

**SYNOPSIS: SALLY RIDE – TENNIS CHAMPION, PHYSICIST,
ASTRONAUT, SPI MEMBER**

Journal of Sports Philately, Winter 2019, published December 2018, by Sports Philatelists International

Prepared August, 2020 for the Third Annual Sarasota Literature Exhibition of Philatelic Articles

Treatment: The Sally Ride Forever stamp issued in May 2018 presented both a unique opportunity and a challenge. Never before had a former member of Sports Philatelists International (SPI) been honored with a postage stamp. I knew that mainstream media and the philatelic press would cover this event. My goal was to explore her life story, including not only her space missions, but also her tennis achievements and her interest in Olympic stamp collecting, and to uncover the design thoughts behind the stamp. Using extensive interviews with Sally's life partner, the stamp designer, and the artist, I obtained information not reported in other media, including unpublished personal photographs. This expansion of the project's scope led to a more detailed presentation of both Sally Ride and the process of creating the stamp. Philatelic items and photographs work together here to bring the story to life.

Originality, Significance, and Research: Personal communications have never before played such a large role in my development of an article, but much of the information was not available in written form, and would have been lost over time if it had not been researched now. The stamp designer, the artist, and Sally Ride's life partner each shared their thoughts and their emotional connection to Sally, allowing me to tell her story in a way not recorded in any other publication.

The unpublished personal photographs and anecdotes about Sally Ride enable the reader to develop an idea of her as a person. She was not only the youngest American astronaut to fly into space, but was also a trained physicist, and the only person to serve on both of the panels that investigated the *Challenger* and *Columbia* disasters. Her importance to the history of the space program and her example as a gay woman who broke barriers will make the details of her sports and philatelic endeavors of interest to future generations of readers.

I believe sports philately should exist not just in its own world, but as a part of the larger community of philatelists and historians. This article was designed to appeal to readers interested in tennis and space philately, to readers who want to learn more about famous LGBTQ people, and to philatelists interested in the thought process that goes into stamp design. It is my hope that this new information will give readers a fresh perspective when looking at the Sally Ride stamp.

Technical Matters, Production and Legacy: This article includes both print and online references, including extensive interviews. The journal is professionally printed and bound, and the article has been written to be easily read in both print and digital versions. The article is currently available only to subscribers, but 5 years after publication it will appear on the websites of the American Philatelic Society, the Association Internationale des Collectionneurs Olympiques, and Sports Philatelists International, at no charge. This article has already been reprinted as the lead article in the July 2020 issue of the *Gay and Lesbian History on Stamps Journal* at the request of their editor.