

2017 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

NAME OF NOMINEE: Daniel R. Mullen

FACILITY NAME: Paxton Park Golf Course

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1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.

The nominee's performance is a constant balancing act given that his job responsibilities at this particular facility include dual roles as the PGA Director of Golf & Operations/Class A PGA Head Professional (since November of 1997) as well as the Greens Superintendent (since January 2000 and member of the Greens Superintendent Association of America). His longevity in this dual role, and the vision and guidance he has provided this facility during an ongoing, long term renovation program to an historic, but very dated, facility attests to his overall performance.

The nominee demonstrates professionalism in every aspect of his job, including dress, language and behavior. This would include interaction with players as well as employees. The nominee encourages and expects this same professionalism from his staff because he strongly believes each one represents not only themselves, but Paxton Park and the City of Paducah, our sponsors, members and supporters as well.

Paxton Park hosts a number of big tournaments each year which include many good, experienced tournament players who play at an entirely different level than our typical daily fee players. He can effectively relate to, and converse with, all levels of players from a diverse background and provide them with the service they deserve, and make them feel welcome. He is very involved with them and, based on their interactions day after day, has their respect.

The nominee is also a longtime CPA and has been able to provide Paxton Park a financial background that has helped guide the facility during ongoing, long term renovation efforts including budgeting, forecasting, business plans, capital improvement plans and various financial analysis that have become the blueprint for understanding our business and where we are headed.

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

Due to the nominee's far western Kentucky geographical location and many job responsibilities at this particular facility, he has not served on any committees or held any Section offices.

He has continued to support any relevant PGA or KGA policies or procedures at Paxton Park in order to support, and be consistent with, the KGA such as KGA handicap service, hosting annual Kentucky PGA Junior Golf Tour events and middle school regionals in western Kentucky and has hosted periodic other KGA events such as local qualifiers for the Kentucky Open.

He participated in the three year KGA Golf House Kentucky funding program a few years ago.

He strives to serve the Section through his everyday professionalism and service.

He strives to serve the Association and the USGA by adhering to the rules on amateur status and cash payouts. Paxton Park utilizes script prizes and does not engage in cash payouts.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.

Paxton Park is a low budget, self-funded municipal golf course agency but is not currently taxpayer supported (although we are trying to change that) in the City budget. Paxton Park relies on user fees and donations to provide funds for operations, improvements and purchase equipment. This is quite a daunting task in this day and time.

The nominee prepared a vision and master plan approximately 16 years ago that was designed to physically renovate this facility over the long term, in order to make Paxton Park relevant and competitive again in the local golf community. Since that time, the nominee has spearheaded fundraising efforts that have raised approximately one million dollars for this renovation, outside of operations, and has done exactly what that master plan blueprint laid out. Paxton Park is not only competitive again but is considered a leader in the local golf community. The Park has won the local Paducah Sun Readers' Choice award for favorite golf course in the region three out of the last four years (this survey includes newspaper readers from southern Illinois and western Kentucky).

During this time, the nominee has also led Paxton Park to implement a wider array of membership options and daily fee options. He has also been directly responsible for upgrading our cart fleet and bringing GPS units to the entire cart fleet. He has also installed winter tarp coverings on approximately 20 rental carts each winter for the past four years. Paxton Park remains the only public facility in western Kentucky to have done that.

Our flagship event, the Irvin Cobb Golf Championships, is now one of the largest events in the state (in terms of purse). This event continues to be the flagship event in this four state regional area with the best and most competitive field. Part of the reason for this is the time and attention the nominee puts into this event. An example of his efforts include staying on number one tee from 6:30 in the morning, until 1:30 in the afternoon, teeing off each and every player in order to (1) make sure he thanks them for their participation and (2) make sure they all get told the same rules, in the same manner, and answer any questions they might have with the same answer. This is typical of the effort he puts into anything he does at this facility. He strives for equity and fairness.

The nominee has led Paxton Park through this "renaissance" campaign while maintaining the original mission of this facility, which is to be an affordable, quality, recreational "family" facility. Mr. Edwin J. Paxton laid that philosophy out as the basis for establishing this facility in 1939, and it remains that way today.

4. Briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

The nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals by his work ethic, professionalism, modesty and personable, friendly manner. He is widely known in our area, and respected by all. The amount of work and effort he puts into this facility, is second to none. The fact he serves a dual role at this facility, both on the course as the greens superintendent, and in the Pro Shop, and can be seen regularly in the trenches with his golf course crew, speaks volumes to what kind of employee and leader he is.

The long term efforts to renovate this facility, which the nominee envisioned, spearheaded and physically helped implement, has inspired fellow Golf Professionals.

The nominee's long hours, he puts in regularly, to provide the best possible product, without any direct resulting compensation (spent over 1,000 volunteer hours on the golf course assisting the maintenance crew in 2016 is typical), inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

The fact this nominee has been nominated for this award by a fellow Golf Professional 3 times now (and was fortunate enough to win this award in 2015), hopefully is a reflection of how much this individual inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

The respect given to the nominee by the members, daily fee players and recurring tournament players who keep coming back in for our larger events, such as the Cobb, which has approximately 55 professionals in the field, inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

I know they inspire him because he wants to represent them in the most positive manner possible. He takes his responsibility as a PGA professional seriously.

5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.

The nominee believes growing the game of golf is more than just teaching. It is creating an enjoyable atmosphere, in an environment where people have fun, and want to be there.

The nominee gave lessons for years before Paxton Park began implementing its long term master plan. At that time, he realized he did not have time to teach, but teaching was a hat he could ask someone else to wear, and he has done so. Since he ceased teaching, six teaching professionals have taken over as the Paxton Park teaching professional, at one time or another, despite the fact it was contractually his concession. He was willing to give that concession up, in order to provide a teaching professional on site, because he felt it was that important. The Paducah area is also fortunate to have one of the best teaching facilities in the country in our back yard. The Golf Complex has several full-time instructors and Paxton Park partners with the Golf Complex to provide a golf course site for playing lessons, short game lessons, putting lessons, etc. This service is provided The Golf Complex at no charge in order to help fulfill our obligation and provide "access" to those who "teach" the game.

The nominee has led efforts to make the golf course accessible to juniors who seemed worthy of a "golf scholarship", as he calls it. These kids did not have the money for a membership, or for

range balls, but he made it available to them at no cost, because he believes it is part of our mission.

The nominee has led efforts to provide a home course to several local high school golf programs, without cost, because he believes it is part of our mission. This was not always popular with some of the members but he has gone to the trouble to make it work, because he feels it is part of our mission. Paxton Park hosts high school golf matches, free of charge, on a regular basis during the high school golf season. Paxton Park is the home course for McCracken County and Paducah Tilghman High School golf programs, both boys and girls. We also provide practice access for the Massac County (IL) High School golf team just across the river.

The nominee provides these kids with free range privileges during the golf season, because he believes it is part of our mission.

Our largest fundraising golf tournament now shares the proceeds, with three local high school golf programs, because he feels like it is part of our mission.

The nominee regularly gives kids better clubs, free of charge, when he has them made available to him through donations. The donors know what he does with them, and they in turn have no reservations about giving him clubs to give away at his discretion.

The nominee led efforts to provide a time when Paxton Park could provide juniors an opportunity to play, free from green fees. Paxton Park does this twice a week.

The nominee gives countless “free” tips to golfers he sees on the course while performing his other duties. He can be seen regularly getting off a mower to demonstrate the proper weight shift. He understands the better they play, the more they will play.

The nominee proudly promotes new member discounts, junior membership options and junior daily fee options, in our golf price structure each year.

The nominee is a big proponent of the Get Golf Ready program and the PGA Junior Leagues program but has not been able to get these programs far enough along due to limited personnel issues the last few years. He is hopeful this too can be implemented at Paxton Park in 2017.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received.

Golf Professional of the Year	2015	Kentucky Section
Merchandiser of the Year—Public	2001	Kentucky Section
Apprentice Scholarship (Titleist or TaylorMade)	1989	Kentucky Section