

Golf Professional of the Year

Sue Fiscoe, PGA/LPGA

FM Golf

Modesto, CA



One could call this “The Year of Sue Fiscoe.” As both the NCPGA Section President and now Golf Professional of the Year, Sue Fiscoe of Creekside Golf Course in Modesto, Calif. has truly had a remarkable year. The award is the highest honor presented to an Association member.

As a member of the LPGA and as the first female PGA of America Section President, Fiscoe has been a strong leader and businesswoman, who has broken down barriers for herself and for others. She performs at the highest levels through her service with the NCPGA, her operation of the FM Golf management company, and in her community involvement. It is Fiscoe’s personal focus to continually lead by example — a hallmark that is so vital to the future of the PGA of America.

Having been granted the operations contract for the City of Modesto in 1991, Fiscoe started her own management company, FM Golf, and has been very successful operating three golf shops, cart and range concession. In the past 16 years, she has become sought after as a consultant for facility owners and private club boards. In this role, she has offered employment and advancement opportunities to minorities as golf professionals and food/beverage managers. In much the same way as she was first given an opportunity, Fiscoe values her ability to provide both opportunity and education to these individuals.

Fiscoe continually takes steps to make the most of the location of her facilities. At both the Creekside and Dryden Park facilities, she and her staff have continued to create “Growth of the Game” activities for juniors, women and minorities at her public access facilities in Modesto. In the Modesto market, FM Golf has become known for these ongoing program developments in the areas of Teaching and Tournaments.

In the San Joaquin Chapter and throughout the NCPGA Section, Fiscoe is a respected resource for fellow professionals regarding their questions on golf operations, employment related issues and administration. Fiscoe was the first female Section officer and became the first female Section President in December 2005. As an NCPGA Board Member and as an officer, she has been very involved in the day-to-day business of the Section as well as in committee activities focused on progressive functions. This includes a leadership role aimed at “growing the game” for juniors, women, minorities and the disabled.

Fiscoe is an inspiration to fellow “non-traditional” golf groups because of her history-making track from assistant golf professional to golf course operator, to Board Member, Section Officer and now President of the NCPGA Section. Through it all, Fiscoe has remained very approachable and helpful to her fellow professionals and Board Members. Fiscoe herself said it best when she told the audience that, “This award does not represent the accomplishments of a year, but rather the accomplishments of a lifetime.”

Teacher of the Year

Mathew Flenniken, PGA
Los Lagos Golf Course
San Jose, CA



One of Northern California's most prolific teachers, Flenniken's in-depth understanding of state-of-the-art teaching techniques, combined with knowledge of golf's history of instruction and education, make it possible for him to help every player. Many golf professionals have come to rely on Flenniken's experience and expertise on the golf swing, the golf mind, the golf spirit and equipment fit.

Flenniken's passion to increase players' proficiency and enjoyment spans over 25 years. He is a Member of the PGA Presidents council on growing the game, a former PGA Education Faculty Member, and has been a speaker at Sectional, National, and International PGA meetings.

More than 24 years ago, Flenniken pioneered the use of teaching and club-fitting together to promote a holistic approach to mastering the game. He has also been instrumental in the development of digital video for instruction for the last 20 years.

Flenniken's unique "learn-together, play-together" programs for families and co-workers have encouraged camaraderie and bonding of players from all walks of life.

Club Fitter of the Year

Rob Weizer, PGA
Bing Maloney Golf Course
Sacramento, CA



PGA General Manager Rob Weizer of Bing Maloney Golf Course is the 2007 Club Fitter of the Year Award winner. Formerly with Haggin Oaks Golf Complex, Weizer has garnered the award for his ability to properly fit golfers with the right equipment.

Weizer's extensive knowledge of club fitting has translated into improved golf performance by his customers and increased sales for Haggin Oaks. He uses leading-edge technology to ensure that golf instruction and club fitting go hand in hand.

Weizer was a part of the design team for the state-of-the-art Player Performance Studio at Haggin Oaks. He averaged about two or more fits per day—that's more than 700 in a single year.

All the major manufacturers consider Weizer to be a recognized fitter for their products. He has also been a part of the Titleist/Cobra Advisory Team, which utilizes his knowledge and experience for club fitting and thoughts on club design.

Weizer is one of the few in the nation who uses advanced technology to discover proper spin rates, launch angles, ball speeds and the land angle of the ball. There are no holes in the philosophy which Weizer promotes each and every day.

Bill Strausbaugh Award

Eric Dietz, PGA
Rochester Golf & Country Club
Rochester, MN



The Northern California PGA honors General Manager Eric Dietz of Rochester Golf & Country Club with its 2007 Bill Strausbaugh Award. Dietz spent most of 2007 with Ridgemark Golf & Country Club in Hollister, California. This award recognizes his outstanding integrity and commitment to mentoring and impacting the careers of PGA Professionals.

Fittingly, Dietz was fortunate enough to have received both golf lessons and life lessons from “Coach” Bill Strausbaugh during his apprenticeship and early membership in the PGA of America.

Dietz advances the idea that PGA members are not just golf professionals, but community leaders. He is recognized as an out-of-the-box thinker, consensus builder and inspiring leader who can design actionable strategies and motivate teams to deliver exceptional service and results.

Dietz served as Chairman of the NCPGA Club Relations Committee and as a member of the NCPGA Section Board of Directors. Dietz has devoted much of his time to helping young people find the right path in life. In recognition of this, he was given the “Champion of the Year” award for helping the Chamberlains Children Center’s “at risk” young adults. Dietz also helped mentor young gang members by exposing them to life outside of their world and into the business arena.

To Dietz, “Community” has no borders. He and a few members at Ridgemark shipped more than 140,000 golf balls and 2,000 golf clubs to the troops stationed in Iraq. His efforts have inspired similar programs across the United States.

Junior Golf Leader

Bill Sendell, PGA
Spyglass Hill
Pebble Beach, CA



The 2007 Junior Golf Leader Award is presented to PGA Head Professional Bill Sendell of Spyglass Hill Golf Course for his professionalism and commitment to junior golf.

Sendell has been an integral part of Junior Golf on the Monterey Peninsula and taken a keen leadership role since becoming a PGA Golf Professional in 1995. He serves as a 2nd Vice President on the AT&T Pebble Beach Junior Golf Board of Directors, he has been the Tournament Director of the same association for the last nine years, he is an instructor for the AT&T Junior Golf Foundation, and is an instructor for the Pebble Beach Golf Academy.

Sendell has helped organize, develop and coordinate numerous junior clinics. He has orchestrated the Spring and Fall Championships held at Peter Hay Golf Course each year since 1997 and he has directed more than 100 junior events in the last nine years.

Sendell’s leadership and integrity in the area of junior golf are noteworthy. He helps approximately 10 juniors on a weekly basis at no charge, he frequently participates in school events to expose students to the game of golf, and he provides 20-30 complimentary lessons per year to various community charities that benefit kids’ programs. Perhaps his biggest accomplishment is that he uses his position to develop his emerging golf professionals to take a passion in junior golf programs.

Horton Smith Award

Ron Runberg, PGA
Brooktrails Golf Course
Willits, CA



PGA Head Professional Ron Runberg of Brooktrails Golf Course is honored with the 2007 Horton Smith Award for his outstanding service and contributions in developing and improving educational opportunities for the PGA Professional.

Runberg's dedication to advancing the National PGA Education Program is recognized at all levels - national, section, chapter and local. Since passing the Golf Professional Training Program, Runberg has been a contributing staff member of the Professional Golf Management Program. He travels on average 12 weeks each year and has visited more than 100 different PGM programs and nearly all of the 20 hosting schools. Runberg works diligently to promote the PGA to those attending PGM schools. Runberg also advises Section apprentices via the PGA Links hotline and his many articles on how to get through the PGM Program have been published by the PGA of America's Education Department.

He is an instructor at Mendocino College and brings kids to the golf course, working side-by-side with the superintendent to teach them about golf course maintenance.

Growth of the Game Award

Janet Ortega, PGA
Pajaro Valley Golf Club
Royal Oaks, CA



PGA Head Professional Janet Ortega of Pajaro Valley Golf Club is presented with the 2007 Growth of the Game award for her involvement and significant leadership contributions through mentoring and sharing with other PGA Professionals about "Play Golf America" and growing the game of golf.

Ortega has had a measurable impact on Growth of the Game initiative. As a regional Co-Leader of the NCPGA Growth of the Game Committee since its inception in 2003, Ortega participates in yearly and strategic planning for the Section's Growth of the Game Initiatives. She also mentors her fellow PGA Professionals on the importance, function and use of the playgolffamerica.com website, as well as creativity in using the tool.

One of Ortega's best practice ideas that has been successful in her growth of the game programs is called the "Graduates and Guests Event." She invites those players who participated in the Play Golf America lesson programs to bring friends to play nine holes of golf in a non-tournament environment with cocktails and appetizers after the round.

For professionals and students alike, she co-authored the section's "Instructor's Handbook," putting the Welcome to Golf, First Swing and Link Up 2 Golf curriculums on paper in an easy to understand, teach and learn format.

Public Merchandiser of the Year

Mike Woods, PGA
Haggin Oaks Golf Complex
Sacramento, CA



PGA Head Professional Mike Woods of Haggin Oaks Golf Complex and his staff are the Public Merchandisers of the Year. Woods' philosophy is to gear everything for the customer, making it easy to shop with space to move around. Educational displays in particular are important.

Under Woods direction, Haggin Oaks added two one-of-a-kind store-in-store vendor areas with Nike and Adidas, a custom made display that holds up to 100 styles of headwear, and a putter display that holds 800 putters with two bridges and custom artificial trees creating an outside experience inside the store.

The Haggin Oaks Merchandising Team creates never before seen displays and fixtures that allow customers to have an amazing shopping experience while continually molding and changing so each visit is new, fresh and exciting. As a result, Haggin Oaks is one of only two golf shops in the country that has been awarded the Top 100 Golf Shops in America by Golf World.

Private Merchandiser of the Year

Paul "Shim" LaGoy, PGA Master Professional
Orinda Country Club
Orinda, CA



PGA Master Professional Paul "Shim" LaGoy of Orinda Country Club and his staff are recognized as the Private Merchandisers of the Year. LaGoy's philosophy is to service member needs. By providing the latest and best equipment, having staff properly educated on the equipment, and having demo equipment available for testing, LaGoy assures that members have the choices they want and need.

LaGoy believes that giving a new company a chance to test their product in the shop not only provides club members with new and exciting choices, but allows an innovative company the opportunity to see how the golfing market responds to their product.

Staying on top of the fashion industry with quality apparel and the latest knowledge of the new "tech" materials keeps members looking their best with a good fit, style and comfort.

Resort Merchandiser of the Year

Greg Enholm, PGA
Resort at Red Hawk
Sparks, NV



PGA Head Professional Greg Enholm of The Resort at Red Hawk shares his award for the Resort Merchandiser of the Year with his staff. Their mission is to be the premier golf shop in Northern Nevada, maximizing sales and profits while delivering excellent customer service through concentration on Product, Pricing, Presentation, Personnel and Promotion....the 5 P's.

Enholm's merchandising team select *products* from a variety of well-known vendors that cover the fashion, technological and pricing needs of its customers. The Resort at Red Hawk offers moderate *price* points. The impressive golf shop *presentation* with its high-beam ceilings, rich tone fixtures and colorful carpeting is one of the finest in the west. Enholm strongly believes that no merchandising philosophy can succeed without well-trained, well-groomed, friendly, helpful *personnel* to work in the shop. To round out the 5 P's, *promotion* of the shop is included in its media and other advertising.

Player of the Year

Ricardo Leibovich, PGA
Tehama Golf Club
Carmel, CA



Congratulations to PGA Head Professional Ricardo Leibovich of Tehama Golf Club. For the second consecutive year, he earns top honors as Player of the Year in the Regular Division category. Leibovich wrapped up the 2007 season with a hefty 966.84 points.

He won the NCPGA Match Play Championship and placed third at the Northern California PGA Professional Championship, receiving a qualifying spot to the 41st PGA Professional National Championship at Reynolds Plantation, Greensboro, Georgia in 2008. He also receives exemptions into the 2008 Livermore Valley Wine Country Championship, AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am and the Reno-Tahoe Open.

Senior Player of the Year

Michael Cook, PGA
Mountain Springs Golf and Country Club
Sonora, CA



For the second consecutive year, PGA Head Professional Michael Cook of Mountain Springs Golf and Country Club garners the Senior Player of the Year honors.

Congratulations are extended to Cook, who finished the 2007 Senior Division season with 178.50 points, 48.5 points ahead of the next closest contender. Not only did he finish first in three senior pro-pro tournaments, Cook also claimed title to the NCPGA Senior Match Play Championship.

Assistant Player of the Year

Eric Goettsch, PGA
Tehama Golf Club
Carmel, CA



Special recognition goes out to PGA Assistant Golf Professional Eric Goettsch of Tehama Golf Club, the 2007 Assistant Player of the Year. Goettsch wrapped the 2007 Assistant Apprentice Division season with 587.50 points, 47.5 points ahead of the closest competitor.

He is the 2007 Medal Play Series 2 Champion and finished second in the Northern California TaylorMade-Adidas Assistant Apprentice Championship, receiving a qualifying spot in the TaylorMade-Adidas National Championship.

Sales Representative of the Year

Terry Kuhns
Tracy, CA



Terry Kuhns, an independent sales representative, was presented with the 2007 Sales Representative of the Year award. Kuhns has been involved with the business of golf since 1965 — his first year of PGA apprenticeship. He was a member of the Tri State section for 17 years and has since been a sales representative in Northern California.

Kuhns has supported many NCPGA events over the years with generous donations of prize money and golf products. He has been involved with several community-based golf programs throughout his career including running the qualifier for the U.S. Kids World Championship. When employed as a PGA Professional, he donated his time and prizes for Children's Hospital Charities.

Sports Media Person of the Year

Michael Jacobi
KRML – 1410 AM Jazz and Blues Radio
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA



Michael Jacobi of KRML – 1410 AM Jazz and Blues Radio was selected as the Sports Media Person of the Year. With his “Raising the Standards Show” and community contributions to golf, Jacobi has been a local media mentor and is generous in creating exposure opportunities for many of the NCPGA Professionals and apprentices.

Jacobi. As he interviews such local stars as Clint Eastwood and well-known professionals such as RJ Harper and Laird Small, Jacobi always has a local PGA Professional on the air with him. Close to 100 PGA Professionals and apprentices have been featured on his show over the years. Throughout the years, Jacobi has also continued to promote and support local golf programs and events.

Assistant Golf Professional of the Year

Tom James, PGA Apprentice
Madera Golf & Country Club
Madera, CA



The Northern California PGA is proud to honor PGA Assistant Golf Professional Tom James of Madera Golf & Country Club as the 2007 Assistant Golf Professional of the Year for his time and dedication to the NCPGA Assistant/Apprentice Division as an educational and mentoring leader.

James became a PGA Apprentice in August 2005 and quickly became an active member of the Northern California Sections' Assistant Apprentice Division. In January 2006 he began volunteering for the Assistant/Apprentice Division as the Tournament Director. He assumed Presidency the following year.

Through James' efforts for events, the collective purses from sponsors increased by 25 percent for the year and there was a 25 percent increase in participation.

During his presidency in 2007, he has devoted hundreds of hours assisting fellow apprentices and developing the Section's Apprentice Mentoring Program. To date, James has mentored more than 40 Level 1 apprentices and many more in Level 2 and 3.

James has also fully organized week-long Junior Camps and contributes time to assisting players of the local high schools in Madera and Fresno.