

World Golf Hall of Fame Media Conference

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

Susie Maxwell Berning

Induction Speech



SUSIE MAXWELL BERNING: Wow. I think I wouldn't be so nervous if I had a golf club in my hand.

Judy, thank you so much for introducing me tonight, but more importantly, for being my dear friend for over 50 years. And for you to win 26 tournaments and yet you fainted at my wedding, I don't understand that.

(Laughter.)

I thank you for sharing this great honor with me today. As well as my maid of honor, Leslie Holbrooke, is also here tonight and a Tour friend of ours. Thank you, Leslie, very much. I am honored.

(Applause.)

I'm honored and privileged to be selected into golf's elite class of accomplished athletes, people like Patty, Mickey, Judy, Kathy, Jack and Arnie, and so many others. It is the only Hall of Fame in sports which honors both men and women together. Not bad for a girl 5'2" from Oklahoma who really thought horses was going to be her future, not golf.

I want to thank the Hall of Fame committee and everyone who had a say in my induction. To all my Reserve Club members, Palm Springs friends, Scottsdale friends who made this trip here with me, thank you. You've made my life so meaningful and fun.

To my LPGA sisters who have guided and encouraged me throughout my years, to UC Ferguson, who helped me, convinced me to give up my horses and play golf. And as Judy said, Jim Flick was instrumental in helping me refine my swing and take my game to the next level.

But more importantly, my family. To my extended family, including my former husband Dale, your support over these years meant a lot to me. And to my mom and dad for allowing me to chase my dreams. To my brothers, Jerry, Bill, Roger, whose competitive spirits and tough brotherly love prepared me for this journey. Roger, thank you for being here. I only wish that Bill and Jerry could be with us,

but they're watching from above and beaming with pride as their little sister accepts this honor.

(Applause.)

Roger's influence always motivated me to be better and to achieve my own success. And I also wish to thank Roger's daughter Jennifer and her support for being here along with her three children, Addie, Julia, and Ryan.

To my most cherished and life's greatest accomplishments, my fifth and sixth major, my daughters Robin and Cindy.

(Applause.)

To have my girls here, along with their children, my grandchildren, Ian and Acacia, and Cindy's husband Nick, thank you so much. I love you all.

Everyone being here this week, bunking out in local hotels, reminded me of our days on Tour as a family. Cindy and Robin would travel with me from tournament to tournament in the summer, and as they each got older, they would caddie, one for me and one for another player on the LPGA Tour. At the same time, after a while, Robin became -- Robin and I became the first mother-daughter to compete in an LPGA tournament together, and that was in 1989 at the Konica.

I wish to congratulate my fellow inductees, Tim Finchem, Marion Hollins, and Tiger Woods on this very special occasion. We're all here enshrined together for sport's greatest honor.

Tiger, I know it's hard for you to believe, but as young as I am, I won all my tournaments before you were born.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

And by the way, Tiger, of my three U.S. Opens, the total winnings was \$16,000. (Laughter.) I was wondering if you'd like to swap checks (laughter). Perhaps, if not all, we could do one, right?



Oh, golf has been so good to me, and it's been an exciting ride. Golf hasn't done -- golf hasn't been as exciting as riding a horse. I thought that riding a horse was much more exciting.

What really convinced me to go into golf was watching Patty Berg give a clinic. And I know there are several other of us that played the Tour, we were motivated and inspired by watching Marilyn Smith give clinics and others. After watching Patty, I got hooked on golf.

And once on Tour, the support and adventures continued. Those of us who played, we were a big sisterhood. We were fierce competitors. On the course, we tried to beat each other's butt, but there was always never any love lost. Off the course, we took care of each other. We would eat, room, and travel together from town to town in caravans.

I always thought that having my own family on Tour was not just a blessing, but it was an advantage. No matter how the round went, I was mom first. My priorities were always to make sure their day went well and to spend time with them, to show and teach them that their goals are worth going after, that tough competition can happen in a loving environment.

When playing, I respected everyone. I feared no one. But tonight I am humbled, thankful, and extremely blessed. Thank you for this wonderful great honor in my professional life. Thank you.

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