

**The association is proud to recognize and induct
Charley Boswell
into its inaugural 2007 class of the Hall of Fame**



Charley Boswell was born on December 22, 1916, in Birmingham, Alabama. An excellent “three letter man” athlete at Ensley High School, Charley was a 1940 graduate of the University of Alabama where he played football, a halfback, for three years. He had planned on a professional baseball career following college, but before that career could get started, he was drafted in the spring of 1941. On November 30, 1944, while assisting a wounded soldier to escape a burning tank they were in, he sustained a blinding battlefield injury.

Charley underwent numerous surgeries in Europe. Efforts to save his sight were not successful. He was then sent to Valley Forge General Hospital, the Army’s center specializing in eye injuries and rehabilitation of sight impaired soldiers. It was there that Corporal Kenny Gleason, Charley’s rehab specialist, introduced him to golf. Charley had never played golf, but Kenny drew on Charley’s athletic and competitive background and found the outlet that would ultimately define Charley’s life. After his first round, Charley was smitten with the game.

Charley went on to play competitively in the United States Blind Golf Association tournaments, beginning in 1948 in Inglewood, California where he finished second to Clint Russell. It was at that event that he met and first played golf with Bob Hope. They established a life-long friendship and a relationship that raised millions of dollars for eye related causes. Charley ultimately won 17 US and 11 International championships. He served as president of the USBGA from 1956 to 1976.

Charley had several coaches over the years, beginning with Grant Thomas. Grant was a high school buddy and a good golfer in his own right. He was most helpful not only as a coach, but also helping Charley with his swing after he returned from Valley Forge. Grant coached Charley into the early ‘50’s before Bo Russell took over when Charley traveled to compete in the USBGA tournaments. Another coach, E.T. Walker traveled with Charley to the Canadian events. Bill Moguee was another coach who played and practiced with Charley in Birmingham.

Charley won the only tournament in which Bill coached him. It was held at the Highland Park GC that would later bear Charley's name.

Charley had a passion for sight preservation activities and used golf to support eye related causes. Beginning in 1974 and continuing through 1988, Charley hosted the Charley Boswell Celebrity Classic, supporting Birmingham's Eye Foundation Hospital. The honorary chairman of the tournament, and annual participant, was Bob Hope. Over the 15 years of the event, \$1,200,000 was given to the hospital. Charley was Chairman of the Helen Keller Foundation for Research and Education from 1990 to 1995. And, in 1982, the Veterans Administration's Charley Boswell Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center in Birmingham was dedicated.

Off the golf course, Charley ran a successful independent insurance agency from 1954 until his death. In addition, he was appointed Alabama Commissioner of Revenue from 1971 to 1979. Among the numerous awards and honors he received are the Tuss McLaughry Award, given by the College Football Coaches Association in 1993; Alabama Academy of Honor, 1983; Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, 1972; President's Distinguished Service Award, 1971; Ben Hogan Award, Golf Writers Association of America, 1958; Most Courageous Athlete of the Year, Philadelphia Sports Writers Association, 1957.

Charley married Kitty Lacy in 1941 and they raised three children—daughter Kay McCarty and sons Chuck and Steve. He had seven grandchildren. Charley passed away on October 22, 1995. Throughout his life, he always was looking to the future with optimism. He often said that for him, blindness was not a handicap, just an inconvenience.