

# Papwa Sewgolum: From Pariah to Legend



**Papwa Sewgolum: From Pariah to Legend** by Adrian Vermeule

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Papwa Sewgolum was a South African golfer who faced immense adversity and discrimination due to his race during the apartheid era. Despite these

challenges, he rose to become one of the greatest golfers of his time, inspiring countless people around the world with his resilience and determination.

## **Early Life and Career**

Papwa Sewgolum was born in Durban, South Africa, in 1934. He grew up in poverty in a small Indian township. Despite his humble beginnings, he showed a natural talent for golf at a young age. He began caddying at the local golf course, where he would spend hours watching the white golfers play.

In 1954, Sewgolum turned professional and began playing in tournaments. However, he faced significant racism and discrimination from both the white golfing establishment and the apartheid government. He was often denied access to tournaments and facilities, and he was forced to play on segregated courses.

## **Breakthrough and Success**

Despite the challenges he faced, Sewgolum persevered and continued to improve his game. In 1959, he won the South African Open, becoming the first non-white golfer to win the tournament. This victory was a major breakthrough for Sewgolum and for the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

In 1960, Sewgolum traveled to the United Kingdom to compete in the Open Championship. He finished in a tie for eighth place, becoming the first non-white golfer to finish in the top 10 of a major championship. This performance earned him international recognition and helped to break down racial barriers in the game of golf.

Sewgolum went on to win several other tournaments during his career, including the PGA Tour's Greater Greensboro Open in 1966. He also represented South Africa in the World Cup of Golf several times.

## Legacy and Impact

Papwa Sewgolum's legacy extends far beyond his golfing achievements. He became a symbol of hope and inspiration for people around the world who were facing discrimination and oppression. He showed that it is possible to overcome adversity and achieve success, regardless of one's race or background.

Sewgolum's story has been told in books, documentaries, and films. He has been inducted into both the World Golf Hall of Fame and the South African Golf Hall of Fame. His life and career continue to inspire people today, reminding us of the importance of fighting against racism and discrimination.

Papwa Sewgolum's journey from pariah to legend is a testament to the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit. He faced immense adversity and discrimination, but he never gave up on his dreams. He rose above the challenges he faced and emerged as one of the greatest golfers of his time. Sewgolum's legacy is one of hope and inspiration, reminding us that anything is possible if we have the courage to pursue our dreams.



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