

## SPORTING LEGENDS: SEVE BALLESTEROS

**SPORT: GOLF**

**COMPETITIVE ERA: 1974 - 2008**

Severiano "Seve" Ballesteros (born 9 April 1957 in Pedreña, Spain) is a Spanish golfer who was one of the sport's leading figures in the 1980s and 1990s.



Ballesteros turned professional in March 1974 at the age of 16. In 1976, he burst onto the international scene with a second-place finish in The Open Championship; he went on to win the European Tour Order of Merit (money title) that year, and repeated his Order of Merit win the following two years. He would go on to win the Order of Merit six times, a record at that time (since surpassed by Colin Montgomerie).

Ballesteros went on to win five major championships:

The Masters: 1980, 1983

His 1980 win was the first at Augusta by a European player.

The Open Championship: 1979, 1984, 1988.

He was also a great at match play; he won the World Match Play Championship five times, and was a mainstay of the European Ryder Cup team for much of the 1980s and 1990s. He scored 20 points out of 37 matches against the United States; his partnership with José María Olazábal was one of the most successful in the history of the competition, with 11 wins and two halved matches out of 15 pairs matches.

While Ballesteros was a member of European sides that won the Ryder Cup in 1985, retained the Cup in 1987 and 1989, and regained the Cup in 1995, the pinnacle of his career in the competition came in 1997, when he captained the winning European side at Valderrama Golf Club in Sotogrande, Spain. This was the first Ryder Cup ever held in continental Europe.

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Ballesteros loved a good battle on the golf course!

### European Tour Wins

1976	Dutch Open, Lancome Trophy
1977	Open de France, Uniroyal International Championship, Swiss Open
1978	Martini International, German Open, Scandinavian Open, Swiss Open
1979	The Open Championship, Lada English Golf Classic
1980	Madrid Open, Martini International, Dutch Open
1981	Scandinavian Enterprise Open, Benson and Hedges Spanish Open
1982	Cespa Madrid Open, Paco Rabanne Open de France
1983	Sun Alliance PGA Championship, Carroll's Irish Open, Lancome Trophy
1984	The Open Championship
1985	Carroll's Irish Open Peugeot Open de France, Sanyo Open, Spanish Open
1986	British Masters, Carroll's Irish Open, Monte Carlo Open, KLM Dutch Open
1987	Suze Open
1988	The Open Championship, Scandinavian Enterprise Open, German Open
1989	Madrid Open, Grand Prix of Europe Matchplay Championship
1990	Open Renault de Baleares
1991	Dunhill British Masters, Volvo PGA Championship
1992	Dubai Desert Classic, Turespana Open de Baleares
1994	Benson and Hedges International Open, Mercedes German Masters
1995	Peugeot Spanish Open

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Seve was excellent playing out of the sand; yet another part of his excellent short-game.

### Team Appearances

Ryder Cup: 1979, 1983, 1985 (winners), 1987 (winners), 1989 (tied, cup retained), 1991, 1993, 1995 (winners), 1997 (winners - non-playing captain)

Alfred Dunhill Cup: 1985, 1986, 1988

World Cup of Golf: 1975, 1976, 1977, 1991

Hennessy Cognac Cup: 1976, 1978, 1980

Double Diamond: 1975, 1976, 1977

The Seve Trophy: 2000, 2002, 2003.

In 2000, he created The Seve Trophy, a team competition similar to the Ryder Cup pitting a team from Great Britain and Ireland against one from continental Europe.

Ballesteros has not played competitively since October 2003 due to back problems, and is currently recovering from life-threatening brain surgery, which he underwent in 2007.

Away from competition, he runs a thriving golf course design business, and is married with three children.

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### Scott Burton's Final Thought

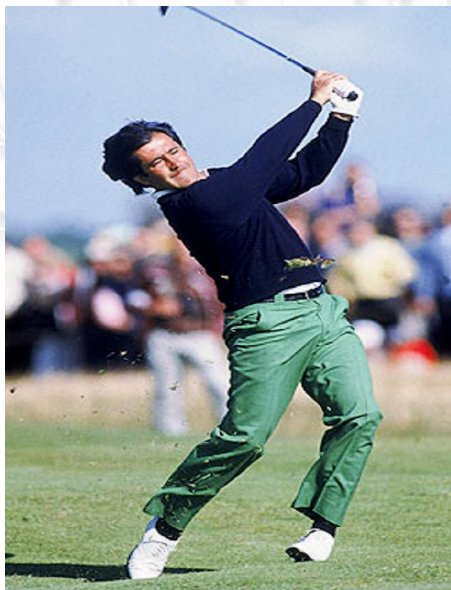
Seve Ballesteros has won virtually every golfing accolade available within professional golf, both as a player and as a non-playing Ryder Cup captain.

A very warm and likeable character, Seve always played fair and possessed a natural attacking style of golf play.

His rise to prominence during the 1970s and 1980s made for some great tournaments, especially his epic duels with the likes of Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson and Nick Faldo.

Ever the perfectionist, Seve battled hard to retain his form during the 1990s, despite suffering from increasingly-painful back problems. His playing form may have dipped, but his leadership and man-management skills were truly magnificent during his Ryder Cup captaincy tenures.

He knew how to motivate and inspire his team, leading them to greater performances each time. Even through his battles with serious illness in recent times, Seve has proved what a fighter he is, gaining more respect from all those around him. He has certainly earned the title of being a true Sporting Legend.



Seve could hitō and hit hardō !