

# Introduction

*Notable Sports Figures* provides narrative biographical profiles of more than 600 individuals who have made significant contributions to their sport and to society. It covers sports figures from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries who represent a wide variety of sports and countries. Lesser-known sports such as cricket, equestrian, and snowboarding are featured alongside sports like baseball, basketball, and football. *Notable Sports Figures* includes not only athletes, but also coaches, team executives, and media figures such as sportscasters and writers.

*Notable Sports Figures* takes a close look at the people in sports who have captured attention because of success *on* the playing field or controversy *off* the playing field. It provides biographical coverage of people from around the world and throughout history who have had an impact not only on their sport, but also on the society and culture of their times. Each biography features information on the entrant's family life, early involvement in sports, career highlights, championships, and awards. *Notable Sports Figures* also examines the impact that the subject had and continues to have on his or her sport, and the reasons why the individual is "notable." This includes consideration of the successes and failures, on the field and off, that keep the person in the public eye.

The biographies in *Notable Sports Figures* profile a broad variety of individuals. Athletes such as **Babe Ruth**, **Michael Jordan**, and **Martina Navratilova** are featured for their record-breaking accomplishments. **Jackie Robinson** and **Janet Guthrie** remain in the public consciousness because of their determination to cross racial and gender boundaries. Other sports figures have captured our attention by their controversial activities. Skater **Tonya Harding** continues to hold public interest not because of any medals won, but because of the scandalous attack on **Nancy Kerrigan**. Baseball player "**Shoeless**" **Joe Jackson** was one of the greatest players of his era, but he is remembered more for his complicity in the "**Black Sox**" scandal of 1919 than for his accomplishments on the field. Their lives, accomplishments, and reasons for the public's ongoing fascination with them are examined in *Notable Sports Figures*.

## SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

A preliminary list of athletes, team executives, sportswriters, broadcasters, and other sports figures was compiled from a wide variety of sources, including Hall of Fame lists, periodical articles, and other biographical collections. The list was reviewed by an advisory board, and final selection was made by the editor. An effort was made to include athletes of varying nationalities, ethnicities, and fields of sport as well as those who have contributed to the success of a sport or team in general. Selection criteria include:

- Notable "first" achievements, including those who broke racial or gender barriers and paved the way for others
- Impact made on the individual's sport and on society as a whole
- Records set and broken
- Involvement in controversial or newsworthy activities on and off the playing field

## FEATURES OF THIS PRODUCT

For easy access, entries are arranged alphabetically according to the entrant's last name.

- **Timeline**—includes significant events in the world of sports, from historic times to the present.
- **Entry head**—lists basic information on each sports figure, including name, birth and death years, nationality, and occupation/sport played.
- **Biographical essay**—offers 1,000 to 2,500 words on the person's life, career highlights, and the impact that the individual had and continues to have on his or her sport and on society. Bold-faced names within entries indicate an entry on that person.
- **Photos**—provide a portrait for many of the individuals profiled. Several essays also include an action photo.
- **Sidebars**—present a chronology of key events in the entrant's life, a list of major awards and accomplishments, and, as applicable, career statistics, brief biographies of important individuals in the en-

trant's life, "where is s/he now" information on previously popular sports figures, and excerpts from books and periodicals of significant events in the entrant's life and career.

- **Contact Information**—offers addresses, phone numbers, and web sites for selected living entrants.
- **Selected Writings**—lists books and publications written or edited by the entrant.
- **Further Information**—provides a list of resources the reader may access to seek additional information on the sports figure.
- **Appendix**—offers a glossary of commonly used sports abbreviations.

- **Indices**—allow the reader to access the entrants by nationality or sport. A general subject index with cross-references offers additional access.

*We Welcome Your Suggestions.* Mail your comments and suggestions for enhancing and improving *Notable Sports Figures* to:

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