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Groundbreaking Tennis Champion Remembered

Althea Gibson broke tennis' color barrier

(AP) — Althea Gibson was an intensely private person whose public triumphs and commitment to helping others left an indelible mark on generations of athletes.

Gibson broke tennis' color barrier in the 1950s as the first black entrant and champion at Wimbledon and the U.S. national tournament. She died Sunday. She was 76.

Gibson, also the first black player on the LPGA Tour, helped pave the way for later stars such as Arthur Ashe, Venus and Serena Williams, and Tiger Woods.

"I am grateful to Althea Gibson for having the strength and courage to break through the racial barriers in tennis," Venus Williams said. "Her accomplishments set the stage for my success and through players like myself, Serena, and many others to come, her legacy will live on."

President Bush issued a statement Monday praising Gibson's spirit, determination, and skill.

"In breaking the racial barrier in championship tennis, she furthered America's progress in recognizing individuals for their character and abilities, not their skin color," he said.

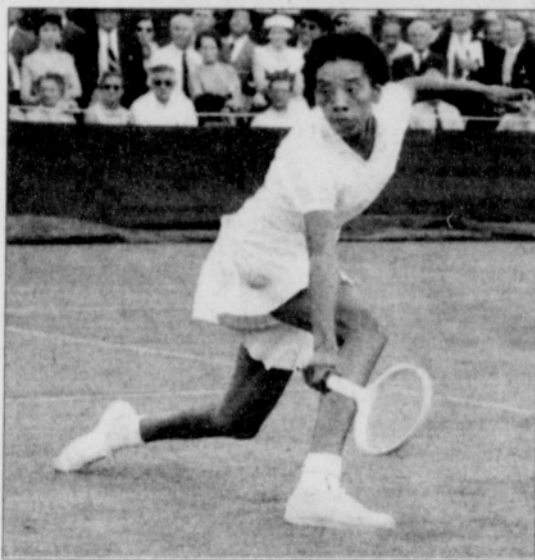
Gibson, seriously ill for several years, died of complications from a severe infection and respiratory illness.

"Her contribution to the civil rights movement was done with her tennis racket," said Fran Gray, a longtime friend who co-founded the Althea Gibson Foundation that helps urban youths learn to play tennis and golf.

"Althea came up in a hard time. Segregation was no easy thing. It was a feat that she accomplished under really devastating and debilitating odds because she wasn't wanted."

The 5-foot-11 Gibson used an attacking serve-and-volley style to dominate women's tennis from 1956-58, winning 11 Grand Slam titles: five in singles, five in doubles, one in mixed doubles.

"Who could have imagined? Who could have thought?" Gibson said in 1988 as she presented her



Althea Gibson returns to Germany's Edda Buding in the first round of Wimbledon in 1956. Gibson, who broke the color barrier in tennis as the first black to win Wimbledon and the U.S. national title, died Sunday. She was 76. (AP photo)

Wimbledon trophies to the Smithsonian Institution.

"Here stands before you a Negro woman, raised in Harlem, who went on to become a tennis player ... in fact, the first black woman champion of this world."

In 1950, three years after Jackie Robinson integrated baseball with the Brooklyn Dodgers, Gibson became the first black player to compete in the national tennis championship - the precursor to the U.S.

Open. She went to Wimbledon in 1951.

Her first major singles title came in the 1956 French Open, and she won both Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in 1957-58.

Recently, Gibson and Gray collaborated on a book, "Born to Win: The Althea Gibson Story," due out next year.

In recent years, Gibson had two cerebral aneurysms and a stroke, and she struggled financially.

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Agassi to Star in Rose Garden Tourney

Tennis legend Andre Agassi is confirmed for the inaugural Superset Tennis event on Nov. 22 at the Rose Garden arena. The event will feature eight of the top men's tennis players in the world battling for a winner takes all prize of a quarter of a million dollars, the largest per set purse in tennis. Agassi has amassed 58 singles titles and sports a record of 782-239 over his career.

"Superset Tennis is an innovative and

exciting event that will help bring tennis into the 21st Century," said Agassi.

The new tennis format will pit eight players against each other in one set, sudden death, elimination contests in one day, for the largest per set prize in tennis.

Tickets are on sale now at the Rose Quarter Ticket Office, online at www.rosequarter.com or www.ticketmaster.com or by calling 503-963-4400.

Dudley Announces Retirement

Blazer center ends 16-year NBA career



Chris Dudley

Chris Dudley, a consistently productive center with over 16 years of NBA experience, announced his retirement Tuesday. An active member of the community, Dudley was among the league's elite honored for his work both on the court and with his charitable efforts.

"Chris Dudley epitomizes everything an NBA player should be. He worked extremely hard. He shared his gift of being a pro basketball player with children in the community and did tremendous work with pediatric diabetes," said Houston

Rockets Head Coach Jeff Van Gundy. "In my time in the NBA, there's no better role model for children than Chris Dudley, who persevered over all odds to have an outstanding NBA career."

Dudley finishes his career with 3,473 points and 5,457 rebounds. He is tied for the Blazers team record for single season offensive rebounds with 325 during the 1994-95 season.

Diagnosed at age 16 with Type 1 diabetes, Dudley overcame the odds to become a professional athlete. He started The Dudley Foundation in 1994 and designed a basketball camp for youth with juvenile diabetes that has operated in Vernonia for the past eight years.

Baseball Wife to Address Addiction



Charisse Strawberry

Charisse Strawberry, wife of former Yankee baseball player Darryl Strawberry, will be the keynote speaker at Union Gospel Mission's fall fundraising banquet on Saturday, Oct. 4.

Strawberry will speak about the heartaches and healing she has experienced as she stood by her husband throughout his very public battle with addiction. The fundraising banquet will benefit LifeChange, an innovative, long-term addiction recovery program of Union Gospel Mission. For reservations, call 503-274-4483.

Ducks Rebound with Huge Loss

(AP) — Washington State quickly made Oregon's recent success look like a fluke.

Matt Kegel threw for three touchdowns and steadily guided the No. 21 Cougars, who took advantage of seven-first half turnovers to beat

the 10th-ranked Ducks 55-16 Saturday.

Oregon (4-1, 1-1 Pacific-10) grabbed national attention with a 31-27 upset of No. 3 Michigan on Sept. 20, but was done in by its own mistakes.



Volleyball Ace Scores Honor

Portland native Elizabeth Bishop earned Most Valuable Player honors at the Albany Challenge volleyball tournament in Ithaca, N.Y. Bishop is a freshman inside hitter with Cornell's volleyball squad.

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