

# Mielke Looking to Build On Recent Success

Mark Mielke hopes to repeat his 2013 Senior PGA Championship effort at the 25th Southworth Senior PGA Professional National Championship presented by Mercedes-Benz

By Randy Stutzman

It was a whirlwind final round for Mark Mielke in May at the 74th Senior PGA Championship at St. Louis' Bellerive Country Club. The 51-year-old PGA head professional at Mill River Club in Oyster Bay, N. Y., made his first appearance in the Championship an unforgettable one, overcoming a triple bogey on the par-4 10th hole to share Low PGA Club Professionals honors with Jeff Coston of Blaine, Wash.

Thanks to the success Mark Mielke (left) and Jim Woodward had at the 2013 Senior PGA Championship and 2012 Senior PGA Professional National Championship, respectively, they figure to be in contention this month in Virginia.

"That 10th hole wasn't good to me all week," recalls Mielke, who was 6-over-par on the 10th over his four rounds. "I had some course management problems on that hole, and I'm just happy it didn't cost me too much."

Mielke quickly recovered from his triple bogey with three back-nine birdies, including one on the 72nd hole, to tie Coston. The pair tied for 28th place overall, and were two of five PGA Club Professionals to make the cut.

"I really played well at Bellerive, and my game was firing on all eight cylinders from Thursday through Sunday," says Mielke. "It was really satisfying to make those birdies coming home. I told myself I wanted to make up for that triple bogey, and I did."



## 25th Southworth Senior PGA Professional National Championship



PGA

SOUTHWORTH SENIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



SOUTHWORTH Development LLC

**When:** Oct. 10-13

**Where:** Creighton Farms, Aldie, Va.; River Creek Club, Leesburg, Va.

**Defending Champion:**

Jim Woodward of Edmond, Okla.

**Prize money and purse/method of play:** A purse of \$285,000 will be distributed to a field of 264 competitors. The Champion will receive \$20,000. Following the first 36 holes, the field will be reduced to the lowest 70 players and ties. Those players will play the final two rounds at Creighton Farms.

Mielke now turns his attention to the silver anniversary of the Southworth Senior PGA Professional National Championship presented by Mercedes-Benz, which will be contested for a third consecutive year in Northern Virginia from Oct. 10-13, at Creighton Farms in Aldie, Va., and River Creek Club in Leesburg, Va.

"It was my first time playing in this Championship and it was a great experience and great golf courses," explains Mielke, who tied for 33rd in 2012. "Especially at Creighton Farms, there are some real tough holes, but there also are some birdie holes. With some experience, I feel good about my chances to finish well again."

The 264-player field features PGA Professionals at least 50 years of age, as of the Championship, who have qualified through one of the 41 PGA Sections.

Last year, Jim Woodward of Edmond, Okla., eagled the 72nd hole to capture the Championship at Creighton Farms.

The 55-year-old PGA teaching professional at Oak Tree National Golf Club in Edmond hit a 4-hybrid approach 245 yards on the 569-yard, par-5 18th, with the ball coming to rest just a foot from the hole.

Woodward, who was the only player in the field to finish under par in 2012, became the first South Central PGA Section member to win a Senior PGA Professional National Championship.

The low 35 scorers in this year's Senior PGA Professional National Championship will advance to the 75th Senior PGA Championship presented by KitchenAid on May 22-25, 2014, at Harbor Shores in Benton Harbor, Mich.

The top eight finishers, including ties, will receive exemptions into the 2014 Senior PGA Professional National Championship.

In addition, the top five finishers will be exempt into the Champions Tour National Finals provided they have submitted an entry by the entry deadline.

Southworth Development of Newton, Mass., is in its third year of title sponsorship in 2013. Mercedes-Benz also joined as a presenting sponsor in 2011. ■