

2025 Merchandiser of the Year Public Award Candidate Bio Form

Please submit this form no later than **Friday, October 4, 2024 at 4pm.**

Email *

jabbergolf@aol.com

Name of Nominee: *

Dean Marks

Facility Employed at: *

Milham Park Golf Club

Year Elected to Membership: *

1997

Do you own the Merchandise Concession? *

Yes

If not, who owns the Merchandise Concession? *

n/a

What percentage of time do you spend in the merchandising area of your facility? *

40

Please share what you can to illustrate the financial success of your merchandising concession * over the past few years in 250 words or less: **(Note: These bios will be shared with the Michigan Section membership- a suggestion would be to use percentages rather than whole numbers to keep any sensitive information private)**

The retail market is tough, but Milham Park has remained strong yet agile enough to adapt to the market's desires as needed. They added a Golf Performance Academy in 2014 which increased custom club fitting and hard good sales by 200%. In 2020, they opened a ski shop inside the pro shop after the area's only local ski shop closed over the summer. Ski Shop sales the first winter surpassed \$200,000, exceeding any expectations they had while selling through 95% of the inventory. Ski sales doubled to \$400,000 in 2022 and are projected to be even higher in 2024. Techniques learned through selling skis carried over to golf, where golf merchandise sales are expected to exceed \$425,000 – a 30% increase over 2020.

Does your facility have the Mill-River Plan or a similar merchandise purchasing plan in place? *

Yes

No

If yes, please explain the plan that is in place: *

n/a

Please share your merchandising philosophy in 250 words or less: *

Selling merchandise at a municipal golf course is very challenging in today's world. Many people just go online or down the road to Dick's to purchase. Those who come into the shop expect to be able to haggle on the price. Milham Park is one of the few green grass shops that has been able to thrive despite the strong competition with the online market.

The pro shop at Milham Park is known for a large shoe selection and regularly keeps over 600 pair in stock. We also have clubs, clothing, and accessories from dozens of companies. Maintaining a large inventory means customers can try before they buy, which is a critical component to competing with the online market. Having a large inventory in which participants can happily spend their gift certificates has also increased our outings and tournaments business, adding greatly to the overall financial health of the facility. Our staff is trained to talk knowledgably about our products, helping us compete with the big-box stores. We maintain strong relationships with our vendors and sales reps to assure we are always offering the best product at the best prices.

The combination of a large selection of quality merchandise, professional service from staff, and discounted prices has kept the pro shop at Milham Park competitive and played a key role in keeping the golf course operationally profitable.

List any other PGA Section or National Awards you've received and the year(s) you received them (50 word limit): *

Youth Player Development - Michigan 2007, 2012
Player Development - Michigan 2017
Merchandiser of the Year Public - Michigan 2023
#GameChanger (PGA Jr League) 2020, 2022, 2023
#GameChanger (Development) 2022, 2023

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