

Golf Legend Arnold Palmer Dies at 87

Golfing great Arnold Palmer, one of the most popular PGA players of all time who was elected to the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1974, died Sunday in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the age of 87.

A seven-time PGA major champion, Palmer's immense popularity drew a legion of fans known as "Arnie's Army" and helped propel the game just as television was coming of age.

"We are deeply saddened by the death of Arnold Palmer, golf's greatest ambassador, at age 87," the USGA said on Twitter.

Nicknamed "The King," Palmer retired from the PGA Tour in 2006 with 62 victories, fifth on the all-time list. He won his first major championship, The Masters, in 1958, and proceeded to that prestigious tournament three other times—in 1960, 1962 and 1964. He won his only U.S. Open championship in 1960, and The Open championship in 1961 and 1962. He won PGA Player of the Year twice (1960 and 1962) and was the PGA Tour's leading money winner four times.

Palmer helped change the perception of golf as an elite, upper-class pastime to a more democratic sport accessible to middle and working classes.

Palmer received the President Medal of Freedom in 2004 from President George Bush, and was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2009.

Palmer's death comes on the heels of the death of another popular sports figure Sunday. Miami Marlins pitcher Jose Fernandez, who was only 24, died in a boating accident early Sunday morning. {eoa}