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MARY LOU RETTON BIOGRAPHY

Mary Lou Retton “vaulted” her way to international fame by winning the All-Around Gold Medal in women’s gymnastics at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, making her the first American woman to win a gold medal in gymnastics. She also won silver medals for Team and Vault, and bronze medals for Uneven Bars and Floor Exercise. Those five medals were the most won by any athlete at the 1984 Olympics. For twenty years, she was the only American to win the Olympic All-Around Title.

Mary Lou garnered many other awards and victories including being the only woman to win three American Cups (1983-1985), the only American to win Japan’s prestigious Chunichi Cup (1983), two U.S. Gymnastics Federation American Classics (1983, 1984), and the All-Around title at both the 1984 National Championships and Olympic Trials. Mary Lou retired from competitive gymnastics in 1986.

Today, she continues to touch the lives of millions. A national sports survey found Mary Lou to be the most popular athlete in America. She is in great demand as a motivational speaker and corporate spokesperson and also travels the world as a “Fitness Ambassador” promoting the benefits of proper nutrition and regular exercise. Mary Lou sits on the Board of Governors of the Children’s Miracle Network and serves as its national chairperson. Recently, she became an appointed member on the President’s Council on Physical Education and Sports.

She was a commentator for NBC at the 1988 Olympic Games and wrote a daily column for *USA Today* at the 1992 and 1996 Olympics. She served as an on air reporter for Gannett Broadcasting’s NBC affiliates the largest NBC affiliate group in the United States. Additionally, she co-hosted the weekly television series *Road to Olympic Gold*.

Mary Lou resides in Houston, Texas, with her husband Shannon and their four lovely daughters. Mary Lou was born in Fairmont, West Virginia, and is the youngest of five children born to Lois and Ronnie Retton.