

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (Dec. 9 2020) – The United States Golf Association (USGA) today launched “Women Worth Watching,” a long-term commitment to use its championships and platforms to celebrate female athletes and role models while promoting equality and diversity in sports and society.

Launched in coordination with SheIS Sport, the USGA’s Women Worth Watching efforts will come to life immediately through the 75th U.S. Women’s Open at Champions Golf Club in Houston, Texas, the final major championship of 2020. Fans around the world will see content across NBCUniversal and USGA channels spotlighting extraordinary women, including four extraordinary females from the host city. The campaign will also highlight equality issues facing the sports world, including women’s sports in the United States receiving only 4 percent of all sports media coverage.

“Starting in 1895 with the first U.S. Women’s Amateur Championship to today as we get ready to celebrate the 75th playing of the U.S. Women’s Open, supporting females has always been a pillar of the USGA,” says Craig Annis, USGA chief brand officer. “Women Worth Watching gives our organization a new platform to not only celebrate the exceptional talents of female athletes in 2020, but also make strides to improve equality in sports far into the future.”

During championship week, the USGA will host a virtual roundtable discussion examining how to elevate women’s sports. The roundtable will feature some of the most influential females from both inside and outside the golf industry, including Cathy Engelbert, commissioner of the WNBA; Erika Nardini, CEO of Barstool Sports; and Molly Solomon, executive producer of Golf Channel.

Fans will also see some of their favorite U.S. Open and U.S. Women’s Open champions, celebrities and prominent media members wearing Women Worth Watching apparel to support the campaign. A Women Worth Watching landing page at usga.org/womenworthwatching will serve as a central hub for information about the initiative, including videos and stories about the USGA’s longtime commitment to women’s golf. Those who will lend their voices and platforms to the initiative include USGA champions such as Michelle Wie West, Annika Sorenstam, Gary Player and Bryson DeChambeau, as well as prominent athletes such as Sue Bird, Carmelo Anthony and Russell Wilson.

Wie West, the 2014 U.S. Women’s Open champion, will serve as a Women Worth Watching ambassador. Wie West participated in the first Women Worth Watching commercial that ran on NBCUniversal in September during the 2020 U.S. Open at Winged Foot Golf Club, which was won by DeChambeau.

“The USGA has always been a proud supporter of women’s golf, which makes my U.S. Women’s Open victory that much more special,” said Wie West. “Women Worth Watching is the next step in their continued promise to amplify the women’s game and its champions, and I’m honored to be a part of an initiative that will create a better world for females, including my daughter, Makenna.”

As part of the USGA’s commitment to give back to local championship communities, Women Worth Watching will share its spotlight in 2020 with four incredibly talented local Houston women who embody the initiative:

- Ashley Yen is a 2020 USGA-American Junior Golf Association Presidents’ Leadership Award recipient. At age 17, Yen has already accomplished significant results on and off the golf course, including starting a nonprofit, Kits 2 Kids, that has distributed over 1,000 STEM kits to organizations in the greater Houston area. Yen also volunteers with The First Tee of Greater Houston as a junior coach and mentor.
- Shea Groom is a player for the National Women’s Soccer League’s Houston Dash. The Dash midfielder, a native of Liberty, Mo., is known for her tenacious playing style and signature “Air Groom” header that has made her one of the league’s top players.
- Jessica Meir (Ph.D.) is a NASA astronaut based at NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston. A true ceiling breaker, Meir completed the first all-female spacewalk in 2019 and was named one of Time Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People of 2020.
- Dr. Roberta Schwartz is the executive vice president and chief innovation officer of Houston Methodist Hospital in the Texas Medical Center. Schwartz, a breast cancer survivor, is responsible for advancing and expanding Houston Methodist’s digital innovation platforms, including telemedicine, artificial intelligence and big data.

The U.S. Women's Open will employ its national and international broadcast platform to feature a vignette introducing the world to these phenomenal Houston-based women.

The USGA conducts seven women's championships annually, including the U.S. Women's Open, which is widely considered the world's premier female golf championship. The championship began in 1946 and its winners include Babe Didrikson Zaharias, Betsy Rawls, Mickey Wright, Hollis Stacy, Amy Alcott, Meg Mallon, Annika Sorenstam, Se Ri Pak, Juli Inkster, Cristie Kerr, Paula Creamer, Inbee Park and Michelle Wie West.

With the support of its Membership Program and the USGA Foundation, the USGA funds the next generation of female golfers through LPGA*USGA Girls Golf. In collaboration with the LPGA Foundation, the organization provide girls with quality golf instruction led by LPGA and PGA teaching professionals or certified coaches from The First Tee.

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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