

MERCHANDISER OF THE YEAR

These awards bestow special recognition on those PGA members who have demonstrated superior skills as merchandisers in the promotion of golf. This award is given for excellence in golf shop operations in three categories: Private, Resort, and Public/Municipal/Military/Semi-Private.

Resort Category

JOHN J. MLYNARSKI III, PGA - Harbourtowne Golf Resort

John Mlynarski's merchandising philosophy is "to provide a quality product, at a reasonable price, and include outstanding service." The combination of these three factors has proven to bring repeat business to his operation. John's shop is relatively small, only 552 square feet, and it takes a lot of imagination to keep merchandise fresh and attractive to customers.

With a relatively elementary layout, his shop has two main entrances, both having direct access to the counter for check out. John divides his shop into five basic sections for ease of shopping, and he and his staff rotate the merchandise weekly, maintaining each category separation. The majority of the pro shop has slot wall for easy movement and hanging of merchandise. Free-standing floor displays feature ensembles, with studio ceiling lights accenting all merchandise. In addition to ensuring his shop has merchandise appeal, John's staff is trained to be polite, neat in appearance, and product knowledgeable. Because he recognizes that some customers expect to receive attention from the Head Professional, John spends a great deal of time on the sales floor making himself available to customers. He also devotes a considerable amount of time shopping the market to assure the shop has product balance. His AAA credit rating in the golf industry helps him to find the best merchandise at the best price. John listens closely to customers, reads trade publications, and consults with sales representatives to gain personal product knowledge and determine demand.

John was born in Camden, New Jersey, in 1962, one of five children. His parents, John Mlynarski, Sr. and Rita Mlynarski (deceased) introduced him to the game of golf when the family moved to State College, PA in 1971. When John was nine years old, Peter Duffy, Head Golf Professional at Toftrees Resort and CC in State College, PA gave him his first golf-related "job" when he hired John as a bag boy. John took lessons and played golf with the staff at Toftrees. Robert Mlynarski, John's younger brother, also chose the golf business as a profession. He is currently the Golf Course Superintendent at Cooper Hills CC in Flemington, NJ.

In 1984, while he was working toward a degree in Labor Relations at Penn State University, John went to work as an Assistant at State College Elks CC in State College, PA (for David Redmond, PGA). After graduation in 1986, John took an Assistant's position at Lords Valley CC in Hawley, PA (for Gene Yanovitch, PGA). In 1988, he worked at Palmetto Dunes Resort in Hilton Head Island, SC, (for Chip Pellerin, PGA) and in 1989, when he was elected to PGA membership, John accepted his current position as Head Golf Professional at Harbourtowne Resort, in St. Michaels, MD.

Even with his busy schedule, John finds time to be very active within his community. He is the Head Basketball Coach at Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School; serves on the Board of Directors and is coach/manager of the St. Michaels' Little League; coaches youth basketball at the YMCA, and is the Head Golf Coach of the St. Michaels' High School golf team. John also sponsors several charities at his club, including "Rally for a Cure," the "Benedictine Charity Classic," and numerous Saints Peter and Paul fund-raisers.

John and Tami, his wife of 14 years, are very proud of their sons, Johnny (11) and Andrew (8). Like their father, both boys are athletic. Not only are they active golfers, but they also excel in baseball, soccer and basketball.

