

# BILLIE JEAN KING

## *Visionary. Innovator. Champion.*

Born: November 22, 1943  
Birthplace: Long Beach, Calif.  
Residence: New York, N.Y.

As one of the 20th century's most respected and influential people, Billie Jean King has long been a champion for social justice and equality. She created new inroads for both genders in and out of sports during her legendary career and she continues to make her mark today. Among her many accomplishments are:

- On August 12, 2009, King was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. The first female athlete to be honored with the Medal of Freedom, King was presented the award by President Obama in ceremonies at The White House.
- Named one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" by Life Magazine in 1990.
- Won 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles and mixed doubles tennis titles, including a record 20 titles at Wimbledon.
- In 2008 King authored *Pressure is a Privilege: Lessons I've Learned from Life and the Battle of the Sexes* to commemorate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her historic 1973 match against Bobby Riggs.
- Was one of nine players who broke away from the tennis establishment and accepted \$1 contracts from tennis promoter Gladys Heldman in Houston. The revolt led to the birth of women's professional tennis and the formation of the Virginia Slims Tour and Women's Tennis Association.
- Empowered women and educated men when she defeated Bobby Riggs in one of the greatest moments in sports history – the Battle of the Sexes in 1973. This match is remembered for its effect on society and its contribution to the women's movement.
- Founded the Women's Tennis Association (1973), the Women's Sports Foundation (1974), Women's Sports Magazine (1974) and co-founded GreenSlam, an environmental initiative for the sports industry (2007).
- Co-founded World TeamTennis (1974), the groundbreaking co-ed professional tennis league and founded the World TeamTennis Recreational League, one of the most popular recreational tennis formats in the U.S.
- Named Global Mentor for Gender Equality by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2008, received the NCAA President's Gerald R. Ford Award in 2009, honored with Major League Baseball's Beacon of Change Award in 2010 and appointed to the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition in 2010.
- Continues to be a leader in the fight for equality and recognition in the GLBT community, and has been honored by many of the leading GLBT organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign, GLAAD and Lambda Legal Foundation.
- Honored on August 28, 2006, when the National Tennis Center, home of the U. S. Open, was renamed the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in honor of King's contributions to tennis, sports and society both on and off the court. She continues to be involved with the USTA and is currently Honorary Chair of the Tennis in the Parks Committee.
- Currently serves on the boards of the Women's Sports Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation.