

## **TOM SULLIVAN**

### **Sample Introduction**

Singer, Actor, Author, Writer, Producer, Tom Sullivan lives and works by “Sullivan’s Rules.” Invented by his dad, Porky Sullivan, so young Tommy Sullivan could play baseball with the neighborhood kids, “the rules” became the cornerstone by which the adult Tom Sullivan came to live his life, turning any negative into a positive, turning disadvantage into advantage, playing in every game.

Born prematurely, Tom was given too much oxygen in an incubator, and though it saved his life it cost him his eyesight. The “inconvenience” of being blind has never kept Tom Sullivan from competing in a world where he realized that to be equal meant that he had to be better. Even though he’s had to adapt the rules slightly, he has proven that one need not be limited by a handicap, whether it is playing neighborhood games as a youngster or teeing it up on Sunday with his golfing buddies as an adult. That’s right! Tom is an excellent golfer. (“I’ve never seen a water hazard. I always have an open shot to the green.”) He is a marathon runner, an avid snow skier and an Olympic-class wrestler who was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Early in his career, Tom gained National prominence as a recording artist, along with over 50 appearances on Johnny Carson’s *Tonight Show*. His performance of the National Anthem at the 1976 Super Bowl Bicentennial Celebration was an unforgettable experience for Tom and the millions of football fans watching that day.

As a special correspondent for ABC’s *Good Morning America*, Tom became a regular morning fixture in millions of American homes. From his insightful interviews with sports legends like Jack Nicklaus and Mohammed Ali to inspiring stories of human beings beating the odds, he made us believe in the strength of the human spirit.

Tom went on to write and star in numerous television sitcoms, such as *Mork & Mindy*, *WKRP in Cincinnati* and *Designing Women*, as well as working with Debbie Allen on *Fame* and the incomparable Michael Landon on episodes of *Highway to Heaven*. Currently, Tom is writing and producing films for television and major motion pictures. Tom has also created a series for ESPN, titled *Superior Beings* in association with Warren Miller Entertainment. The first special, profiling the amazing courage and accomplishment of some extraordinary individuals, has aired and is set to become a series in prime time.

Tom has authored over a dozen books. *If You Could See What I Hear*, co-authored with Derek Gill, is an early biography of Tom’s life, which was made into a highly successful major motion picture starring Marc Singer. In a recent title *Adventures in Darkness*, Tom takes readers through his monumental eleventh

summer. Blind since birth, Tom lived in a challenging world of isolation and special treatment, but he was driven to break out and live as sighted people do. This book is a hair-raising, heart-warming experience that culminates in Tom's determination to realize his dreams of a "normal" life.

Tom has also authored two books with the illustrious Betty White, *The Leading Lady: Dinah's Story* and *Together*. He also wrote *Seeing Lessons: 14 Life Secrets I've Learned Along the Way* and found time to author three children's books and the work he's most proud of entitled *Special Parent, Special Child*, written to provide parents of special needs children with direction and hope.

With so many professional pursuits, goals and accomplishments Tom caught the attention of college campuses and corporate meeting planners long ago. For over thirty years, Tom Sullivan has been one of the most sought-after inspirational speakers on the circuit. His interests and insights, his pride and patriotism, his wisdom and passion for excellence have motivated audiences all over the world.

It is my pleasure today to introduce an amazing American, a true Renaissance man.... Mr. Tom Sullivan