

Jim Estes, PGA
Olney Golf Park, Olney, Maryland

Jim Estes, PGA Director of Instruction at Olney Golf Park, has played and taught golf professionally since 1988. Born August 12, 1964 in Washington D.C., Jim's father got him playing golf as a youngster, hitting plastic practice balls in their backyard. He grew up playing at Bethesda Country Club under the watchful eye of Head PGA Professional Jim Folks. At the age of 15, Jim attended his first "golf camp" traveling to PGA National Golf Club (Palm Beach Gardens, Florida) to attend the PGA National Academy taught by PGA Professional Gary Wiren, PhD of The PGA of America staff. Jim was an outstanding athlete at Robert E. Peary High School (Rockville, Maryland) lettering in golf and basketball. In 1982, he was not only the Captain of the basketball team, but also named their Athlete of the Year. Jim attended the University of Maryland where he excelled on the golf team and graduated in 1987 with bachelor's degree in economics.

Jim turned professional in 1988 as a tournament player, but failed to gain tour status. In January of 1989 he traveled to South Africa for three months where he qualified for a few events playing against Ernie Els and John Bland among other notables. Later that year competing on the US Golf Tour, Jim won the Greater Ozarks Open at Point Royal Golf Club in Branson, Missouri. He collected \$20,000 for the victory over a strong field that included future two-time US Open Champion, Lee Janzen. In February 1991, Jim went to work as an assistant at Bonnie View CC in Baltimore, Maryland for Head PGA Professional Jeff Sprague. In March of 1992 he went to work for Harold "HP" "Hal" Miller, the Head PGA Professional at the Evanston Golf Club (Skokie, IL) where he remained until the end of March, 1996. Jim was elected to PGA membership on November 1, 1993. In January of 2001, he went to work at Olney Golf Park as a PGA Teaching Professional. Jim was selected to be Olney Golf Park's PGA Director of Instruction on March 15, 2002. In 2007, Jim earned his status as a PGA Certified Professional in Golf Instruction.

In pursuing his fullest potential as a player and instructor, Jim has been coached by some of the most accomplished instructors in the game - teachers such as David Leadbetter, Jim Suttie, Jim Flick, and Mike Adams - as well as working alongside them as a teaching professional.

Jim is an outstanding tournament player, but it is his time spent off the course and with his students that have given him more pleasure. He was inspired in 2005 to serve America's veterans in an unprecedented program and founded the Salute Military Golf Association, a non-profit charitable organization that equips and encourages injured veterans to use golf as a means to overcome their physical limitations. In 2007, Jim and his "The PGA/Disabled Sports USA Military Golf Program" were provided support for specialized training of PGA Professionals, as well as funding for teaching and for acquiring golf equipment for the wounded veterans. Over the past two years, Jim has led a cadre of PGA Professionals conducting free individual lessons for the veterans every Saturday morning in the spring. A section of the range is cordoned off for use by the veterans who make the 30-minute trip from Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Hospital. Every week, in a more formal group session, Jim and his peers focus on all aspects of the game. During this period of time, the PGA Professionals have witnessed the full spectrum of injuries, from the catastrophic to those that don't show any wounds outwardly such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or Traumatic Brain Injury. The program currently involves over 40 wounded warriors.

Jim was one of 12 individuals honored with a [2007 GOLF Magazine Innovator Award](#). In August of 2008, he was also featured in a clinic, "Making Golf Fun for People with Physical Limitations," the day prior to the 90th PGA Championship at the PGA Learning Center, near the main spectator entrance at Oakland Hills CC. Jim may have become the first contestant to give a clinic on the eve of a major

championship. Regarding conducting that clinic, Jim said about his preparation, "It was not a problem at all."

When asked about the future, Jim said, "My goal is to keep helping these guys and the many more veterans who want to find enjoyment through golf. My wife said to me that playing full-time on the Tour wasn't in the cards, and now you have found a new mission in life. I believe that I have been able to help carry on a greater mission."

All students who come into the program and meet Jim and his staff have found their niche in some way on the practice range. "You struggle to find ways to get people to play better golf," he said. "The veterans we see have many of the physical attributes needed to play golf before they arrive. They have balance, mobility, good hand-eye coordination and can think under pressure. Above all, they are not afraid to fail. You hear how discipline is bred in the military; it definitely transfers over when you are teaching them." Jim says that his father has used his own medical knowledge to suggest training tips for the wounded warriors. "There are many things that we have discussed to help in instruction. It is so rewarding to see golf play a vital role in their recovery. Overall, I think that this has been the best year of my PGA life. When you can do things for other people, it comes back. We hope this work with the veterans will be replicated around the country. There are no limits to what golf can do when it comes to making these men and women find value in their lives."

In addition to earning exempt status on the 1998 PGA TOUR, Jim's playing accomplishments include playing in four U.S. Open Championships (1990, '95, '97, '98), making the cut at the 1994 PGA Club Professional Championship (CPC), and being named the 1995 PGA Club Professional Player of the Year, while serving at Evanston GC. In June of 2007, he tied for eighth in the 41st PGA Professional National Championship (formerly the CPC) to earn his berth as one of 20 PGA Club Professionals in the 156-player field in the 2008 PGA Championship. This was Jim's first PGA Championship even though he had earned a spot in the 1996 PGA Championship, after tying for seventh in the 1995 CPC. But, he chose to give up his exemption in the PGA Championship in order to give the Nike Tour another shot. Jim went on to win the 1996 Nike Tour's Inland Empire Open.

Jim's PGA TOUR credentials include competing in 31 events from 1994-1998, earning \$73,438 in 1998 alone, with his best finish being a tie for 16th in the 1998 Greater Greensboro Chrysler Classic. He has competed in 133 events on the Hogan/Nike/Buy.com Tour from 1990 through 2001, earning \$152,492.

Jim is the 2008 MAPGA Player of the Year and won the Illinois PGA Section's Player of the Year twice (1995 and '96). He competed in 5 US Amateur Championships (1982, '83, '85, '87, '88) making the field for Match Play the last three times.

In addition to the 2008 Tournament of Champions, Jim has also won the following MAPGA championships: the 1991 Assistant Professional, the 2002 Match Play and Tournament of Champions, and the 2003 Senior-Junior with Bob Bilbo, PGA.

Jim has two children Tyler (13) and Samantha (11). He and his wife, Susan, were married on October 24, 2003 in Germantown, Maryland where they currently reside.