

Important Events in the History of Women's Golf



Timeline -- Important Events in Women's Golf

From [Women Welcome Here!](#) by Nancy Berkley

- 1552 Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-87), an avid golfer, coins the term "caddie" by calling her assistants "cadets." It is during her reign that the famous golf course at St. Andrews is built.
- 1867 The Ladies Club of St. Andrew's, Scotland, is formed — the first ladies' golf club.
- 1891 The Shinnecock Hills Golf Club on Long Island opens its doors to women. Golf proved so popular that the club opened a 9-hole course for women two years later.
- 1894 The first ladies golf tournament in the U.S. is held on the 7-hole Morristown, N.J., course – which later becomes Morris County Golf Club.
- 1894 The Amateur Golf Association of the United States — soon to be called the United States Golf Association — is formed.
- 1895 The First U.S. Women's Amateur championship is held at the Meadow Brook Club in Hempstead, N.Y.
- 1916 The Professional Golfers' Association of America is founded.
- 1917 Women's Tournament Committee of the USGA is founded. In 1934 it becomes the Women's Committee of the USGA.
- 1932 The first Curtis Cup Match, between women amateur golfers of the USA and Great Britain and Ireland is won by the USA.
- 1934 Helen Hicks becomes one of the first women golfers to turn professional. There are no professional tournaments but she promotes products for Wilson-Western Sporting Goods Company.
- 1936 The National Golf Foundation is established to foster golf's growth and economic vitality.
- 1938 Patty Berg, twice a runner-up, wins the U.S. Women's Amateur at age twenty.
- 1941 Patty Berg Cup Defender "signature" clubs are introduced by Wilson Sporting Goods and become big sellers.
- 1944 The Women's Professional Golf Association (WPGA) is founded. It is replaced by the LPGA six years later.
- 1945 Babe Zaharias plays against the men in the PGA sponsored L.A. Open, making two of the first three cuts.
- 1946 The first U.S. Women's Open is conducted by the WPGA. Patty Berg wins.
- 1947 Babe Didrikson Zaharias is the first American to win the British Ladies' Open Amateur. She turns pro later in the year.
- 1949 Marlene Bauer, age fifteen, wins the first U.S. Girls' Junior Championship, and turns pro later in the year.
- 1950 The Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) is established with financial help from Wilson Sporting Goods. In its first season, the LPGA included 14 events worth \$50,000 in total prize money.
- 1952 The LPGA establishes the Vare Trophy awarded at the end of the season to the LPGA player with the lowest scoring average. Named after Glenna Collett Vare who in 1922 won the first of her record six U.S. Women's Amateur Championships.
- 1958 Patty Berg wins the Western Open, her 15th major championship, a record.

- 1959 LPGA members vote to establish the Teaching Division. In 1991, it becomes the LPGA Teaching and Club Professional Division.
- 1960 The first LPGA National Golf School staff is established under the guidance of Shirley Spork and Barbara Rotvig. In the mid 1960s, Ellen Griffin, an active member of the LPGA teaching school, becomes a member of the National Golf Foundation's "think tank" that gathers for week-long seminars to discuss promotion and teaching of the game.
- 1961 Louise Suggs defeats a field that included 10 men at the \$10,000 Palm Beach Par 3 Invitational.
- 1961 Mickey Wright and Barbara Romack defeat Arnold Palmer and Dow Finsterwald in a CBS Sports Spectacular on a par-3 course in Las Vegas, playing from the same tees.
- 1963 First nationally televised women's event – the U.S. Women's Open.
- 1964 Mickey Wright wins 11 tournaments on the LPGA tour.
- 1964 Alice Dye, the first woman invited into the American Society of Golf Course Architects, designs the first complete set of forward tees at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Ind.
- 1970 JoAnne Carner joins the Tour at the age of 30 after capturing the LPGA's Burdines Invitational as an amateur in 1969. "Big Momma," is still competing as the oldest player on the LPGA Tour.
- 1972 Congress passes Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activities receiving Federal financial assistance."
- 1972 The Colgate-Dinah Shore Winners Circle debuts on the LPGA Tour offering \$110,000 – the first six-figure purse in women's golf.
- 1973 Mickey Wright sets a record of total victories by capturing her 82nd win on the LPGA tour, the Colgate-Dinah Shore Championship.
- 1976 Judy Rankin, with \$150,734 in earnings, becomes the first LPGA Tour player to earn more than \$100,000 in a season.
- 1977 The PGA of America votes to accept female members.
- 1978 Nancy Lopez gives the LPGA Tour a boost by winning five tournaments in a row, and nine in all, during her first full season.
- 1981 Kathy Whitworth is the first woman golfer to top \$1 million in career earnings. She captures her 83rd LPGA tournament, breaking Mickey Wright's record of 82.
- 1985 Kathy Whitworth wins her 88th LPGA tournament, the all-time record for official victories for women and men.
- 1988 The first issue of *Golf For Women* magazine is published.
- 1989 The LPGA Urban Youth Golf Program and the LPGA Girls Golf Club are established under the guidance of Kerry Graham, LPGA Teaching Division President, and Sandy LaBauve, LPGA Golf Professional.
- 1990 Juli Inkster becomes the first woman to win the only professional golf tournament in the world in which women and men compete head to head. She wins the Invitational Pro-Am at Pebble Beach in a one-stroke victory.
- 1990 The Solheim Cup is introduced, pitting professional women golfers from the U.S. against those from Europe.
- 1991 The LPGA Foundation is established to support junior golf programs and scholarships for girls.
- 1991 The Executive Women's Golf Association (EWGA) is founded by Nancy Oliver in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., to promote golf among working women.
- 1991 The first *Women in Golf Summit* is held. Women leaders in the golf industry meet to discuss ways to increase women's participation in golf.
- 1992 The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is named the official charity of the LPGA in 1992, becoming the first national charity to partner with a professional golf association.

- 1996 Judy Bell becomes the first woman president of the United States Golf Association and serves two one-year terms.
- 1996 The *Rally For A Cure* organization is founded to raise money for breast cancer research through the promotion of women's golf events.
- 1997 LPGA Teaching and Club Professional Division exceeds 1,000 members
- 1998 LPGA establishes the first-ever sponsored television series in women's golf. The State Farm LPGA Series included television coverage of seven 1998 LPGA tournaments on ESPN and ESPN2 and offered a bonus pool of \$250,000 to players.
- 1999 Aree Wongluekiet becomes the youngest U.S. Girls' Junior Golf Champion at 13 years, 3 months, 7 days.
- 2000 Michelle Wie, 10, becomes the youngest player to qualify for a USGA women's amateur event when she qualifies for match play in the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship.
- 2001 After winning the McDonald's Championship, Karrie Webb became the fifth player in LPGA history to complete the Career Grand Slam, joining LPGA Tour Hall of Famers Louise Suggs, Mickey Wright, Pat Bradley and Juli Inkster.
- 2001 In the Battle of Bighorn, Annika Sorenstam and Karrie Webb team up with Tiger Woods and David Duval, respectively, for the Lincoln Financial Group prime-time television event – the first time a male-female pairing has been used for the event. Sorenstam and Woods defeat Webb and Duval on the 19th hole.
- 2002 At the Kraft Nabisco Championship State of the Tour Press Conference, LPGA Commissioner, Ty Votaw, announces the LPGA's five-year strategic plan centered on a Fans First philosophy. To better connect with fans, Tour players are asked to concentrate on Five Points of Celebrity: performance, approachability, appearance, joy, passion and relevance.
- 2002 Suzy Whaley, an LPGA and PGA professional, becomes the first woman to qualify for a PGA Tour event – the 2003 Greater Hartford Open.
- 2002 Golf 20/20 establishes a Diversity Task Force to focus on women in golf including their participation as an emerging fan base.
- 2003 Annika Sorenstam accepts a sponsor's exemption to play in the PGA Colonial Tournament. Although she does not make the cut, she draws record crowds and television viewers.
- 2003 Golf 20/20 establishes a pilot program, the National School Golf Program, to introduce golf in 160 elementary schools.
- 2003 Michelle Wie, age 13, becomes the youngest woman to win a USGA adult women's competition: the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship in Palm Coast, Fla.
- 2005 Paula Creamer, age 18, becomes the youngest woman to win an LPGA multiple-round tournament in LPGA history at Wykagyl CC near New York City in the LPGA Sybase Classic. (May 22, 2005)
- 2007 Morgan Pressel, age 18, becomes the youngest woman to win an LPGA *major* tournament at the Kraft Nabisco Championship at the Mission Hills Country Club – Dinah Shore Tournament Course, Rancho Mirage, California (April 1, 2007)

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