles long and comprised of several legs with long stretches of nothing but ocean. How did the crew of 12 women get along?

This question has always mystified me as men were rarely asked it but we always were. I have always got on well with other women (and me for that matter) and I know that people may not believe this but after I had made the decision >>

SIX LEGS AND 32,000 MILES OF NOTHING BUT OCEAN

1989–1990 WHITBREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE

	START	END	MILES
LEG 1	Southampton (ENG)	Punta del Este (URG)	5,938
LEG 2	Punta del Este (URG)	Fremantle (AUT)	7,260
LEG 3	Fremantle (AUT)	Auckland (NZL)	3,272
LEG 4	Auckland (NZL)	Punta del Este (URG)	6,255
LEG 5	Punta del Este (URG)	Fort Lauderdale (USA)	5,475
LEG 6	Fort Lauderdale (USA)	Southampton (ENG)	3,818



to let my 1st Mate go, we never had an argument on the boat after that. We formed an incredibly close bond and always had each other's back.

TRACY BECAME THE FIRST WOMAN TO RECEIVE THE YACHTSMAN OF THE YEAR TROPHY AND HER BOAT, 'MAIDEN', WAS INSCRIBED IN THE PAGES OF SEAFARING HISTORY.

What was the most challenging part of the race and were there any moments when you feared for your life?

The most challenging parts of the whole race are the Southern Ocean legs. It is almost impossible to describe how tough it is. Constant freezing temperatures, huge seas that throw you around like dolls, sleep deprivation, hunger and constant stress. We didn't really feel fear during the worst few days when we nearly sank going round Cape Horn as you are so focused on survival but the fear kicks in afterwards when you think what could have happened.

You skippered a couple of other ocean vessel competitions. One of them ended up with the sponsor abandoning their financial commitment, which sent you into personal bankruptcy. What happened there?

Above: Tracy Edwards navigating 'Maiden' with one of her crew members.

I managed a race in Qatar and they didn't pay us. This is not unusual.

In 2014, someone discovered that the original 'Maiden' was left to rot in a marina somewhere in the Indian ocean. You then raised money to salvage it. Where is it now and how is it being used?

Well, now we are sailing Maiden around the world again raising funds for my charity, The Maiden Factor Foundation. When we can resume the tour after Covid we will be sailing a further 150,000 miles over three years, visiting over 60 destinations in over 30 countries. We work with and support Communities who enable girls into education and empower and support them to remain through their teenage years.

What are the members of the original crew doing today?

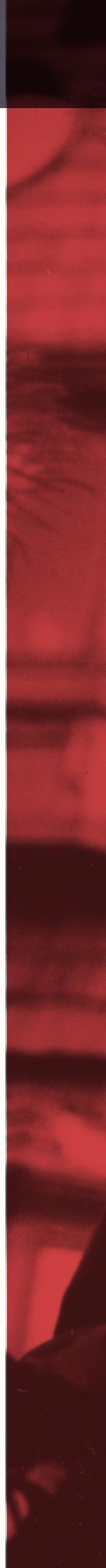
They are scattered around the world in places like the UK, New Zealand, and the United States. Most have stayed close to sailing, whether pursuing it professionally as racers, business managers, or as a form of recreation.

What's next for you on life's calendar?

The Maiden Factor Foundation is my life. We cannot have equality for women if where we are born dictates whether we go to school or not. It has to begin at grass roots level. I fear that events have overtaken the rights of women and girls and I cannot stop until we have equality for women and girls which gives us justice for everyone, everywhere.

A Woman Triumphs at the Iditarod

SHMagazine



IN 1985, LIBBY RIDDLES BECAME THE first woman to conquer the Iditarod, the world's most prestigious dog sled race. Braving harsh winter conditions including a vicious arctic storm, the 29 year-old finished the 1,000-mile chase across the Alaskan wilderness in 18 days and 20 minutes, hours ahead of all her male counterparts. Libby became an instant celebrity and an inspiration for women around the world, proving they can hold their own in the toughest of all sporting challenges. Libby went on to write three books, including Race Across Alaska, her personal story at the Iditarod, and two other children's books. In 2007, she was also inducted into the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame. Sports History Magazine asked Libby to share her thoughts on the famed race and about being the first female champion in one of the most grueling events on earth.

How did you first become interested in dog sledding?

I always wanted a life with animals and they seemed the most practical for Alaska.

How does a person train for a long-distance dog sled race?

It's very obsessive. Many hours spent training, preparing, and caring for the dogs. A lot of experimentation, trying to come up with better ways to do things and improve gear for dogs and musher. >>

Below: Libby Riddles stands in front of the City Hall at Nome, Alaska, shortly after crossing the finish line at the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in 1985.

WITH GREAT SPIRIT AND COURAGE, LIBBY RIDDLES BECOMES THE FIRST WOMAN TO WIN THE LAST GREAT RACE

How do you build a winning dog team?

Lots of dedication, time spent together gaining experience racing, or using them for travel and for work like getting firewood and ice fishing. Basically, giving them experiences they will need to be prepared and building mutual trust between musher and team. Good luck helps too!

The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race is over 1,000 miles long and is contested over many days and nights. Did you have a strategy when out in the wilderness?

My strategy has always been to do the best my team and I can do. We have a basic schedule, but things happen and you have to know when to adjust according to conditions and how your team is doing. You have to know when to take a chance, too.

The first Iditarod took place in 1973 and was

Right: At a checkpoint along a race trail.

WOMEN ARE GOOD AT ENDURANCE AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS, ESPECIALLY US NORTHERN GALS!

won in 20 days. Last year, the winner cleared the finish line in 9 days. What makes it so much faster today?

Competition has made for some truly amazing endurance huskies. Training and diet has improved over time and I think global warming has made for easier trail and conditions in some years.

The race is so brutal that competitors become sleep deprived and even start hallucinating on the trail. How do you cope with such grueling fatigue?

Real mushers don't whine. You go into it knowing everyone else is facing the same thing. If you can cope with it stronger, maybe you win.

What are the biggest challenges in the race for the dogs? >>


Timberland
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Left: Libby Riddles with dogs Axle and Dugan after taking first place at the 1985 Iditarod dog sled race.

The possibility of picking up viruses from teams that come from all over to join in the race. It's such a disappointment to get a bug in the team. We try to build their immune system and it is part of the training to go to earlier races of shorter distance for practice and exposure to the current season's viruses. If the musher prepares the dogs well and cares for them well along the trail, the dogs that are meant to do this kind of thing can often be ready to turn around and do it again with a couple days off at the finish. For the ones that it's hard, they find themselves doing tours instead of racing!

REAL MUSHERS DON'T WHINE. YOU GO INTO IT KNOWING EVERYONE ELSE IS FACING THE SAME THING. IF YOU CAN COPE WITH IT STRONGER, MAYBE YOU WIN.

In 1985, you became the first woman to win the Iditarod. What do you attribute that remarkable feat to?

Focus, a good team of human and canine, being lucky enough to know what I wanted at a young age and going for it.

That year, conditions were also especially harsh due to severe storms. Were there moments when you actually feared for your life?

Not really, because in the heart of it I was too busy to waste energy being afraid.

After you, Susan Butcher became the second woman to claim the Iditarod and she won it 3 years in a row. So, men don't have a natural biological advantage over women in this particular challenge?

Dog mushing has maybe the most diverse group of competitors of any sport because you need many different types of skills to be good at it. Women are good at endurance and mental toughness, especially us northern gals!

The Iditarod trail had to be redrawn at least twice due to lack of snow. Do you sense that climate change is threatening the race?

It has made it tough for the sport and for people to train. In Alaska and other northern places, we see the change much more radically than some places. Even though we're having a cold snap now, we've just had the warmest year on record. It's depressing to have no snow until midwinter.

You authored a few books about your experience at the Iditarod. Tell us about them?

I started keeping journals as a teenager and it led me to write about the Iditarod after winning. I wrote Race Across Alaska with journalist Tim Jones. It was on the American Library Association list of top twenty books for young adults, and was also runner-up to a dog writers award. I also made my living selling the books to cruise ship passengers in SE Alaska. I wrote a kids' version of the story called Storm Run because so many schools, teachers and kids love the Iditarod, and girls need stories like this! I wrote Danger the Dog Yard Cat with my friend and Iditarod finisher, Shelley Gill, for younger kids because I like cats, too. ●

Locker Rooms Open Up to Female Journalists

SHMagazine

FEW LANDMARK COURT DECISIONS COME down in the world of sports, but in 1978 a federal judge ruled that women reporters could not be barred from interviewing players inside the locker room. In January, 1975, two female journalists became their own story after breaking the sex barrier in the locker room at the NHL All-Star game in Montreal. They were the first women reporters admitted into the dressing room of a North American professional sports team. Robin Herman, the first female sports writer to join the 'New York Times' and Marcel St. Cyr, a radio reporter based in Montreal, were granted access by the coaches to conduct postgame interviews of players inside the changing facilities. When the news broke, Herman said "I'm not the story, the game is the story". But the account of girls in the locker room overshadowed a ho-hum hockey match that saw the Wales Conference trounce the Campbell Conference 7-1. Women on the sports beat was a rarity and even then, they were placed at a professional disadvantage having to wait outside in the hallways. The ambitious ones knew that the locker room was the best place to capture the pulse of a team and the players. It's in that inner-sanctum that the team's spirit and players' emotions are revealed and unscripted; the euphoria and the elation, the heartbreak and the misery. While ladies were asked to wait outside until the players came out, their male peers were busy inside taking notes and holding up the microphone to record their subjects. The headline event at the Montreal Forum took place at the height of the women's liberation movement and it wasn't long before other sports teams followed the NHL's lead, namely in the NBA. But permitting women to enter the testosterone-infused confines depended on the whims of the team, its managers, or the league. The prevailing attitude was still sexist and Herman and St. Cyr received their share of hate mail, deriding them as flimsy flirts and "whores" who knew little about the game itself. It wasn't until two years later that legal measures were taken to prohibit gender exclusion and it came in the form of a lawsuit against the man who ran America's favorite pass-time, baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn. Melissa Ludtke was an accredited 20-something reporter for 'Sports Illustrated' when she was granted access to the Yankees clubhouse at the end of the 1977 baseball season. The Los Angeles Dodgers, who went on to face the New York franchise at the Fall Classic, also voted as a team to allow her to interview them inside their locker room. But midway through the first game of the World Series, MLB overruled the Dodgers and the Yankees, disallowing all female journalists from reporting inside the dressing rooms. Pleading with the commission of baseball but to no avail, Ludtke and Time, Inc., parent of Sports Illustrated, brought a lawsuit against Bowie Kuhn on the grounds that Ludtke's 14th Amendment rights were violated when she was denied access as a female journalist to the team clubhouse. Named in the lawsuit were also various officials of New York City, including then Mayor Abe Beame, since they were charged with overseeing anti-discriminatory compliance with the lease of Yankee Stadium. At the heart was Ludtke's fundamental right to pursue her

profession as a woman, which otherwise granted men an unfair advantage. Kuhn's argument was that his decision was necessary "to protect the image of baseball as a family sport" and "preserve traditional notions of decency and propriety". A year later, in time for the 1978 World Series which saw the Yankees and Dodgers square off again, U.S. District Judge Constance Baker Motley ruled in favor of Ludtke. MLB appealed the decision but it was upheld. Not surprisingly, female journalists would still encounter various forms of lewd behavior while reporting from the inside, but the landmark decision of September 26, 1978 put away what some called the last "male bastion of sports journalism".

Above: Robin Herman, one of the first two female sports writers to report inside the men's locker room.

Diane Crump with Fathom, her mount at the Kentucky Derby (1970).

Breaking a Glass Ceiling on the Racing Saddle

SHMagazine

IN 1970, SPECTATORS AT THE KENTUCKY Derby saw something they've never witnessed before- a female jockey piloting one of the horses into the starting gate. Diane Crump was the first woman to ride the famed Triple Crown race aboard Fathom, coming in 15th in a 17-horse field. A year earlier, the Connecticut native became the first female professional jockey when she ran the Hialeah Park Race Track in front of a crowd that was so hostile to the idea of a non-male rider, that she needed a police escort to get on the track. Undeterred, the courageous 21-year old took to the 4-legged chase, placing 9th in a field of 12 and making history for women in the sport. She went on to a racing career that earned her 228 wins and the legendary status of a horse racing pioneer. Crump is the subject of a new biography recently released, "Diane Crump: A Horse-Racing Pioneer's Life in the Saddle". Sports History Magazine asked Diane to look back and share her story with us.

You grew up in Connecticut, but your family moved to Florida when you were still young. Tell us a little how you became interested in horse riding.

I fell in love with horses at a carnival pony ride in Milford, Connecticut at the age of 4. I don't know what it did to me, but I just didn't want to stop riding that pony! From then on my parents would take me to a livery stable on some Saturdays to ride for an hour when time and money allowed. For my 7th birthday, I got a package of riding lessons for 8 weeks. The love and desire were there and apparently nothing could stop that. There were no horses at all where we lived and no one in my family had pretty much ever heard of a horse! We moved to Florida when I was 12 and the promise of getting my own horse came to pass. We moved to Oldsmar, Florida which is the home of what once was Sunshine Park and today >>

is Tampa Bay Downs. From getting my own riding horse and starting a riding club, to working on a thoroughbred farm, one thing led to another and my dreams and passion grew.

What did your family and friends say when you told them you wanted to race horses?

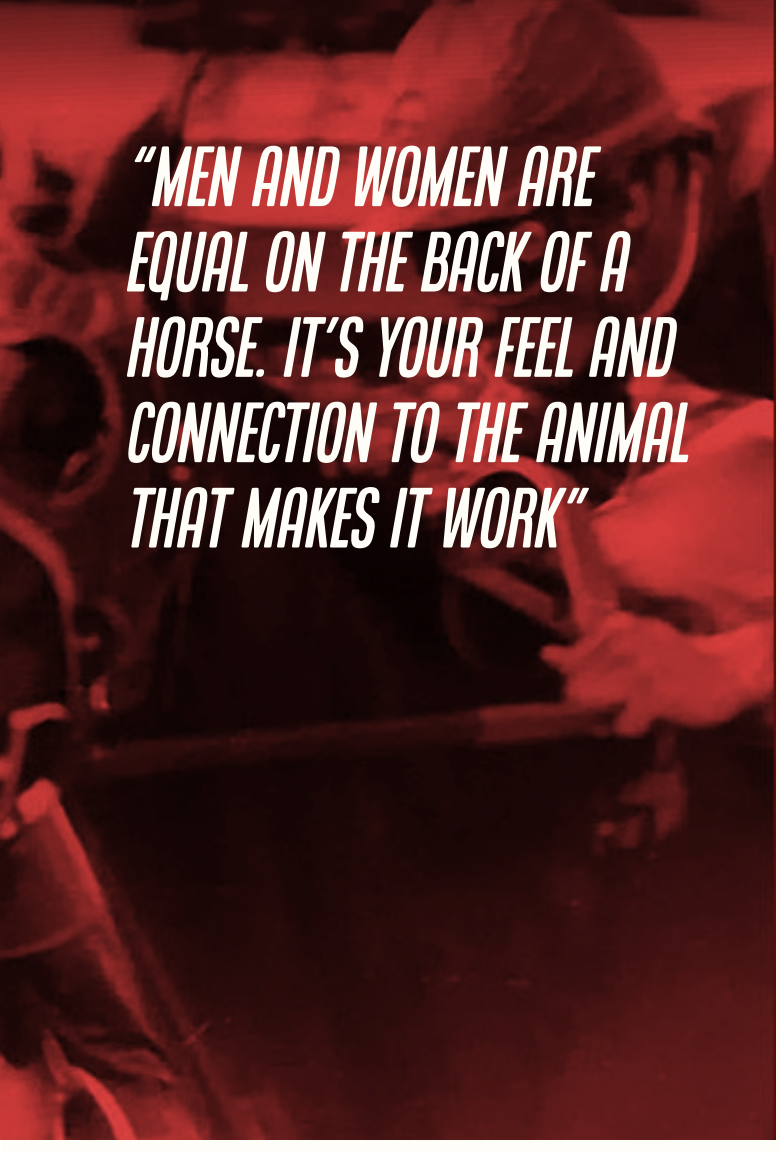
My family was always extremely supportive of each of their kids living their dreams. They didn't understand to start with what riding and working with racehorses was all about but they were behind my dreams!

In 1969, you became the first female jockey to run a professional race. How did that opportunity come about?

It's a long story about how women got the right to ride and the obstacles they had to overcome. It was illegal for women to ride up until a court battle in 1968. From then on, we had to overcome boycotts, threats and negative press. It's all in my biography that just recently came out.

That first race was held at Hialeah in front of a very hostile crowd. How did you feel as a 21 year-old trying to compete in such a poisonous atmosphere?

I felt awesome finally getting to ride in a race and becoming a jockey. It was a dream come true. I



Left: On the saddle at Hialeah Park where she became the first female professional jockey (1969).

never paid any attention to the negativity around me.

The following year in 1970, you became the first woman to ride in the Kentucky Derby. Tell us what you remember from that historic day.

I remember the excitement and enthusiasm that Derby Day holds for everyone. I won the first race on the card that day and it was a great way to get started. I finished third in the two-year filly stake as well and then on to the Derby.

Fundamentally, men should not have a natural advantage over women when piloting a horse. Or, do they?

Men and women are equal on the back of a horse. It's your feel and connection to the animal that makes it work.

Coming up in the sport, were there any jockeys that you looked up to, or tried to excel?

I didn't really have any jockeys in particular that I looked up to. There were certainly plenty that I admired and respected, though.

There's an anecdote of you racing in Puerto Rico and one of the jockeys behind you is grabbing the back of your saddle to get a free ride. You turned to whip him with your stick, he whipped you back, and this went on until he eventually pulled away to win the race. How did you feel coming out of that experience?

I felt as though I was as tough and fearless as I could be.

In 1989, you suffered severe injuries from a riding accident. What happened?

I was breaking a 2-year old at a training center and he reared up and fell over backwards on me. He broke my leg in several places and I had a compound fracture of the tibia among other things.

You retired in 1999 with 228 career wins. What are some of your most memorable races?

I rode a lot of horses that I dearly loved and that gave me their heart. I don't really have a favorite. My most memorable race was at Woodbine in Canada, however. We shipped a 2-year filly up there for a stake race. It was a three-horse photo with me wedged in the middle. Both riders claimed foul against me, although I couldn't even hit my filly as we were in such tight quarters. It took 20 minutes to decide the photo finish and the foul claims. It was >>

At the all-male jockey's quarters in Churchill Downs (1981).

Above: Walking with a police escort at Hialeah Park Race Track in Florida (1969).

a great feeling when my number went up as the winner and the race was declared official!

There's been a lot of talk about the future of equine racing, especially following reports of horses dying on the track and the recent legalization of sports betting. What does the horse racing industry need to do in order to preserve its heritage?

I think the drug testing and use of medication need to get more strict, and we need to get back to the basics of horsemanship.

Today, you run an equine sales business. Tell us about it.

My business, Diane Crump Equine Sales, is exactly like a real estate company only for horses. I have a website with all of the horses posted with pictures, videos and a detailed description. People call me and I set it up for them to come try the horses that they are interested in. I meet them at the individual farms and then they can follow me to see however many horses they might be interested in looking at. ●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A Young Woman Makes History at the Marathon

SHMagazine

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN RUNNING a marathon was the bastion of men, and for women to compete in the 26.2-mile race that commemorates a Greek battle was tantamount to sending them into military combat. Kathrine Switzer broke that mold in 1967 when she became the first female to run the Boston Marathon as a numbered entrant. She had registered for the race using her first initial and last name, so her gender on paper didn't raise any suspicion. It was only later on the street when she was spotted running with the pack that a marathon official tried to physically remove her. The official was unsuccessful and Kathrine didn't just make it to the finish line, she made history. Today, the foot racing pioneer is an international celebrity in the world of long-distance running. Sports History Magazine asked Kathrine about that momentous day that took place in Boston over 50 years ago.

How old were you when you ran your first marathon?

I was 20, and my first marathon distance was run in practice. My first marathon race was the 1967 Boston Marathon.

Why did you want to run the marathon, and the Boston Marathon in particular?

I discovered early that running always made me feel powerful, free and fearless. The longer I ran, the higher I felt so the 26.2-mile distance intrigued me. The Boston Marathon, which was >>

Katherine Switzer pictured in 1975.

Above: A race official attempting to forcibly remove Kathrine from the 1967 Boston Marathon.
Right: Fellow runners coming to Kathrine's aid when they saw her being assaulted.

founded in 1896, was the most famous race in the world to me next to the Olympics. Yet unlike the Olympics, it was supposedly open to anyone who wanted to try to run. I felt thrilled by the prospect of running 26.2 miles in a race where supposedly anyone could run in the same race as the greatest runners in the world. There was no other sports event like that. For instance, you cannot just go out and play baseball with the New York Yankees. Plus, my coach Arnie Briggs had run the Boston Marathon 15 times and he used to tell me stories about this race and they inspired me.

Were you trying to prove anything or make a statement when you first ran the Boston Marathon in 1967?

No, I was just a kid who wanted to run, and was there as a reward from my coach who didn't believe that a woman could run the distance. >>


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At the 2017 Boston Marathon, the 50th anniversary of her groundbreaking race.

BREAKING RULES, BUSTING MYTHS AND PAVING THE WAY FOR WOMEN

Marathon pioneer Kathrine Switzer poses with her original entry number from the 1967 Boston Marathon.

I heard that other women had run marathon distances and that one woman in 1966, Roberta Gibb, ran the Boston Marathon but without an official bib number, so I wasn't trying to break any barriers. It wasn't until a race official attacked me during the run that I became determined to finish and speak out on behalf of all women.

How did you enter the race if it was for men only?

First, there were no rules written saying it was a men's only race. Next, there was nothing about gender on the entry form. Third, my coach told me it was OK for me to enter and in fact I must enter the race properly for my run to count. Lastly, I signed my name with my initials, K.V. Switzer. So, the officials probably thought K. stood for a man's name.

Did you disguise yourself as a man?

Absolutely not! I was very proud of being a woman. I had long hair, wore lipstick and eyeliner to the start line. I was wearing a very nice shorts and top outfit so I'd look good, but because the weather conditions were miserable, 34 degrees, snowing and sleeting, I had to leave my baggy grey sweat suit on. I'd planned on only wearing that to warm up in, and then discard it, as most athletes do before a race. It was my worst looking warm-up suit, too! All the men around me knew that I was a woman. The morning of the race, it was not only snowing/sleeting but also very windy and very cold, and everyone looked alike in their baggy grey sweat suits—including me. So perhaps officials didn't notice me then. If it had been a hot day, and I was only wearing the >>

shorts and top, history might have been changed.

At what point in the race did the official attack you and why?

At about the 2-mile mark, so I still had 24 miles to run. The official claimed the race was a men's only race and that I was not allowed to run. He was very angry that I had obtained an official bib number, and he lost his temper.

What did the men around you do in the race?

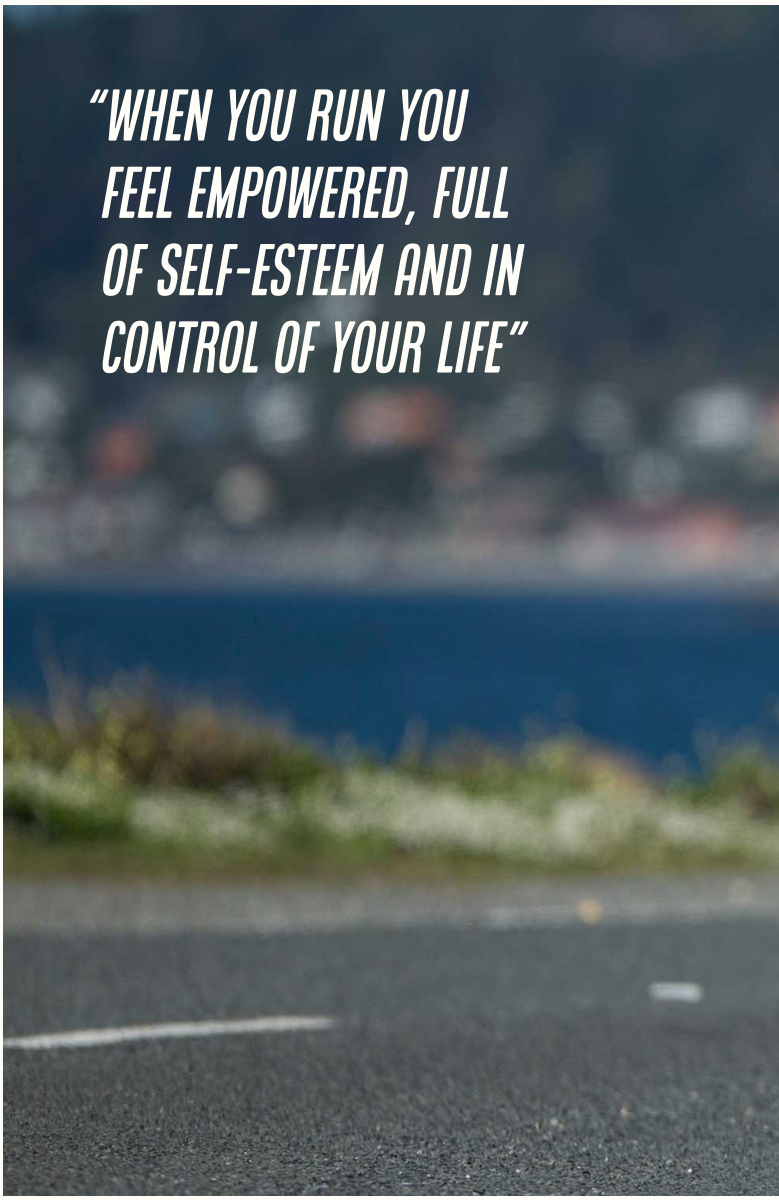
They were shouting at the official to leave me alone and tried to push him away but he was very determined. Then my boyfriend, who was an ex-All American football player, gave the official a massive shoulder charge and sent him flying out of the race.

Did you get in trouble for running the Boston Marathon?

Yes, the official who attacked me had me disqualified from the race and then expelled from the Amateur Athletic Union, the sport's governing body, for a whole list of reasons, one of which was running with men. Plus, there was a lot of negative press reports and plenty of hate mail.

There are famous photos of the official attacking you. How did they take those photos?

The photo truck was right in front of us and the press and officials' bus was alongside of us, working their way from the back of the race pack to the front. The official jumped off the bus and attacked me...right in full view of the photographers taking pictures from the back of the truck. It was very bad timing for the official, but it was very good timing for women's rights. The photo of the incident was flashed around the world and is now in Time-Life's book, "100 Photos that Changed the World."



How has the Boston Marathon experience changed your life?

In just about every way because by the time I finished the race, I was inspired to both become a better athlete myself and create opportunities for other women in running. All this led to several interesting careers, almost all of which I designed for myself and are connected to running and social change. The 1967 Boston Marathon also told me I could persevere over anything. And it

has helped me to be pretty fearless in other ways, too. (Mostly, anyway!!) Young women today have many options in sports. Why would they select long-distance running?

Because running is totally easy, convenient and cheap. It does not require a team, a field, a gym or a tee-time. It welcomes all ages, sizes, abilities and ethnicities. It only requires a pair of shoes. You can run for fun, or be competitive. Also, women are very good at it. They have exceptional ability in endurance and stamina. Most of all, it is instantly transforming. When you run you feel empowered, full of self-esteem and in control of your life. It busts stress and gives you the courage to do what you never thought you could do. Also, because once those other sports are over--when college and high school are done--they don't exist anymore unless you go on to be a pro. The USA is very bad about not having community teams and sports, especially for women. ●

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The Most Successful Sibling Act in Sports History

By Cecil Harris

WHILE BECOMING THE MOST SUCCESSFUL sibling act in sports history, the Williams sisters have also made women's tennis faster, quicker, harder-hitting and more athletic, and inspired generations of youngsters to play the game. Venus, the elder sister by fifteen months, and Serena learned to play on roughhewn courts in the hardscrabble Compton section of Southern California. In 2002 and 2003, they were ranked No. 1 and No. 2 in the world. If you took that for granted at the time, then that's unfortunate because you are not likely to ever see another tennis family achieve that again. All told, Serena and Venus have combined for 30 Grand Slam titles in singles and 14 more in doubles. They have also won three Olympic gold medals in doubles. Add to that an Olympic gold medal in singles for Venus in 2000 and one for Serena in 2012 and you have the stuff of which legends are made. Each sister turned pro in the 1990s at age 14. They were strong and confident figures on court with beads in their braided hair, crushing serves, forehands and two-fisted backhands while sending a message to their opponents—get stronger and fitter or step aside. Credit their parents, Richard Williams and Oracene Price, who instilled in Venus and Serena the belief that they could achieve anything with hard work and determination. Also credit Althea Gibson, a five-time major champion who in 1957 became the first Black player ever ranked world No. 1. "I once wrote a paper about her for school," Serena said. "There were tournaments that wouldn't let her play because they weren't accepting Blacks. And when she could get into tournaments, she wasn't always allowed to use the locker room like the other players or eat in the dining room like the others. She had to sleep in cars in some tournaments when everybody else was sleeping in hotels." Serena's 1999 U.S. Open title was the first by a Black woman at a major event since Gibson won the 1958 U.S. Nationals (forerunner of the U.S. Open). Drawing upon inspiration from Venus and Gibson, Serena has become the gold standard in women's tennis. With her incomparable serve, power game, athleticism and intensity, Serena has won a record 23 major titles in the Open era (since 1968). One more major title would tie Margaret Court's all-time mark. As for Venus, the record book shows that she has conquered Wimbledon five times and the U.S. Open twice. However, her most impactful victory occurred off the court, the culmination of a three-year battle that began in 2005 to achieve pay equity for women at Wimbledon, tennis's premier tournament. The U.S. Open was the first Grand Slam event to offer equal prize money in 1973. Eventually, the French Open and the Australian Open followed suit. However, the men who ran Wimbledon believed that since men played best-of-five-set matches at the majors while women played best-of-three, men had to work longer for the money and should be paid more. But women's tennis, certainly by 2005, had proven itself to be as big a draw as men's tennis. Indeed, the emergence of Serena and Venus as global superstars made the sisters as much of a drawing card as any leading man. In 2005, Venus advocated for gender equity at the annual meeting of the Grand Slam committee, held during the second Friday at Wimbledon. The committee consists of representatives from each Grand Slam event (Wimbledon, U.S. Open, French Open, Australian Open), the Women's Tennis Association, the Association of Tennis Professionals (men's tour) and the International Tennis Federation. The day after stating her case to the committee, Venus scored a dramatic win over Lindsay Davenport

in the Wimbledon final, 4-6, 7-6 (7-4), 9-7—at 2 hours, 45 minutes the longest women's final in Wimbledon history and, arguably, the finest. Yet the All-England Club voted against bringing pay equity to Wimbledon in 2006. Instead, a modest pay increase was made to the women's purse. Men continued to be paid more across the board, but the female champion would make "only" 30,000 pounds (approximately $39,000) less than the male champion. With Venus as the anchorwoman, the WTA secured the backing of prominent female political figures in the United Kingdom such as Tessa Jowell, secretary of state for culture, media and sport, and Patricia Hewitt, trade and industry secretary. Venus also gained the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Venus then wrote an editorial that appeared in The Times of London on June 26, 2006, one that effectively put Wimbledon's patriarchs on the defensive: "It is a shame that the greatest tournament in tennis, which should be a positive symbol for the sport, has been tarnished," she wrote. "How can it be that Wimbledon finds itself on the wrong side of history?" Once Venus's editorial appeared, the issue of pay equity became a hot topic throughout the U.K., even in Parliament. When Janet Anderson, Member of Parliament, asked British leader Tony Blair during Prime Minister's Questions about the need for pay equity at Wimbledon, Blair expressed his support. Game, set and match. With Venus tapping into her power and using her voice to amplify and persuade, women in sports had achieved a major victory. Pay equity has been the rule at Wimbledon ever since. For more than a quarter-century, Venus and Serena Williams have had an enormous impact on tennis. In 2020, Venus turned 40 and Serena 39. Their brilliant careers are in the twilight, yet they are cultural icons and role models for girls and young women, and boys and young men, around the world.

Cecil Harris is the author of "Different Strokes: Serena, Venus, and the Unfinished Black Tennis Revolution" (University of Nebraska Press).

Above: Venus (right) and Serena Williams, the most successful sibling act in sports history.

Three Years After Jackie, Althea

SHMagazine

THREE YEARS AFTER JACKIE ROBINSON broke baseball's racial barrier, another athlete who was born into a family of southern sharecroppers cracked open the U.S. National Championships, the forerunner of today's U.S. Open.

In 1950, Althea Gibson became the first tennis player of color to swing a racket at the Nationals. Having built a winning portfolio with the American Tennis Association (ATA) and granted entry to compete at an all-white tennis club, the 23-year old subsequently made her debut in Forest Hills on August 28, 1950.

Founded in 1916, the ATA was the tennis version of the Negro League, black America's answer to the practice of banning African-Americans from competing alongside whites.

But tennis was different. Entering the Nationals was not the same as breaking into a mass-consumption pastime sport like baseball. A mostly unpaid recreational pursuit, lawn tennis embodied the added hurdles of money, class and status.

Gibson's initiation was more historic than triumphant. She lost in the second round of her inaugural tournament to the #3 seeded Wibledon titlist, Louise Brough. It would take a half-dozen years and plenty of frustrations before landing her first trophy at the 1956 French Open.

What followed were two consecutive seasons of victories at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open. By the end of her amateur career in 1958, she would clinch 5 singles grand slams.

Gibson was the first black champion in Wimbledon's 80-year history and the first to receive the trophy personally from Queen >>

The watercolor portrait of Althea Gibson by Boris Chaliapin for the cover of the August 1957 issue of Time Magazine.

Receiving the trophy from Queen Elizabeth II.

ALTHEA GIBSON

PROFILE OF A TENNIS CHAMP

U.S. OPEN	Singles Champ: 1957, 1958 Doubles Finalist: 1957, 1958 Mixed Doubles Champ: 1957
AUSTRALIAN OPEN	Singles Finalist: 1957 Doubles Champ: 1957 Mixed Doubles SF: 1957
WIMBLEDON	Singles Champ: 1957, 1958 Doubles Champ: 1956, 1957, 1958 Mixed Doubles Finalist: 1956, 1957, 1958
FRENCH OPEN	Singles Champ: 1956 Doubles Champ: 1956 Mixed Doubles QF: 1956

THE ATA WAS THE TENNIS VERSION OF THE NEGRO LEAGUE, BLACK AMERICA'S ANSWER TO THE PRACTICE OF BANNING AFRICAN-AMERICANS FROM COMPETING ALONGSIDE WHITES.

Elizabeth II. She remarked that shaking hands with the monarch "was a long way from being forced to sit in the colored section of the bus".

The tennis prodigy also stormed the doubles scene. In addition to a playing partner, Gibson found a soul mate in Angela Buxton, a Jewish tennis virtuoso who herself ran up against discrimination in her native England. Together, the pair captured the doubles competitions at the French Open and at Wimbledon in 1956; the feat was as much a bold statement in the face of the elite tennis world as it was an athletic achievement.

Gibson was named Female Athlete of The Year by AP in 1957 & 1958. "Sports Illustrated" and "Time" both had her on their front covers, the first black woman to be featured.

Though born in the South, young Althea grew up in Harlem and started drawing attention after winning paddle tennis matches. A cadre of upper class black professionals took over and provided training and guidance. Boxing champ Sugar Ray Robinson was one of her patrons. At the time, players qualified for the Nationals by accumulating points at sanctioned tournaments, most of which were by invitation and held at private white-only clubs.

The unlikely tennis star, who was born in a >>

Below: Althea Gibson, the first black champion at Wimbledon's 80-year history.

GIBSON WAS THE FIRST BLACK CHAMPION IN WIMBLEDON'S 80-YEAR HISTORY AND THE FIRST TO RECEIVE THE TROPHY PERSONALLY FROM QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

rural shack and brought up on the streets of New York, was groomed with the necessary grace and elegance expected of ladies on the tennis court. But it wasn't until Alice Marble, a 1930's American tennis celebrity, published an indicting article against the sport's policy of segregation, that Gibson was allowed entry.

In July, 1950, Gibson received an invitation to the Eastern grass court championships at the Orange Lawn Tennis Club in South Orange, NJ. Her performance there was good enough to win a bid to Forest Hills. And the rest as they say, is history. ●

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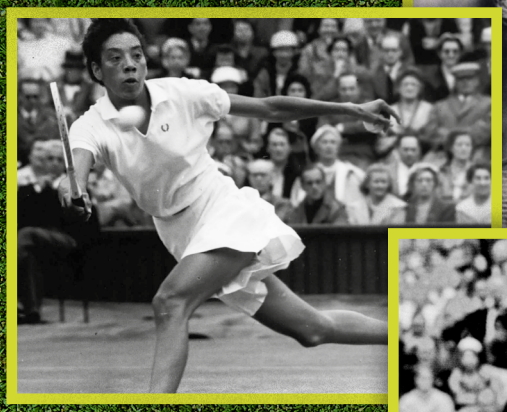
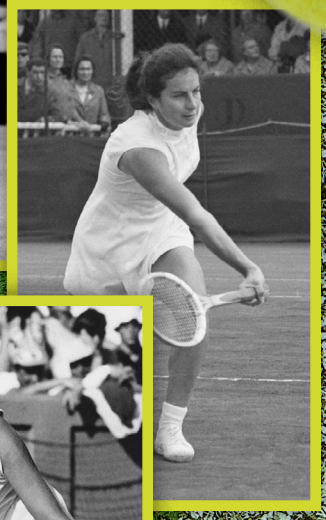
STEFANIE GRAF (GER)

ALTHEA GIBSON (USA)



MARIA BUENO (BRA)



VIRGINIA WADE (ENG)

BILLIE JEAN KING (USA)

MARGARET SMITH COURT (AUT)

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PARACHUTE

Reflections on Title IX

By Corye Perez Beene

THE EXCITEMENT WAS PALPABLE AND the anticipation was real. As the United States prepared to cheer on Team USA at the 2019 Women's World Cup, it was the perfect time to reflect upon the historical journey women's athletics have taken to secure a pre-eminent place in our nation today. We all remember the 1999 World Cup when Team USA defeated China. The joyous victory celebration which ensued saw Brandi Chastain rip her shirt off in a blissful moment of triumph, forever branding her iconic image in the annals of sports history. That match had the highest television ratings for any female sport in American history. Outdoor soccer has the third highest number of participants among all team sports. The number of female high school players has increased steadily since 2009 and while these are all encouraging statistics, it wasn't so long ago that women had but scant opportunities for playing sports, much less making it their full-time careers. Women's athletics began their upward trajectory with the passage of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. Meant to prohibit discrimination against women under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial aid, its sponsors sought professorships and research dollars for women. Athletics were barely a fleeting consideration during the bill's congressional hearings. Nevertheless, it didn't take long for the gross inequities between women's and men's sports teams to rear their ugly heads. For example, men had chartered buses for travelling, while women were forced to resort to bake sales to pay the gas in their own vehicles to attend "away" games. The incongruence in sports' budgets was another area. Only 1% of athletic program budgets were allocated for women's sports. One large University in the northwest had a $2 million budget in which only $18,000 went to women. Women's teams had to put up with leftover equipment the men discarded, rarely having the finances to purchase new gear. In addition, sexism was seen in coaching salaries, hiring practices, support staff and athletic director benefits. One female athletic director had a 200 square foot office with a part-time assistant, while her male counterpart had a suite of offices, 5 secretaries, a bookkeeper and a personal assistant. To address these imbalances and to clarify how Title IX was to be implemented, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) devised its first set of regulations on enforcement in 1975. Imparted to the Office of Civil Rights, the regulations called for equal opportunity in all areas including practice times, facilities, coaches' compensation, academic tutoring and medical staff. The Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) was the organization that controlled women's sports at colleges and universities in the 1970's. The group's philosophy stressed education first. While sports were important to the overall experience of its athletes, it was secondary to the emphasis on education. The AIAW chose to distinguish itself from the ultra-competitive, win-at-all-costs National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). After the NCAA began offering its own championships for women in 1981, the AIAW dissolved. As the years passed, the federal government added to its Title IX guidelines. To show compliance today, schools must address three areas. First, institutions must show the opportunity for women to participate using a three-pronged test. The first one ties women's participation in athletics to the enrollment at its institution. For example, if a school shows women as 55% of its student body, then its women's teams must be 55% of all athletes. The second prong must show that a

Below: Brandi Chastain celebrating Team USA's victory over China at the 1999 Women's World Cup.

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school has had a history of increasing its athletic opportunities for women over time. The final prong, the most commonly used compliance method at the university level, must show that it "fully and effectively" accommodates the interests of women to participate in sports. The second area for compliance concerns scholarship money. The money distributed for scholarships must be in proportion to the number of female and male athletes participating. The final area fulfilling Title IX guidelines covers the totality of sports programs through the lens of eleven key areas. These areas include the scheduling of games and practices, publicity dollars, and locker room facilities. Title IX's monumental influence on women's athletics cannot be overstated. In 1981, there were 100 female soccer teams at the collegiate level. Today, there are 959 teams. Only 10,000 girls played soccer in high school in 1976. Last year, that number was over 390,000. As we look back, we can't forget how far women's sports have come in two generations. ●

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Michelle Akers Recalls Her Playing Days and the Rise of Women's Soccer

SHMagazine

ONE OF THE GREATEST FEMALE SOCCER players of all time, Michelle Akers defined what it meant to be a sports trail blazer. In 1988, at the University of Central Florida, she was the first in the women's category to receive the Hermann Trophy, or college soccer's equivalent of the Heisman Trophy. Three years later, she took home the Golden Shoe award at the inaugural FIFA Women's World Cup when she helped lead Team USA to its first victory. Pile on an Olympics gold medal (1996) and a second World Cup championship (1999), and it's not surprising that FIFA named her 'Female Player of the Century' (shared with China's Sun Wen). Today, 20 years after retiring from the game, the former soccer star lives a quiet life outside Atlanta, Georgia, tending to her horse farm rescue and animal welfare program. Sports History Magazine asked Michelle to recall her playing days and share her thoughts on women's soccer.

You grew up in Seattle, Washington. At what age did you discover your talents on the soccer field?

I always knew I was good, but I didn't realize HOW good until half-way through college. And even then, not until the 1991 World Cup did I realize my potential was on the level of being one of the best players in the world. I mostly just focused on being MY best and having fun on the field and with the process of improving as a player. I never really compared myself to other players, or thought about it much. >>

Michelle Akers, FIFA Women's World Cup champion (1991, 1999) and Olympic gold medalist (1996).

With her teammates after winning gold at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

Soccer, especially women's soccer, was still at its infancy in America when you started out. Who did you look up to as sports heroes?

My favorite soccer player was a Scottish guy, #17 Dave Gillett on the Seattle Sounders (North American Soccer League). I loved his air game, toughness, and work ethic. I practiced hours trying to tackle, head the ball, and play like he did. And before that, I loved #75 Mean Joe Greene on the Pittsburgh Steelers (NFL). I had his jersey and dreamed of playing in the Super Bowl with the Steelers.

In 1986, you were the first college female ever to receive the Hermann Trophy, an award that recognizes the country's top male and female college soccer players. Did you feel at the time that you were pioneering the women's game?

Not at all. In fact, it's a funny story because that trophy arrived out of the blue at the UCF soccer office, broken in half with a letter saying congratulations, and that was that. There was no fanfare or even a phone call from the Hermann people. So, to me, it didn't leave much of an impression. Years later, the award received more acclaim and publicity and grew in prestige. Only then did I begin to think about how far that award and the college game had come since my own college career.

ON THE GAME TODAY: "EXECUTION AND ARTISTRY IS HIGHER"

At the 1991 Women's World Cup, your team employed the "Triple-Edged Sword" lineup with Carin Jennings and April Heinrichs in the wings and you in center. What made that formation so successful?

We were all very different kinds of players. Carin was an unorthodox and very successful 1v1 player with an uncanny ability to score, as well as pass and combine in small spaces. April was fast and direct in taking on players 1v1 and a solid finisher. And I was very good in the air, a good target player, and finisher. So, between the three of us, it was an impossible mix to mark up or defend against.

The 1990s turned out to be a phenomenal decade for women's soccer as you and Team USA clinched the 1991 and 1999 World Cups and won gold at the 1996 Olympics. Do you think the country as a whole grew to embrace the game because of the women's performance?

In part. Yes, the '96 Olympics were the first Olympics to include women's soccer and the fact that it was in the U.S. and we won Gold definitely brought a lot of attention to the team. And the '99 WC was also a huge boost for those same reasons. But the U.S. men's game also contributed to the growth. The '94 WC was hosted by the U.S. and that brought unprecedented attention and awareness as well. So, those years and the success of the events, as well as the United States >>

Women's National Team's victory, were huge to growing the game at home.

While American women have gone beyond expectations on the international stage, why do you think the men continue to remain hopelessly behind?

Culture in part. Around the world, soccer is a male-only or male-dominated sport. And in the U.S., the men's game wasn't given the same platform as other more prominent sports such as basketball, baseball, and American football. We are also a much bigger country and this presents a different challenge in developing players as compared to other smaller-sized countries. So, we lag behind historically and also have not yet figured out how to successfully develop our players within those conditions. Apply that to the women's side... culturally, women in the U.S. had more freedom to play soccer and sports in general compared to other women around the world, so we had more opportunity and support for development.

Professionally, you put in a few seasons with Tyreso FF, a Swedish club. Tell us about the experience of an American female playing a European game in Europe.

Tyreso FF was a D2 club wanting to be D1 and my challenge as a player developmentally was to become a game-changer/game-winner player, so it was a perfect fit. The coaches were the Swedish women's national team and youth team coaches and the experience was incredible for me. I loved Sweden. Loved the people. And I am forever grateful for the opportunity.

Are there any coaches you played under who really made a difference in terms of your own individual development, or a team's performance?

Anson Dorrance. Tony DiCicco. Anson laid out the vision for our USWNT to be the best in the world before there was much support or competition for the women's game internationally, or within US Soccer. He was also brilliant in choosing players who meshed together well and he provided individual and team insight, training philosophies, and team tactics/style of play to inspire and enable our success. Tony DiCicco did much of the same with more support, resources, and history behind us. But he had to do it within his own style and strengths as a coach while also going through similar, but also very different circumstances such as strikes, increased media attention, tougher schedule, and players with children.

What are some of your most cherished moments on the field?

Running fitness with my team, sitting on the field post game, stretching and cooling down. Moments in the locker room pregame and post-game. Walking out onto the field with the crowd cheering. Winning. Losing. They were all great.

In terms of talent and style of play, how do you see the game today compared to 30 years ago when you were out there?

It's the same and different. It's still soccer. The game is the game. But overall, the athletes, skill level and training equipment are at a higher level across the board which has elevated and highlighted the different styles of play and competitiveness between teams. It's a better game to watch. Execution and artistry is higher. More teams and more players perform and compete at a higher level. And every year it continues to develop, grow, and expand.

Equal pay on the field has been an issue in recent years, especially after the women's national team proved themselves again at the 2019 World Cup. What will it take to narrow the >>

Below: In action at one of the U.S. Women's National Team games.

ON EQUAL PAY: "WOMEN AND MEN MUST RECEIVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, RESOURCES, AND RESPECT OFF THE FIELD FOR IT TO HAPPEN ON THE FIELD"

MICHELLE AKERS
PROFILE OF A SOCCER STAR

BORN	Santa Clara, California February 1, 1966
COLLEGE	University of Central Florida 1985-1988
FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP	Gold 1991, 1999 Bronze 1995
OLYMPIC GAMES	Gold 1996
INTERNATIONAL CAREER STATISTICS	153 appearances 105 goals 36 assists
ACCOLADES	1988 Hermann Trophy 1991 Golden Shoe Award 2004 National Soccer Hall of Fame

Above: Running the ball at a friendly match against China at Giant Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

pay gap, especially at the FIFA level?

Two things. One, a cultural shift. Women and men must receive equal opportunity, resources, and respect off the field for it to happen on the field. Although, I also think the 'on the field' helps change mindsets 'off the field'. And two, time. Changing mindsets and culture takes time and a lot of individual courage to force change by stepping out of the box. It will take women supporting women, men supporting women, dads supporting daughters, brothers supporting daughters, etc. We still do not have it here in the U.S. So, for me, it is exciting to see other countries supporting their women and girls in ways that inspire more change here and put pressure on those who do not support equality.

What are you enjoying most at this stage in your life?

Being a mom and spending time with my horses and animals. And I am still working to step into my dream of living with and saving the wild mustangs on a thousand-acre property somewhere in the west. ●

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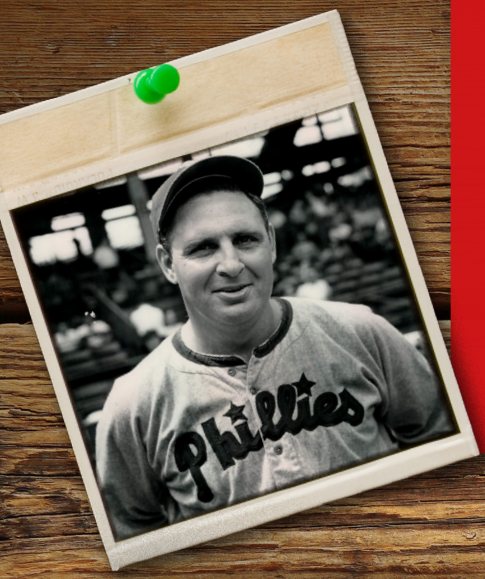
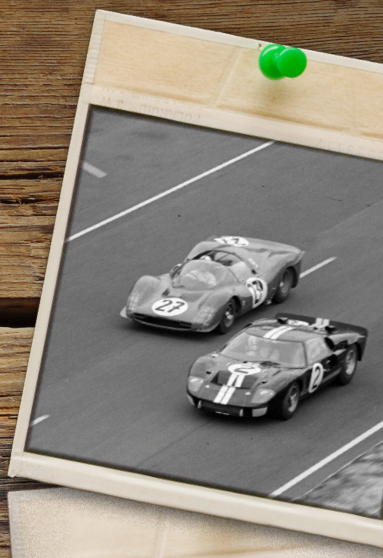


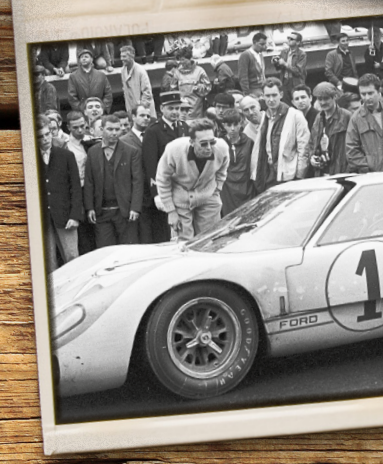
THE MOST BIGOTED MAN IN BASEBALL

Phillies manager Ben Champman hurled endless racial epithets from the bench



FORD TAKES ON FERRARI

His ego bruised, Henry Ford II takes revenge on the race track



THE WORLD'S BEST LOSER

Tea Magnate Thomas Lipton is honored for losing the America's Cup 5 times

LOOKING BACK WITH HALE IRWIN

The 3x U.S. Open champion recalls his playing days

FOR A TOUCHDOWN, OR FIELD GOAL, CALL GEORGE BLANDA

With a powerful arm and an accurate foot, Blanda played until he was 48 years old

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