

ASSISTANT PGA PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

This award bestows special recognition on an assistant PGA Professional who, through a commitment to improving opportunities for assistants, has distinguished himself/herself in service to the Section, his/her peers, and facility.

Michael S. Aldrich, PGA

River Bend Golf & Country Club, Great Falls, Virginia

Michael S. Aldrich was born on March 10, 1969 to Susan and Gerald Aldrich. He started hitting whiffle golf balls in his grandparent's yard when he was seven years old. Mike's first round of golf was when he was nine; playing with his father and grandfather, Saul Horowitz at Buena Vista Golf Course in West Hartford, CT. The most memorable experiences of that day is when he birdied the 60 yard sixth hole by chipping in. Mike's father and grandfather both agreed that being able to play golf would be important for his success in the business world.

It was not Mike's goal to become a PGA club professional, however, as he showed some ability at an early age, it was a common occurrence to hint at this potential. His father was very involved in the Sammy Davis Jr. – Greater Hartford Open and served on the Executive Committee for several years in the 70's in positions including Press Relations and Players Relations. During those years, Mike's father got him involved in tasks and he was fortunate to interact with many of the PGA Tour Professionals, including Phil Blackmar, Lee Trevino, Howard Twitty and Fuzzy Zoeller. Mike was a standard bearer for Lee Elder for several years and said that Lee's positive attitude and graceful demeanor on the golf course has stayed with him all this time.

Mike's first golf-related job was caddying in the Greater Hartford Open for the Chairman of Cannon. When he turned 17, he started working at Rockledge Country Club, and municipal golf course in his hometown of West Hartford, CT. The PGA Head Professional was (and still is) Richard Crow. Mike always looked up to Richard as the epitome of patience and grace under pressure. It was that same grace under pressure that allowed Mike to keep his job after crashing a golf car into a white pine on his second day of work, causing considerable damage to the car.

Mike attended Hall High School in West Hartford, CT where he went to the Connecticut State High School Championship twice, and won the Jack Stigberg Memorial Tournament as a senior in 1987. From Hall High School he went on to Bentley University where, during his freshman year, he played NCAA golf. Mike graduated from Bentley with a degree in marketing.

Since turning professional in 1994 and being elected to PGA membership in 1997, Mike has been an Assistant Professional at various facilities in the New England Section including Glen Ellen Country Club, Millis, Mass.; Breakfast Hill Golf Course, Greenland, N.H.; and Cochecho Country Club, Dover, NH. He spent three years at Forest Hills Country Club in Chesterfield, Mo.

and made his way to the Middle Atlantic Section in 2002 with an Assistant position at Bull Run Golf Club in Haymarket, Va.

Mike served as an Assistant at Westwood Country Club in Vienna, Va. before becoming an Assistant at River Bend Golf & Country Club in Great Falls, Va. where he has worked since 2008. He has also served as The PGA General Manager and Head Professional at Poolesville Golf Course in Poolesville, Md.

Mike has served on the MAPGA Board of Directors as the Vice President of the Central Chapter (2008-2009) and as the President of the Central Chapter (2009-2010). He participated in The PGA/Disabled Sports Military Golf Program and helped raise over \$1,000 for the Salute Military Golf Association by running in the Shamrock Marathon in 2008. He also won the Blockbusta Classic, a Pro-Invite at The Members Club at Four Streams in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Mike is an avid runner and has competed in two marathons, a 70.3 mile Ironman competition and numerous other endurance races where twice he finished 3rd place in his age group. Currently, Mike is training for the 2011 140.6 Ironman Coeur d'Alene.

Mike's golf philosophy is to focus on instruction, customer service, valuing employees, playing the game of golf and being a PGA Professional. He says that a PGA Professional's ability to play and teach the game of golf is what makes the title PGA Professional mean something to amateur golfers.

Mike and his wife, Laura Kathleen, were married in May of 1992 and have two children, Emily Margaret (16) a sophomore at Thomas Jefferson High School and Molly Kathleen (12) who is in the 6th grade.