

Vanessa Asks, Rick Responds: The Big Break III -- The Women are Coming



Vanessa Bell

By Vanessa Bell

The Big Break. It is what every athlete is waiting for who has not quite made it into the professional arena. Golf is no different. I think it is extremely hard for an aspiring golf professional to break through mental and physical barriers to earn one of those precious spots in a tour event. The Golf Channel thinks so too. In 2003, the Golf Channel aired its own reality television show, *The Big Break*. The winner received exemptions into four Canadian Tour events giving them the break they have eagerly sought after. In the heightened popularity of reality television shows, *The Big Break* not only appealed to golfers, but to non-golfers too, making it a massive hit.

Consequently, *The Big Break II* contestants have already been chosen and possibly filming under-

way. It's a secret.

Recently, what really caught my attention were rumors of *The Big Break III*; it's for ladies. The winner of this series receives exemptions into four LPGA events. It has to be almost every female professional's dream to compete on the LPGA Tour, and I am no exception. I headed straight to the computer in search of any leads for further information and came back with an application form found on the Golf Channel's website. After much pondering over 44 questions and two essays, I faxed the application. During dinner the next evening, the phone rang. It was the Golf Channel. The result: an audition at 11am the following week in Decatur, Illinois.

The Golf Channel had a section of the range roped off where the auditions were being held. My idea was that they already had a list created of personality types they were looking for. I was not nervous and knew I just had to be myself because I was either going to fit a criteria or I wasn't. Of course talent came into play as well.

The first part of the audition was on the range. I had to shape shots with my driver and 5 iron. It was possible being that there weren't actually any trees to go around or avoid. After that I had to hit a 100 yard pitch, (knocked it to about 6 foot), a 75 yard pitch, (must remember not to leave

myself that yardage out on the course), and a 50 yard pitch, (hit the bottom of the flag). Next, a little flop shot into a basket — missed — but only just.

The second part of the audition was in front of the camera answering a few questions. Luckily, most of them came from the application form so I didn't have to do much stumbling. I think I did fine but why is it that you always think of better things to say after the event? It was fun to be wired up to a microphone and stare into a camera only a couple of feet in front of you trying your best to get that break.

They are looking for ten contestants and have at least three more audition sites. They will have picked the contenders by the end of August. It seems rather a long time away but you never know when you are going to get your big break. **MG**



Rick Smith