

Jay Hardwick, PGA
*Virginia Tech Golf Course and Pete Dye River Course of Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia*

Jay was born May 28, 1949 in Bluefield, West Virginia to J. Shannon Hardwick (now deceased) and Dorothea W. Hardwick. Jay's father was a prominent businessman in the New River Valley for over 60 years. He was also a former professional baseball player who scouted for the San Francisco Giants until 1968 and was inducted into the Salem-Roanoke Baseball Hall of Fame in 1997.

In 1955, at age six, Jay started playing golf with his parents at Giles Country Club in Pearisburg, Virginia. Jay's father, who was a huge influence on his life, had picked up the sport late when he began playing at age 38 after retiring from professional baseball, but within two years he was a 2 handicapper.

Jay caddied at Giles Country Club for ten years before moving to the maintenance crew at age 16. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1971 with a degree in Business Administration. Jay is a three-time member of the Virginias/Carolina Team, a four-year letterman at Virginia Tech (1967-1971), and was the team captain in 1971. His teams won three straight Virginia State Intercollegiate Championships.

Jay declared his professional status in 1972 and played for one year on the NTGA Florida Winter Tour. In 1973, when he started the PGA's apprentice program at the age of 23 at Giles Country Club, he was the youngest head golf professional in the Middle Atlantic Section. He was elected to PGA membership in 1977. Jay stayed at Giles Country Club for ten years adding General Manager, Bookkeeper, and even Golf Course Superintendent to his duties. From 1983-2003, he was the PGA Director of Golf at Virginia Tech, which encompassed the duties of Head PGA Professional at Virginia Tech Golf Course and Head Golf Coach for Virginia Tech. In 2003, he was promoted to PGA Director of Golf for River Course LLC, which owns the new Pete Dye River Course of Virginia Tech and manages the Virginia Tech Golf Course for the university. His current duties include full responsibility for the entire golf staff at both facilities, including the golf course superintendents, as well as continuing as Head Golf Coach for Virginia Tech.

Jay has had the pleasure of having 80 young men go through the golf program at Virginia Tech with a graduation rate of 99%. Nine of these graduates are now Head PGA Professionals; three are Head Golf Course Superintendents; one, Jeff Haley, is the agronomist for the PGA Tour; and two are currently exempt players on the Nationwide Tour. Jay has remained in contact with these young men and serves in an advisory capacity to them as they have grown in their own careers. In addition, he has always been available for the young professionals in the Section, especially in the state of Virginia, to discuss job and professional opportunities. These calls are quite frequent and he cherishes the opportunity to help guide young people in their chosen field. This is a way for him to give back to a game that has provided him so much. He was extremely

fortunate to have people like Bill Strausbaugh, including “Coach” himself, to mentor him during his early years.

Jay volunteers at and speaks on behalf of many organizations, including Lions Club International, Big Brothers of America, the regional Chambers of Commerce, and local elementary schools. He has been active in numerous golf coach associations and has instructed at many junior golf clinics and charity events.

Jay has based his career on the ideals and values of The PGA and has always tried to conduct himself in a manner consistent with these qualities. Recently, Jay was presented the inaugural Labron Harris Sr. Award by the Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA) to the coach (and PGA member) whose support of the game through teaching, coaching, and involvement in the community has helped ensure the continued growth of the game and represents the finest qualities the game has to offer. In 2003, he received the GCAA’s Service Award for outstanding service to the community, Virginia Tech, and the sport of golf for the previous twenty years. Jay continues to stress the high qualities of the game itself, as well as the values of The PGA, to the players in his golf program. The students are required to attend joint rules seminars presented by the Middle Atlantic Section and the Virginia State Golf Association in order to have a better appreciation for the game and the people who promote it.

Jay has been named Coach of the Year eleven times by various conferences (Big East, Atlantic-10, Metro, Virginia Colleges, NCAA). In 1994, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Virginia Golf Professionals for his dedication to the game, for serving the Virginia Chapter with dignity and faithfulness, for maintaining relationships with the club and the community to the highest standards, and for maintaining a playing ability in keeping with the requirements of the profession.

Jay and his wife, Celia, have been married 28 years. Their son, Cristopher, and daughter-in-law, Melissa, recently presented them with their first grandson, Jacob Dylan.