

**Mark J. Beran, PGA**  
*Woodholme Country Club*  
*Pikesville, Maryland*

On August 10, 1965, Mark J. Beran was born the twin son of Emil and Alice Beran who then resided in the steel-driven town of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mark and his identical twin brother Michael are the youngest two of four boys in addition to a sister Debra, the sole daughter of the Beran family. By the time Mark was in the third grade, Emil and Alice packed up the family and moved to Warrington, Pennsylvania, a small suburban town outside Philadelphia. It would be in this town – in a small church yard – where Mark would find his love for the game that would impact his future.

Mark's father and older brothers, Robert and Richard, played golf on occasion and when they ventured out, they took Mark and Michael with them. Fairways Golf Course was the local public golf course in Warrington and in the afternoons junior golfers had unlimited play for \$5.00. The twins were about 13 years old when their father would drop them off at Fairways and they would play until dark. On the days they didn't get to the golf course, they just walked across the street from their house into the church yard and created their own golf "oasis." Mark, Michael and good a friend Rudy Virga turned trees, manhole covers and telephone poles into golf holes and played many matches on this homemade course.

An unfortunate incident by Michael in the church parking lot (golf ball into a car windshield) would close the church yard course permanently. Mark knew then that he could not go on without golf. The trio found their golfing ticket at a local golf course that was looking for spotters to help the golfers with their pace of play. Warrington Country Club would become Mark's first employer in the golf business. From spotting golf balls in exchange for free golf to dishwashing at night to working in the golf shop, Mark became a staple at Warrington Country Club. Emil and Alice were even quoted as saying that Mark and Michael "lived at that club."

Mark translated this passion for golf into an education and a promising career by attending Ferris State University to major in Professional Golf Management. During his time at Ferris State, Mark completed internships at his home course Warrington Country Club, at Canoe Brook Country Club in Summit, New Jersey, and at the famed TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra, Florida. With these diverse internship experiences, Mark was very open to moving where he needed to in order to get a head start on his career as a PGA Professional.

Mark graduated from Ferris State in 1988 and already had an Assistant Professional position lined up at Brick Landing Plantation in Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina. He stayed at Brick Landing for three seasons and then spent one season at Westchester Country Club in Rye, New York before moving into the Middle Atlantic Section for an Assistant Position with Baltimore Country Club in 1991. Between the years of 1991-1994, Mark spent the summers in Baltimore and the winters in Bonita Bay, Florida at the Bonita Bay Club.

In 1995, Mark's big break happened when he became the Head PGA Professional/General Manager at Minisceongo Golf Club in Pomona, New York. In this position, Mark started on a path, not only to make himself successful, but to also help others become successful in their own right. Mark had no problem hiring people from all walks of life. His female teaching professional was working at the local bagel shop and his Caddie Master was driving a bread route in New York City. Both are still in the business and doing very well. Others who worked with Mark are having success in their chosen career paths.

After ten great seasons in Pomona, Mark made a return to the Middle Atlantic Section by accepting the Head Professional position at Woodholme Country Club in Pikesville, Maryland. Since 2005, Mark has been leading his staff and guiding future PGA Professionals to achieve their goals. A former First Assistant of Mark, Rudy Virga, PGA Mark's longtime friend and former assistant is now the Director of Operations for Empire Golf Management which is just one of many examples of how Mark's mentoring has helped others succeed in golf and other professions.

In addition to leading and mentoring his staff, Mark has made a commitment to the Middle Atlantic Section. He started as Director-at-Large for the Northern Chapter and worked his way to his current position as the President of the Northern Chapter. With his successful history in employment services, he also chairs the MAPGA's Employment and Club Relations Committee. A prime example of his commitment to employment was when he visited a stand-alone driving range, talked to the owner and found him a PGA Professional who would help increase his business. He has championed efforts to enhance communications regarding all the employment tools available to PGA Members. Mark has also been an examiner for Playing Ability Test (PAT) for the past 18 years.

Mark has been happily married to his wife Jill since 2000 and they enjoy spending time with their son Spencer (13) and daughter Emily (12). Mark met Jill while she was working for GolfDigest and she booked a lesson with him. Mark considers that his best lesson ever. Those close to Mark will also find him out and about in his community. In his hometown of Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania, Mark volunteers with the Helping Hands Program at his church, and he is active with his Home Owners Association as well as his children's Intramural Sports League.

This is the second time in the past three years Beran has received the Bill Strausbaugh Award for his distinguished service mentoring PGA Professionals, especially in the area of employment and club relations, as well as his outstanding involvement in charitable and community activities.