

## Arnold Palmer

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The sport of golf has produced many celebrities and none shine greater than Arnold Palmer. Timing is everything and Arnold's career coincided with the popularity of televised sports beginning in the 1950s. His handsome features and his willingness to play risky shots endeared him to the fans. Other golfers may have more trophies on the mantelpiece but the public show Arnold the most affection. Born in 1929 in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, Arnold was taught the game by his Father who was a professional at the Latrobe Country Club. Arnold showed he had talent from the age of seven. He attended University and did service with the United States Coast Guard.

It was in 1954 that he won the US Amateur tournament. This prompted Arnold Palmer to turn professional and he won the Canadian Open the next year. He never looked back, winning seven major competitions in his career. He won the Masters four times, the US Open once and the British Open Championship twice. The Open Championship in Britain had been something of a mission for Arnold Palmer to persuade other American golfers to participate. They were reluctant at first, given the difference in golf course design of the two countries, but Arnold won them round.

The most successful period in a long career was 1960-1963, when Arnold Palmer won twenty nine competitions on the PGA Tour over four seasons. He also captained the US Ryder Cup team to victory in 1963. The game began to be dominated by Jack Nicklaus from the late 1960s, and Arnold Palmer decided to go on the PGA Senior Tour, now known as the Champions Tour. He entered his final Masters in 2004. When he missed the cut the following year at the US Senior Open, he stated that he was quitting the Majors.

In addition to success on the golf course, other golf related activities have helped to keep Arnold Palmer involved in the sport. He continued his family connection to Latrobe Country Club by becoming the owner in 1971. He also helped to set up the Golf Channel, watched by eager fans throughout the world. Golf is a much more international game today than when Arnold Palmer was a young man, and many countries are keen to join in. Arnold was responsible for the deal to build the very first golf course in China.

A successful business has been built around golfing books and DVDs written and presented by Arnold Palmer. He ranks amongst the highest earners in the sport, because of contracts from advertisers and sponsors. He even started a trend for his favorite drink, which he says is a mixture of iced tea and lemonade. Arnold is a straight talker and the fans relate to his friendly approach. He had a successful operation for prostate cancer in 1997.