

2023 Special Awards Candidate Bio Form

Please send this form back no later Friday, October 21, 2022.

If you were nominated for more than one award you must **submit a bio form for each award.**

Email *

jbreedlove@oakland-hills.com

Name of Nominee: *

John Breedlove

Award Nominated for: *

Assistant Golf Professional of the Year

Facility Employed at: *

Oakland Hills Country Club

Year Elected to Membership: *

2022

Please describe your achievements/accomplishments that would pertain to this award. *

First, I would like to thank you for considering me for the Assistant Golf Professional of the year award. It is an honor to have the hard work from this season acknowledged by our organization and considered against other assistant golf professionals in the Michigan section who work tirelessly to grow this great game.

2022 has been a challenging but rewarding year. I relocated my family from the Georgia section when I was presented the opportunity to come work as the senior assistant professional at Oakland Hills Country Club under the mentorship of Michigan golf hall of famer Steve Brady.

I'm sure you are all aware that 2022 has been a uniquely difficult year for Oakland Hills after the fire that destroyed the historic clubhouse on February 17th, 2022. The fire left the club scrambling to regroup and figure out the logistics of golf operations for an active membership at a 36-hole facility..... without a clubhouse. As Mike Tyson famously said, "everybody's got a plan until they get punched in the mouth".

I remember watching ESPN's coverage of the fire and thinking that it was one of the worst tragedies to occur in the sport in recent memory. At that time, I had no clue that I would soon be employed there and had no intention of ever living in Michigan. However, about a month after the event, I saw a job posting on pga.org for the senior assistant golf professional position at the renowned club. I was looking to take the next step in my career, and I thought it would be a unique opportunity to be a part of the planning and rebuilding process. I also thought that this was a great chance for me to be considered for a position at one of the top clubs in America as I'm sure, with the clubhouse just having burned to the ground, the stack of resumes being submitted wasn't quite as high as it normally would be. Fortunately for me, Steve Brady gave me a shot. I can honestly say that I have worked harder and been challenged more this summer than any of my other golf industry experiences, but it has been deeply rewarding.

A little background on me. I am originally from Deland, Florida where I first got my feet wet in the golf industry at Victoria Hills Golf Club (Golf Digest top 10 you can play in Florida 2005). I started working on the outside operations team and quickly worked my way up to 1st Assistant. I worked at Victoria Hills from 2004-2010. When the economy slumped in 2008-2009 it was devastating to the golf industry in Florida. I had always wanted to join the military due to the influence that my uncle, Colonel Gary Breedlove, had made on me when I was young. So, much to the surprise of everyone I knew (including my wife), I went to the local recruiter's office and enlisted in the United States Army.

Joining the Army was the best decision that I ever made. The military experience taught me discipline, the value of hard work, and a deep appreciation of the American way of life. I had a successful military tenure, earning 2 Army Achievement Medals, the Army Commendation Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, and graduating as the Distinguished Honor Graduate at the Army Warrior Leader Course (top in class of 325 soldiers). I spent much of my military service time overseas being stationed in Germany for 6 years and deployed to Afghanistan for 10 months in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

After being honorably discharged from the military in 2017, I knew I wanted to return to the golf business. I enrolled at Keiser University College of Golf and Sport Management and later graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in Golf Management. During my time at Keiser, I was given one year of eligibility from the NAIA and walked on to the golf team at age 32. I competed for one season and later assisted the head coach by running practices and traveling with the team. At Keiser, I learned a tremendous amount about being a golf instructor under the mentorship of Dr. Eric Wilson, PGA and Ken Martin, PGA. I also gained valuable golf industry experience being employed at High Ridge Country Club, Moon Golf, and Callaway Golf.

In 2019 I was accepted into the University of Georgia to pursue a master's degree in Kinesiology with a focus in Sports Management. I was also given a position as a graduate teaching assistant as a golf instructor. I was responsible for teaching the game to over 100 undergraduate students each semester. This was an invaluable experience for me to be able to apply my skills as a golf instructor to over 400 students.

I'm very proud of the fact that in May of 2021 I graduated from the University of Georgia with a master's degree in Kinesiology and a GPA of 3.85. Furthermore, my master's thesis entitled "Impact of Sales with Advanced Analytical Technology on Golf Consumer Purchasing Behavior: Traditional vs. Technological Procedures" was focused on how the use of Trackman in retail sales impacts consumer behaviors. This paper has been condensed and submitted to the Journal of Sport Management for peer review. Another research project that I contributed to during my time at UGA was recently published in the Sustainability Journal. The article is entitled "Moving Away from Category Exclusivity Deals to Sponsorship Activation Platforms: The Case of the Ryder Cup" and was focused on sponsorship strategies used during the 2014 Ryder Cup at Gleneagles.

After completing my studies at UGA, I was blessed to be offered a position as 1st Assistant Professional at the Atlanta Athletic Club where I learned a tremendous amount from my friend and mentor Bud Taylor, PGA. I was able to complete much of my level 1,2, and 3 PGA apprenticeship during my year at the AAC and was a critical staff member during the 2021 KPMG Women's PGA Championship.

My previous education and experience culminated in this opportunity here at Oakland Hills Country Club. I am proud to say that I have been able to make a positive impact on the club during an exceedingly difficult time after the fire. I have been involved in many golf aspects of the golf operations from planning and logistics of temporary facilities to tournament operations, but my greatest contribution has been the revitalization of the junior golf programs at OHCC. Between the recent major renovation of the south course and the clubhouse fire, the junior golf programs had seen a dramatic decline in participation. I was able to introduce the Operation 36 program to the club. 9-Hole events are the cornerstone of the Operation 36 program and the true measurement of the skill level of the players. Players are attempting to shoot 36 to advance to the next division (Hole length D1 = 25 yards, D2 = 50 yards, D3 = 100 yards, D4 = 150 yards, D5 = 200 yards). Even from the shorter distances, the North Course at OHCC provides a stout test of a player's abilities. If these kids can learn to score on this golf course at a young age, they will be able to score anywhere in the world once they grow and develop. This summer we have had over 120 different kids participate in the program hitting 21,536 shots on the golf course this season with a scoring average of 43.2! Over 52% of kids who participated advanced to at least division 2 and some players advanced all the way to division 5. More importantly, the junior golf programs were well received by the entire membership and will be expanded for next season.

In summary, it has been a whirlwind of a few years since returning to the golf industry in May of 2017. During this time, I earned a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and Class A membership with the PGA. I have also been able to contribute to two of America's top private clubs, the Atlanta Athletic Club, and Oakland Hills Country Club. I'm proud to be a member of the PGA of America and I am excited to see where the journey goes from here.

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