

## Our Best

Arizona Golf Association honors 2003 award winners

The Arizona Golf Association (AGA) has announced its 2003 NOVA Player Awards, which include the Players of the Year and Mayfair Award Winner (lowest stroke average). NOVA Home Loans is the presenting sponsor of AGA events and has been the "Official Mortgage Bank" of the AGA since 1999. The awards were presented at the AGA's annual Spring Meeting and Awards Banquet at Phoenix CC.

"These awards honor the playing achievements of some exceptional individuals," said James Waitt, the AGA's Director of Rules & Competitions. "We are very proud of these men and their support of our programs as well as their dedication to continued improvement. Aside from individual accolades, each served as an ambassador for the AGA in 2003 while playing in team competitions. That is one of the highest honors we bestow on the players."

### Kellaney Is State's Top Amateur Again

For a record eighth time, Ken Kellaney wins the AGA Player of the Year Award, based on player performances in major championships in 2003.

At the age of 47, Kellaney has established himself as one of the premier amateur golfers in the Grand Canyon state by winning an unprecedented 13 major championships in AGA competition. He is the only player to have captured the career Grand Slam in Arizona amateur golf, having won the Publinks, Mid-Amateur, Amateur and Stroke Play championships. He earned his record eighth Player of the Year award by virtue of winning the Arizona Amateur for a record fifth time. He secured his record eighth Mayfair Award by posting a 70.78 scoring average.

"Winning this award means a lot and was a lot of hard work," Kellaney said. "I moved here from Illinois in 1987 and in a short period of time, I have had quite



Tommy Roberts

*Ken Kellaney's play is like money in the bank, safe and gaining interest.*

**"Most rewarding is that every year I have gotten better at a higher level of competition as I have gotten older."**

**— Ken Kellaney**

a bit of success with the AGA. Most rewarding is that every year I have gotten better at a higher level of competition as I have gotten older. I am honored to accept this award."

In one of the closest races for Player of the Year honors, Kellaney narrowly edged Arizona State University standout Jesse Mueller, who captured the Stroke Play championship and finished second

in the Mayfair Award with a 70.79 scoring average.

Kellaney, a bank vice president, recorded a 3 and 2 victory over Ben Kern at Moon Valley CC to capture the Arizona Amateur title. Kern, 19, a Tucson resident, is the son of Ben Kern, the AGA Player of the Year in 1997 and 1998. Kellaney's stellar performance en route to the victory was highlighted by six birdies and just 22 putts. At the Arizona Publinks championship, he narrowly missed picking up his second title of the year, losing in a three-way playoff to Aaron Moreno at the Aguila GC.

Kellaney previously shared the record of four Arizona Amateur championships with Dr. Ed Updegraff and Mark Sollenberger. He has won at least one Arizona major championship in seven of the past 14 years.

To be eligible for Player of the Year, a golfer must have won one of the four individual major championships (AZ Publinks, AZ Mid-Amateur, AZ Amateur, AZ Stroke Play) or be the winner of the Mayfair Award. The Tournament Committee determines the winner by reviewing player performance, including the following: having won a second individual major championship, the Mayfair Award, a USGA Championship, another AGA-sponsored individual competition, performance in USGA Championships and the NOVA Performance Rankings.

#### KEN KELLANEY – 2003 RECORD

**Winner:** 79th AZ Amateur

**Mayfair Award Winner:** 70.78

**2nd:** AZ Publinks

**5th:** AZ Mid-Amateur

**12th:** 30th AZ Stroke Play

**NOVA Open Performance Rankings:**

1421 (1st)

## Masters Player of the Year ARMEN DIRTADIAN

Dirtadian, a 51-year-old school teacher and actor from Tucson, earned two victories in 2003 and finished third in the NOVA Masters Performance Rankings. He posted rounds of 75-73 to capture the Southern Divisional Stroke Play. He also won the Short Course title by defeating four-time winner Kellaney, 15-year-old Philip Francis and Russell Bergstedt III in a playoff on the par-60 4,019-yard Ahwatukee Lakes GC. Dirtadian's other top finishes included a second at the Divisional Short Course championship, a third at the Southern Amateur, where he finished four strokes off the lead, and a fourth at the Northern Amateur.



### ARMEN DIRTADIAN – 2003 RECORD

**Winner:** Southern Divisional Stroke Play  
**Winner:** Short Course  
**2nd:** Divisional Short Course  
**3rd:** Southern Amateur)  
**6th:** Western Amateur  
**Qualified:** US APL Sectional Qualifying  
**4th:** Northern Amateur  
**3rd:** 30th AZ Stroke Play  
**NOVA Masters Performance Rankings:**  
 1010 (3rd)

## Seniors Player of the Year MICHAEL MAHONEY

Mahoney, 62, from Scottsdale, notched two Senior Divisional titles in 2003 and finished second in the NOVA Senior Performance Rankings. He picked up the Short Course title at Ahwatukee Lakes GC in a playoff victory over Jerry Baker of Scottsdale. Mahoney overcame a five-stroke deficit with a final-round 60 (even par) to force the extra holes. At the Divisional Match Play event Mahoney won the championship, defeating Tom Preston of Mesa 4 and 2. He finished second at the Northern Divisional Stroke Play tournament at Antelope Hills GC.



### MICHAEL MAHONEY – 2003 RECORD

**Winner:** Divisional Short Course  
**Winner:** AZ Divisional Match Play  
**2nd:** Northern Divisional Stroke Play  
**9th:** AZ Divisional Stroke Play  
**5th Low Amateur:** AZ Senior Open  
**Team 5th:** Sedona Divisional Four-Ball  
**NOVA Senior Performance Rankings:**  
 572.5 (2nd)

## Volunteer of the Year JIM HAMILTON

For the past 10 years, Jim Hamilton has been a fixture at AGA tournaments. Entering his tenth year of service with the Arizona Golf Association, the 68-year-old former Penzoil sales management executive is most often found managing the scoring area at AGA and USGA events.



"This is a very unexpected and such a wonderful honor," Hamilton remarked. "Since I retired, this is a way for me to stay involved, be around people that I truly enjoy, doing something I find very rewarding."

Hamilton moved to the Valley in 1980 from Riverside, Calif., and retired 10 years later. Combining his passion for golf with his desire to use his business skill, he found the perfect opportunity volunteering not only with the AGA, but at the LPGA and PGA Tour events.

## Updegraff Award FREDERICK C. HICKLE, TUCSON CC



Fred Hickle has served Arizona Golf in many roles. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Association from 1976 until completing his presidency in 1989.

During that time, he was involved with the development of the tournament program, working especially hard to retain the walking tradition in the Stroke Play. As the USGA Sectional Affairs (now Senior Amateur) representative Fred has been a staunch proponent of the traditions of golf so valued by Dr. Updegraff.

Among his USGA contributions, including two terms on the Executive Committee, Hickle has been instrumental in protecting the integrity of the USGA Handicap System and equipment rules. Always working behind the scenes, his intense devotion to the true spirit of the game and its honorable traditions has governed his life and forever benefited Arizona Golf.

## Legends Player of the Year REX BREWSTER



Brewster, 69, of Phoenix, had an outstanding year. He won two events and finished third in the five other tournaments he entered, which propelled him to first in the NOVA Legends Performance Rankings. He bested the competition by five strokes, shooting a 60-61 to win the Divisional Short Course Legends title. At the Southern Divisional Stroke Play tournament, he posted scores of 70-69 to capture the title by seven strokes.

### REX BREWSTER – 2003 RECORD

**Winner:** Divisional Short Course  
**Winner:** Southern Divisional Stroke Play  
**Team 3rd:** Southern Divisional Four-Ball  
**3rd:** AZ Divisional Stroke Play  
**Team 3rd:** Sedona Divisional Four-Ball  
**3rd:** Northern Divisional Stroke Play  
**Team 3rd:** East Valley Divisional Four-Ball  
**NOVA Legends Performance Rankings:**  
 637.5 (1st)