

Hall of fame

Ontario PGA club pro winner continues to knock down the barriers

Not just any other female golfer, Mary Jane Hall has made quite a statement in Canadian golf. Overcoming many barriers set up by a male-dominated sport, Hall believes she has become somewhat of a role model for potential women club professionals.

The head pro at the Ladies Golf Club of Toronto, Hall was recently presented with the Ontario Club Professional of the Year award by the Ontario PGA.

"The most rewarding fact was that previous winners made the final decision," said Hall, who began playing golf at the tender age of 13.

The awards committee is made up of past recipients of the Club Professional of the Year award. They bestow points to deserving clubs, determining which facilities have excelled in specific categories, such as merchandising, teaching, community involvement and charity work. Hall's award recognized her club's overall excellence, particularly in the area of junior programs. The Ladies Golf Club of Toronto organizes provincial and district events for junior players, as well as offering a great deal to the community, such as clinics for neighborhood children.

"We try to offer kids an opportunity they may not have otherwise had," said Hall, whose club is attempting to lure youngsters into the sport — offering a new opportunity, a switch from the common options of little league soccer and baseball.

Along with the children's clinics and her many other responsibilities at the club, she still finds time to help out in the community, volunteering much of her time to the hospital. Despite her busy schedule, however, Hall never slows down — it's a character trait.

She has been involved in the athletic realm of life since she was a child, and although golf is her favorite, it isn't her



only sport. Hall also enjoys horseback riding, scuba-diving, tap dancing and playing squash occasionally. Her golfing résumé, though, reads the longest, and has the brightest highlights.

She has been playing golf for 33 years, professionally for the last 27. She started her career in tournaments for CPGA assistant professionals, where she was the only female. From that point, she went on to become the first woman in many other areas: the first member of the Quebec PGA, the first member of the Atlantic PGA, the first to achieve Class A status as a member of the Canadian PGA, the first to become a head professional in Canada and the first to compete in the Canadian Club Professional Championship.

Despite all of her achievements and milestones, Hall's most recent award is her most cherished — "the icing on the cake," she describes — being rewarded for what she loves to do.

Still very active in the golfing world, Hall plans on competing in a few events this season, including Ontario PGA tournaments and Canadian women's events.

The accomplishments to date are wonderful, but Mary Jane Hall has no plans on stopping just yet. She probably wouldn't know what to do with herself if she did. •

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