



**LESLEY VISSER
SPORTS BROADCASTER, SPORTSWRITER,
AUTHOR, MENTOR
TO BE AWARDED THE
SPORTS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
AT THE 41ST ANNUAL
SPORTS EMMY® AWARDS**

Sport Emmy® Awards to be Presented at a Gala on April 28, 2020

New York, NY – February 19, 2020 -- The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences announced today that Lesley Visser, the pioneering sports reporter and one of the most highly acclaimed female sportscasters of all time, will become the first woman to receive the Sports Lifetime Achievement Award at the 41st Annual Sports Emmy® Awards. The event will take place in New York City at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Frederick P. Rose Hall on Tuesday, April 28th, 2020.

“To be a pioneer at nearly every juncture of sports reporting isn't easy despite how Lesley Visser makes it look, said Justine Gubar, Executive Director, Sports Emmy Awards. “Lesley has spent her career serving as an unparalleled role model and mentor to countless up-and-coming journalists including myself. Her generous spirit, breadth and depth of knowledge, and professionalism shine in our industry and The National Academy could not be more thrilled to honor Lesley with our Lifetime Achievement Award for Sports.”

“For 45 years Lesley Visser has been a leader and trailblazer in both print and television journalism,” said Sean McManus, Chairman, CBS Sports. “Very few people have had the word *first* attached to them throughout their career as much as Lesley, and even fewer have created a place in an industry that never existed. From first working in press boxes with a credential that read, ‘No women or children,’ to becoming the first woman assigned to work ‘Monday Night Football,’ and to being the first woman enshrined into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, there is no one more deserving to be honored as the first woman to receive the Sports Emmy Award for Lifetime Achievement.”

"When you look at Lesley Visser's resume which is a long list of accomplishments, where almost everyone begins with 'the first woman,' the phrase that comes to mind for me is 'one of the best damn journalists I have ever worked with,'" said Vince Doria, former Sports Editor, Boston Globe and former Vice President and Director of News at ESPN. "While Lesley is a pioneer in every respect, gender has nothing to do with the fact that she's just a damn good reporter."

The 41st Annual Sports Emmy Awards will be presented in more than 40 categories. Ballots for the Sports Emmy Awards are tabulated by the firm of Lutz & Carr, LLC.

LESLEY VISSER

Lesley Visser is the most highly acclaimed female sportscaster of all time. In six Halls of Fame, she has almost always been the First - the First woman enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame; the First woman reporting from a Super Bowl sideline; the First woman to cover the NFL as a beat; the First and only woman to have presented the Championship Lombardi Trophy at the Super Bowl; the First female sportscaster to carry the Olympic Torch; the First woman on ABC's "Monday Night Football," the First woman on the World Series network broadcast; the First woman on the Final Four network broadcast and the First woman on the NBA Finals network broadcast. She was named No. 17 by USA Today on the NFL 100 All-Time Greatest TV and Radio Voices.

Visser is the only sportscaster - male or female - to have worked on the Network broadcasts of the Final Four, the Super Bowl, the NBA Finals, the Olympics, the World Series, the Triple Crown, the World Figure Skating Championship and the US Open Tennis. She was voted the No. 1 Female Sportscaster of All Time by the National Sportscasters of America. Her career began at the *Boston Globe* in 1974 after she won a Carnegie Foundation Grant, given to only 20 women in the country who wanted to go into jobs that were 95% male. When she started covering the NFL for the Boston Globe, the credentials read, "No Women or Children in the Press Box." Lesley was elected to the Sportswriters Hall of Fame for her work at the *Boston Globe*, magazines and CBS.com. She was voted to the Sports Broadcasters Hall of Fame for her work at CBS, ABC, ESPN and HBO. Visser was the first and only woman to win the Billie Jean King "Outstanding Journalist Award," and was honored as the first female "Lombardi Fellow." She has been named a Muhammad Ali "Daughter of Greatness." Visser was the first female sportscaster to win the Newseum Award for Lifetime Achievement, first given to Walter Cronkite. Lesley had the privilege of reporting from the Fall of the Berlin Wall for CBS in 1989. Days after the 9/11 terrorist attack, she went with the New York Giants and the New York Jets to Ground Zero to chronicle their relief efforts for "The NFL Today".

A graduate of Boston College, which awarded her an Honorary Doctorate in 2007, she served on the Board of the V Foundation for Cancer Research for more than 20 years. Visser has mentored young women for decades, while speaking at colleges and businesses around the world - from Doha, Qatar, to the Diplomatic Security Service at the U.S. Department of State, to NYU's campus in Abu Dhabi. Lesley's book, "Sometimes You Have To Cross When It Says Don't Walk: A Memoir of Breaking Barriers."

The Hall of Fame Sportscaster is in her 30th year at CBS, her 45th in the business. She has been voted one of the "Women We Love" by Esquire Magazine and one of the "Five Ideal Dinner Guests" by GQ. She and her husband, Bob Kanuth, a former captain of Harvard basketball, live in Bay Harbor Islands, Florida.

About The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences

The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS) is a non-profit service organization dedicated to the advancement of the arts and sciences of television and the promotion of creative leadership for artistic, educational, and technical achievements within the television industry. It recognizes excellence in television with the coveted Emmy® Awards for News & Documentary, Sports, Daytime entertainment, and Daytime Creative Arts & entertainment programming, as well as achievements in television Technology & Engineering.

NATAS membership consists of nearly 18,000 broadcast and media professionals represented in 19 regional chapters across the country. Beyond awards, NATAS has extensive educational programs including regional student television and the National Student Production Awards for outstanding journalistic work by high school students, as well as scholarships, publications, and major activities for both industry professionals and the viewing public.

NATAS is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate the life experiences and diversity of our team, our members, and the vibrant community of creative professionals we serve. For more information go to www.theemmys.tv

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