

THE HORTON SMITH TROPHY

This award bestows special recognition on a PGA member for outstanding service and contributions to developing and improving educational opportunities for the PGA Golf Professional.

CHARLES T. (CHUCK) BASSLER, JR. - Willow Oaks Country Club

Chuck Bassler was born in 1949 in Washington, D.C. to Charles T. Bassler, Sr. and Peggy L. Bassler. His father was a PGA Golf Professional who played in many Tour events in the 1950's and 1960's, and was inducted into the MAPGA Hall of Fame in 1987. Chuck's father passed his legacy down and taught Chuck to play golf when he was only five years old. Chuck grew up surrounded by some of the great names in golf. One of his most vivid memories was shagging balls for his father and Sam Snead at their home in Columbia, Maryland.

Chuck's first golf-related job was as a cart boy at Turf Valley Golf Course in Ellicott City, Maryland, where he worked for his father. He admired his father in tournament play and developed a strong desire to please him by playing well.

After majoring in Business Administration at the University of Maryland, Chuck spent a brief time pursuing a career in sales. In 1976, while waiting to start a new job, he took a temporary position helping his father, who was then the Head Professional at Indian Spring Country Club. Chuck so enjoyed the golf business that he decided to stay and utilize his sales experience to enhance his father's Professional Shop sales.

Chuck became a golf professional in 1976 and was elected to PGA membership in 1978. His interest in golf education heightened in 1979 when the PGA Tour contacted him to host a regional qualifier at Shannon Green Resort where he was the Head Professional. To better prepare himself, he attended a United States Golf Association (USGA) Rules of Golf workshop. His score on the examination qualified him to attend an advanced workshop the following year. During his education process, Chuck became aware of the need for many amateurs and golf professionals to improve their knowledge of the rules of golf. He started a personal crusade to not only further his own knowledge, but to share what he learned with fellow professionals and amateurs. In 1986, Chuck began teaching the rules to club members at Hobbit's Glen, and in 1987 to Middle Atlantic PGA professionals. In 1988 Chuck accepted the Head Professional position at Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond, Virginia, where he requires his Assistant Professionals to attend rules of golf and tournament operations seminars annually. In 1989, Chuck established a Rules Committee to oversee the conduct of section tournaments, thus filling a huge gap in the tournament program. Also in 1989 Chuck was appointed to the PGA

Rules Committee, and later that year was asked to coordinate a PGA/USGA workshop. Since then, Chuck has been an annual instructor at the workshops. Since 1990 Chuck, in conjunction with the Virginia State Golf Association, has served as a Rules of Golf Instructor for countless workshops and seminars in the Commonwealth. Chuck is so well known for his knowledge of the rules of golf that almost daily he receives calls from fellow professionals, his club members and other amateurs seeking a ruling, or justification to substantiate one.

It would be impossible to list all of Chuck's numerous career credits and accomplishments in the space allotted here. His boundless energy has had a positive influence on his community as well as his profession. Over the years, various charities have financially benefited from the proceeds of the Virginia State Open. Since 1989, as the Host Professional for the Championship, he has coordinated the efforts of the tournament organizers and charities to help raise over \$250,000; in 1997 he served as Chairman of the Virginia State Open. His dedication to presenting a quality championship with an equal field of PGA professionals and Virginia amateurs has resulted in an event held in high regard by the participants, the Richmond community, and the entire state. In 1996 he developed the "Eight Rising Stars" Junior Golf Program in conjunction with WRIC-TV8, Richmond, Virginia. Proceeds are dedicated to improvements for schools in Richmond City and four surrounding counties. Chuck has served the Southern Chapter and the MAPGA as a Director and/or Officer every year since 1987. Three times he has represented the Section as a delegate to the PGA Annual Meeting. Of the many awards Chuck has received, he is most proud of being honored as the Section's 1990 Professional of the Year and being inducted into the Dewar's Hall of Fame for Virginia Golf Professionals.

Chuck's personal philosophy of life is "to treat others the way I want to be treated," as is evident by the positive impact he has on virtually every facet of the golf profession, his community and his family. Chuck is a devoted husband and father. With the help of his wife, Patti, he has raised two children -- Stacey, a Certified Physical Therapist and Chad, a student at JMU.