

PERSPECTIVE: A Letter to Tiger
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Hey, Tiger! Thank you for Augusta. This letter may seem a little late, but I imagine you've been pretty busy reading the mail coming in from around the world.

Your victory recalls to me some characteristics of champions. One is that they never seem surprised at their victories. Of course, why should they be, since inevitably they've done their homework? Preparation is the name of the game. Years and years on the courts, on the track, in the lab, in the gym, doing research, whatever, brings confidence and power in the crucial moment and allows the victor to win the prize. Arthur Ashe didn't seem surprised when he held the victory cup overhead at Wimbledon almost a generation ago, Tiger. Gratified, happy, yes — but not surprised.

I'm not just referring to confidence in sports stars, however. Once I complimented a celebrated American singer on performances of a difficult role at the famed Salzburg Music Festival. Although the event was a "first," and as significant to her career as Augusta to yours, there was no coyness, no fake humility in her response: "I hope you heard the six high C's I hit in the last act!" She proudly proclaimed: "I gave the audience everything I had. Every bit of my study, practice and planning was aimed at this day and others to come."

Another characteristic of champions that I admire, Tiger, is their seemingly inherent immunity to obstacles. A successful lawyer once told me, "When they throw an obstacle my way, I catch it, chew it up, get the nourishment from it, spit it out and keep on truckin'!" I think that no true champion has ever been deterred by barriers of race, class or disability.

And no true champion has ever waited for the "right time" to accomplish his or her mission. For the champion, Tiger, the right time is always now. One world conquered — many worlds to come.

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