



NEWS

wmphoenixopen.com

Release Date:

December 13, 2011

Media Contact:

Rob Myers, (480) 348-7540

**THUNDERBIRDS HONOR JACK NICKLAUS
MAKE GOLF LEGEND HONORARY THUNDERBIRD PRIOR TO
TEE OFF LUNCHEON**

Phoenix, Ariz. – Golf Legend and 1964 Phoenix Open Champion Jack Nicklaus has six Green Jackets from The Masters, five PGA Championship Wannamaker trophies, four US Open trophies, three British Open Claret Jugs, but until today, he didn't have a Blue Velvet Tunic and Silver Concho from The Thunderbirds. The Thunderbirds, hosts of the Waste Management Phoenix Open since 1934, honored the Golden Bear by making him an honorary Thunderbird prior to today's 2012 Tee Off Luncheon at The Phoenician Resort.

With the addition of Nicklaus there are a total of 31 honorary Thunderbirds, including former PGA TOUR Commissioner Deane Beman, singer Bing Crosby, entertainer Bob Hope, former City of Phoenix Mayor Margaret Hance, golf legend Arnold Palmer and PING Golf founder Karsten Solheim.

No name is more synonymous with greatness in the sport of golf than the name Jack Nicklaus, and no single person has changed the face of the sport more than Jack Nicklaus – the player, the designer, the philanthropist, and the good-will ambassador. Jack, 70, has been named

“Golfer of the Century” or “Golfer of the Millennium” by almost every major golf publication in the world. He was also named Individual Male Athlete of the Century by *Sports Illustrated*, and one of the 10 Greatest Athletes of the Century by *ESPN*. Winner of the 1964 Phoenix Open held at Phoenix Country Club, Nicklaus played in five Phoenix Opens (1962-65 and 1986) and has four top-10 finishes.

Thunderbird membership is limited to 55 Active members. Each has demonstrated a sincere interest in sports and a dedication to community affairs. All Thunderbird activities and events are the prime responsibility of these Active Thunderbirds and are under the watchful eye of the Big Chief and Thunderbird Council. When a Thunderbird reaches the age of 45, their status changes from Active to that of Life Member. Although they are relieved of continuous duties, it is not unusual to see a Life Thunderbird lending a helping hand at The Waste Management Phoenix Open or one of the many other Thunderbird-sponsored events. There are over 300 members comprising The Thunderbirds organization. To date, the Thunderbirds civic organization have given more than \$75 million dollars to local charities, including more than \$48 in the last decade alone.

The 2012 Waste Management Phoenix Open, known as “The Greatest Show on Grass,” will be held at the TPC Scottsdale from January 30th to February 5th, 2012. The Waste Management Phoenix Open is the best-attended golf tournament in the world and has gained legendary status for being the most unique stop on the PGA TOUR. The 2012 edition will mark the 77th playing of the event (one of the five oldest events on the PGA TOUR) and the third as the Waste Management Phoenix Open.

-30-

