

MERCHANDISERS OF THE YEAR

This award is bestowed on those PGA Professionals who have demonstrated superior skills as merchandisers in the promotion of golf. This award recognizes excellence in golf shop operations in three categories: Private, Resort, and Public/Military/Semi-Private.

MERCHANDISER OF THE YEAR RESORT CATEGORY

John J. Mlynarski III, PGA

Links at Perry Cabin
St. Michaels, Maryland

John J. Mlynarski III has been named the MAPGA Merchandiser of the Year- Resort for an impressive fifth time. He won this award previously in 2001, 2007, 2010, and 2015. This award recognizes PGA Professionals who have demonstrated superior skills as merchandisers in the promotion of golf.

John was born in Camden, New Jersey on November 6, 1962, and is one of five children. His parents, John and Rita Mlynarski introduced him to the game of golf when the family moved to State College, Pennsylvania at age nine. Along with his parents, John credits David Redmond, PGA; Gene Yanovitch, PGA; and Peter Duffy, PGA for influencing his decision to work and play golf. John's passion for golf grew after Duffy, who was the Head PGA Professional at Toftrees Resort and Country Club in State College, asked John to help out as a bag boy. While working at Toftrees, John was always improving his game as he would take lessons and play golf with the professional staff. In 1984, while working toward a degree in Labor Relations at Penn State University, John accepted a job as Assistant Professional at State College Elks Country Club, working for David Redmond, PGA. After graduation in 1986, he moved to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina where he worked for Chip Pellerin, PGA, at Palmetto Dunes Resort. John accepted a First Assistant Position at Lords Valley Country Club in Hawley, Pennsylvania working for Gene Yanovitch, PGA. During the 1986 season. John moved to St. Michaels Maryland to be an Assistant Professional at Harbourtowne Resort in 1987. He was promoted to Head Golf Professional after two seasons and earned his PGA Membership in 1989, he stayed at this position for twenty-eight years. In 2014, Harbourtowne was sold to Capital Properties. The golf course had an estimated twenty-million-dollar renovation redesigned by legendary golf course architect Pete Dye and was renamed as Links at Perry Cabin. Mlynarski was hired as Head Golf Professional and was promoted to Director of Golf in 2017. Currently in his thirty-sixth year on this property, he has now added a Membership Director, Food and Beverage Director and Director of Retail to his list of responsibilities. Retail management is his passion.

At Links at Perry Cabin, John's merchandise philosophy has not changed from his previous positions, "to provide a quality product, at a reasonable price, and include outstanding service." The combination of these three factors has brought repeat business and success to the golf shop. The golf shop is small, only 780 square feet, and it takes a lot of imagination to keep merchandise fresh and attractive to customers. Since John opened the golf shop in 2017, there has been an increase in total sales each year. The shop is divided into five sections for ease of shopping, and he and his staff rotate the merchandise weekly. The majority of the golf shop's merchandise is displayed on various fixtures custom made for the space. In addition to ensuring his shop has a good selection of merchandise, John also trains his staff to be polite, have a neat appearance, and be knowledgeable about the products. Since he recognizes that some customers expect to receive attention from the Head PGA Professional, John spends time on the sales floor making himself available to members and guests. He also devotes a considerable amount of time shopping the market including attending thirty-five PGA Merchandise Shows to ensure the shop has proper product balance. John listens closely to customers, reads trade publications, and consults with sales representatives to gain personal product knowledge and determine demand. Along with his great success at Harbourtowne and Links at Perry Cabin, John was also named Callaway National Club Fitter of the Year in 2004 and 2010 and won a prestigious Association of Golf Merchandiser Platinum Award for Best-of-the-Best golf shops in the Country in 2022.

Even with his busy schedule, John finds time to be active in his community, although with the magnitude of this renovation his time was limited, though he is still proud of his accomplishments. He has served as Vice-President of the Talbot Optimist Club and was on the Board of Directors for seven years. During his career he was Head Basketball coach of Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School, coached the St. Michaels High School Golf team for eight years, turning around a program on the verge of extinction, to winning the North Bayside championship and being selected Maryland Mid-Shore High School Golf Coach of the Year. As Captain, he led Team Maryland to 3-1 record over Virginia in The Capital Cup in 2011, 2012, 2015, and

2021. He was also a volunteer basketball coach at the YMCA and a long time Board member and manager for Homerun Baker Little League. John was inducted into the PGA Quarter Century Club in July 2014, and the Eastern Shore Golf Magazine Hall of Fame Class of 2015. John was also on the MAPGA Junior Golf Committee and served as Northern Chapter Eastern Director.

John and Tami, his wife of 35 years, are immensely proud of their sons, John IV, age 32 and Andrew age 29 who both graduated from Ohio University and are employed by Callaway Golf.