



LPGA®

INFORMATION

See Why It's *Different* Out Here

MICHAEL (MIKE) WHAN - LPGA COMMISSIONER

Michael (Mike) Whan is the eighth commissioner of the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association), one of the longest-running and most successful women's sports organizations in the world. Whan assumed the leadership role on Jan. 4, 2010 with an eye toward enhancing existing business relationships, increasing exposure for players and maximizing the LPGA experience for fans.



In his sixth year as Commissioner, Whan has led a resurgence of the LPGA by enhancing business relationships, embracing the global makeup of the Tour and piloting the "See Why It's Different Out Here" marketing campaign that focuses on the unique and approachable personalities of the LPGA's players.

During his first five years at the helm, Whan oversaw strong renewal rates amongst title and marketing partners, developed new tournaments that showcase the world's best players and drove huge increases in the LPGA's television viewership. Not shy to embrace the global aspect of the LPGA, Whan has expanded playing opportunities throughout Asia while increasing the number of North American tournaments for the U.S.-based Tour. His "role reversal" concept challenges players and staff to think like the sponsors and ensures that everyone plays a role in delivering value to those who financially support the Tour.

Under Whan's tutelage, the LPGA's tournament schedule has soared from 23 to 33 with innovative events like the "Founders Cup;" strategic partnerships (KPMG Women's PGA Championship); The Evian Championship – the LPGA's fifth major; the eight-country, first-of-its-kind "International Crown;" and the CME Group Tour Championship with its new season-long, \$1 million "Race to the CME Globe" points competition attached.

Purses have jumped above \$60 million with television ratings showing steady climb and coverage hours surpassing 400 for the first time. In addition, under Whan the developmental Symetra Tour has added six events and increased prize money by 53 percent, the LPGA's Girls Golf program expects 50,000 new members annually by the end of 2015 – up from 5,000 in '10, and the LPGA's Teaching division has its largest ever membership and has now expanded into Asia. Now embracing "all things global," the LPGA caters to fans in 225 countries via the website and boasts television partners in 175 countries. As a testament to Whan's efforts, in 2015 the LPGA was recognized for its over-all growth –being selected by Sports Business Journal as one of five finalists for "Sports League of the Year" alongside the NBA, NASCAR, MLS & Big East Conference.

Whan developed a passion for golf at a young age, cutting greens and caddying to earn money. He attended Naperville Central High School in Naperville, Ill. for his freshman and sophomore years before transferring to Anderson High School in Cincinnati, Ohio. Whan graduated from Miami University of Ohio in 1987 and began his business career the same year at the Proctor and Gamble Company, rising through the ranks as a Brand Assistant, Brand Manager and eventually Director of Marketing, Oral Care, before pursuing his passion for sports.



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In 1994-95, he served as a Vice President and General Manager at the Wilson Sporting Goods Company responsible for all aspects of the golf ball and glove business. He also managed the marketing department, two manufacturing facilities and the Research & Development division.

Whan joined the TaylorMade Golf Company as Vice President of Marketing in 1995. Over the course of his four-year tenure, he was promoted to Vice President, Sales and Marketing and eventually EVP/General Manager-North America for TaylorMade-Adidas Golf. In his role as General Manager, Whan's business unit represented more than 70 percent of the company's worldwide sales and profit.

Whan served as President/Chief Marketing Officer for Britesmile, Inc., from 1999-2002, before returning to sports as the President-CEO of Mission Hockey, a hockey equipment company. During his seven-year tenure in the hockey business, he restructured and redefined the company, then acquired Itech Sports to create Mission-Itech Hockey. When Whan finalized the sale of Mission-Itech Hockey, it commanded market share leadership in nine product categories, sales in more than 30 countries and had more than 50 percent of the National Hockey League (NHL) players using the brands.

He and his wife, Meg, and his three children—Austin, Wesley and Connor—currently live outside Orlando in Lake Mary, Fla.