

Collector's Edition

real SPORTS e-Zine

The Authority in Women's Sports™

6th Annual Athlete of the Year and Most Important Moments In Sports



This year's Athlete of the Year is one you may never have heard of – but her accomplishments were outstanding.

This year's Number One Most Important Moment in Sports is for off-the-field realities that can translate to greater on-the-field possibilities.

6th Annual Most Important Moments in Sports

Keeping Women's Sports in Focus

Best Athlete of 2006

Lorena Ochoa establishes her place
on the LPGA Tour.

3

Most Important Moments in Sports

2006 echoed years gone by when
little focus and attention were paid
to the success of women athletes.

But have no fear since we have
the athletes in focus.

4 - 6

Join the Team

Team REAL SPORTS

7

Best Athlete of 2006

Establishing Clarity



In a professional tour from which just a handful of athletes roll off the tongue of the American public, such as Nancy Lopez, Annika Sorenstam and Michelle Wie, this year's selection of REAL SPORTS Athlete of the Year goes to Lorena Ochoa, who chipped out of obscurity to command focus and attention in 2006.

The 26-year-old, who turned pro in 2003 after a stellar, but short, collegiate career, earned this year's Rolex Player of the Year honors for the LPGA. During her two-year collegiate career at the University of Arizona, she finished each of her events within 3 shots of the lead and won 12 events.

Ochoa, a native of Guadalajara, Mexico, finished the year atop the Tour's money list with \$2,592,872 and first in points with 337. Karrie Webb finished second behind her in both statistics with \$2,090,113 and 262 points respectively.

Athlete of the Year and Most Important Moments in Sports selections are determined by REAL SPORTS Editorial Board.

Most Important Moments in Sports

#1 MOTHERHOOD ANNOUNCEMENTS BUILD VISIBILITY

Julie Foudy has traded in her cleats for more than just a contract extension with ESPN through 2009. Both she and former #1-ranked WTA star Lindsay Davenport are expecting their first child in 2007. Much has been said about the balance women must achieve between motherhood and other endeavors, whether it be from an athletic competitor or business leader perspective – realities are driving leagues, graduate programs and employers to find ways to support women's pursuits to succeed on all levels.

#2 WNBA CELEBRATES 10th ANNIVERSARY

Ten years is a significant milestone whether it be in a relationship or a business. The WNBA's ten-year Anniversary, which was kicked off in June 2006 as part of a season-long celebration, owes David Stern a big thank you for his unwavering support of the league. After the collapse of the ABL, fans from those markets were slow to release their grudge against the powerhouse of sports. However, Stern's and his leaders', including Val Ackerman, commitment of time and money enabled a new fan base to develop so these fans would have no knowledge of a time when professional women's basketball did not exist.

#3 MARYLAND'S BELIEF, Stuns Duke 78 – 75 in OT

In what many believe was the most exciting women's national championship game ever, the youth of Maryland stunned the experience of Duke by believing no deficit was too large to overcome. The Terrapins, trailing by thirteen points in the second half, mounted a comeback to take the game to overtime. Kristi Toliver's three-pointer at the end of regulation enabled Maryland to overcome the second-largest deficit in the history of the title game; her two free throws with 35 seconds left in overtime secured the victory.

#4 WTA – MAKING A RACQUET ALL YEAR LONG

Arguably the WTA offered the most exciting events in women's sports from start to finish in 2006 and the fans of tennis were rewarded for their loyalty. Martina Hingis came back from a three-year layoff to end the year ranked #7, and Justine Henin-Hardenne and Kim Clijsters both reclaimed

the #1 position during the year. Clijsters became the first pro tennis player in history to make it to #1 while being ranked outside the Top 100 in the span of one year. Fellow Belgian Hardenne reached all four Grand Slam singles finals. The end of year Sony Ericsson Championships brought a three-way battle between Henin-Hardenne, Amelie Mauresmo, who shed the title “Greatest Player Never to have a Major” by winning the Australian Open, and Maria Sharapova, who took the U.S. Open. At year’s end, Henin-Hardenne was in possession of the top spot.

#5 LPGA – YOUTHFUL ORIENTATION

This was to be the year Michelle Wie made her mark, but instead it was less-heralded youths and names unbeknownst to the astute fan who saw their skills rewarded with success on the links. Lorena Ochoa, REAL SPORTS 2006 Athlete of the Year, not only led the tour with total money earned and total points, but also finished atop the following statistical categories: Eagles (15), Birdies (395), Greens in Regulation (.755), Scoring Average (69.236), and tied for first in Top 10 Finishes per Number of Events Played Percentage (20/25 = .800)

#6 WNBA CHAMPIONSHIP TAKES BEST OF 5

Coach Bill Laimbeer lamented his team often for its lack of focus during the up and down Championship series, but in the end, Deanna Nolan scored a game-high 24 points to lead the Shock to victory over the Sacramento Monarchs. Nolan was awarded MVP of the series for her efforts. The series also saw fan favorite Katie Smith achieve her championship goal – one that eluded her in college and the WNBA – to go along with her ABL successes.

#7 MARTINA’S LOVE 40

Martina Navratilova officially called it “Game, Set, Match” after a career that covered four different decades. Navratilova retires with a record of 168 singles and 177 doubles titles and with the sense of tremendous fan adoration for her dedication and commitment to her sport.

#8 NCAA ELITE PROGRAMS REMAIN IN FOCUS

Women’s Championships continued to bring added attention to the success of female student-athletes as well as to the group of elite institutions where winning is part of their program. The University of North Carolina won the Division I Championship for Soccer by defeating Notre Dame, which brings their success to 18 titles in the last 25 years.

As the top seed, Nebraska defeated Stanford to take the Division I Volleyball title in front of a record crowd of 17,209 fans. In Lacrosse, Northwestern defeated Dartmouth for its second consecutive title, Arizona defeated Northwestern to earn their seventh national title in softball, and Maryland earned its second women's national championship of the year when the Terrapins defeated Wake Forrest in Field Hockey.

This year also brought the announced retirement of UCLA's Sue Enquist, winner of 11 National Championships as a player or coach for the Bruins and the untimely death of Army's basketball coach Maggie Dixon less than a month after leading her team to its first-ever NCAA tournament. Dixon was just 28 years old.

#9 LILLY'S LONGEVITY DEFIES CONVENTIONAL THINKING – SUCCESS EARNS HONORS



Kristine Lilly, front row, second from left, shown with her famous teammates, just prior to winning the 1999 World Cup.

Kristine Lilly, at the age of 35, was recognized again this year as U.S. Soccer's 2006 Female Athlete of the Year. Lilly, who first won the award in 1993, also won the award last year. This year Lilly also earned her 300th cap and had seven game-winning or game-tying goals. While an amazing accomplishment, the U.S. National Soccer team continues to rebuild and needs additional work to become dominant again.

#10 NCAA CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

As part of the NCAA's 100-year celebration, the organization ranked its top 100 former student-athletes. Three women made it into their Top 10 and we salute them and all female student athletes who have leveraged sports and education as a way to keep their dreams in focus.

1. Jackie Robinson
2. Arthur Ashe
3. Jesse Owens
4. Dwight D. Eisenhower
5. John Wooden
6. **Althea Gibson**, Basketball, Golf, Tennis
7. **Madeline Albright**, Swimming & Diving
8. Jack Nicklaus
9. **Eunice Kennedy Shriver**, Swimming & Diving, Track & Field
10. Eddie Robinson



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