

# Charlie Sifford

June 1922 – February 2014

Charlie Sifford in February 1984.  
Cover of African American Golfer's  
Digest – Winter, 2004.

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Charlie Sifford, the first African-American to play on the PGA Tour, died on Feb. 3 at the age of 92 in Warrensville, Ohio.

Through patience, tolerance and hard work, he broke pro golf's color barrier in 1961. He won two PGA tour events – the 1967 Greater Hartford Open and the 1969 Los Angeles Open – and 19 other tournaments, including the Senior PGA Championship in 1975. He won the National Negro Open six times before joining the PGA Tour. He was an original member of the Champions Tour. He was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2004, the first black golfer to be so honored, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2014.

Inspired by Jackie Robinson, Sifford told the baseball pro that he was going to follow in his footsteps. "If you try hard enough, anything can happen," Sifford said.

Sifford endured plenty of racial insults along the way. Through it all he focused on golf, breaking barriers by breaking par. Tiger Woods and other African American golfers have often spoke of Sifford's journey and what it meant to them.

He will always be remembered as one of the greats of the game.

*"Man, I'm in the Hall of Fame, the World Hall of Fame. Don't forget that now! I'm in the World Hall of Fame with all the players. That little old golf I played was all right, wasn't it?"*

Charlie Sifford  
Speech during induction ceremony  
at the World Golf Hall of Fame

