



## KANSAS LEGEND BIOGRAPHY

### Tom Watson (1949-present)

Tom Watson is one of Kansas City's favorite hometown athletes. He was considered one of the best golfers of his time and won eight major championships over an eight-year span. Watson often went toe to toe with Jack Nicklaus, a golfing legend, and was tough enough to come away from several of the match-ups victorious.



Watson was born Thomas Sturges Watson in Kansas City, Mo., and earned prominence while golfing at Pembroke Country-Day High School. He attended Stanford University, majoring in psychology and playing on the university golf team. In 1971, after graduation, Watson turned pro but earned a reputation for being unable to win in the end. Watson began working with Bryon Nelson in an effort to improve his game, and in 1974, Watson won his first PGA championship.

The following year, Watson won the Bryon Nelson Classic, as well as his first major championship, the British Open. Watson continued to play well and was considered the most likely candidate to beat Jack Nicklaus, the leading golfer at the time. Watson won his first U.S. Masters in 1977 and proceeded to beat Nicklaus by one shot in the 1977 British Open in one of the best games of golf the sport has seen.



In 1982, Watson met Nicklaus in the U.S. Open championship at Pebble Beach. On the 17<sup>th</sup> hole, Watson hit what may have been the most memorable shot of his career, chipping a difficult shot downhill from the rough for a birdie, edging Nicklaus out by two shots to win the title. Coincidentally, Nicklaus finished second in four of Watson's eight major championship wins.

Over the course of Watson's career, he would win the British Open five times, the Masters twice, and the U.S. Open once. He led the PGA Tour in wins six years, in money five years, and in scoring three years. He was PGA Tour Player of the Year six times. In 1987, Watson was awarded the Bob Jones award in recognition of distinguished sportsmanship in golf and inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1988.

Watson joined the Champions Tour in 1999 and has since earned eight victories, including four Senior majors. He is one of just four Americans to become an honorary member of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews in the United Kingdom.



Outside of golf, Watson is married with two children and three stepchildren. He currently resides in Stillwell, Kan. He has also donated a great deal of time and money to finding a cure for ALS in honor of his longtime caddy, Bruce Edwards. Edwards passed away from the disease in 2003, which prompted Watson to co-found Driving 4 Life, an organization committed to fundraising for ALS research through the game of golf. Watson also designed the golf course for the National Golf Club of Kansas City.

