

H. MALLORY PRIVETT 1936-2015

Local golf rules guru passes at 79

Privett did a great deal for Southeast Florida golf in the past 20 years.

By Brian Biggane
Special to The Post

H. Mallory Privett, a member of two golf Halls of Fame who last month became only the third recipient of the Florida State Golf Association's Lifetime Achievement Award, died Saturday after a lengthy illness. He was 79.

Privett, who worked for Pratt & Whitney for 33 years and served as mayor of North Palm Beach from 1971-74, spent much of the past 23 years since his retirement serving as a rules official and volunteer coordinator, serving as Volunteer Chairman of the Honda Classic from 2006-12. He had been diagnosed with bone marrow cancer.

"He was literally the first call I made when we took over the Honda in 2006," Hon-



H. Mallory Privett was inducted into the South Florida PGA Hall of Fame last month. He is also in the FSGA Hall of Fame. LANNIS WATERS/ THE PALM BEACH POST

da Classic Executive Director Ken Kennerly said. "And I truly believe he's one of the reasons the tournament is where it is today."

"He's meant the world to our organization," FSGA Executive Director Jim Demick added. "He was an amazing individual; he gave himself to every golf organization that needed help, and was so tremendously capable. He was the face of golf in Southeast Florida for the last 20 years."

Born in Selma, Ala., Privett was introduced to the game by his father and grew up caddying at Selma Country Club. He maintained a single-digit handicap for much of his life and in 1992, the year he retired, he won the PGA National senior championship and Palm Beach Gardens city championship. During a failed bid the same year to qualify for the U.S. Senior Amateur, he took an interest in the job of rules official and decided to follow that path.

Fellow USGA and FSGA rules official Joe Small, who calls Privett his mentor and has worked scores of events alongside him, said in their early years together he didn't always understand his methods.

"Then I learned there was a reason, and now the FSGA uses a lot of his principles as far as administering a tournament. How many people he touched is just amazing. He really was an amazing guy."

Privett was inducted into the

FSGA Hall of Fame in 2010 and last month added the South Florida PGA Hall of Fame to his résumé. Last month he also joined Bill Baker and Jim Callender as the only recipients of the FSGA Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kennerly said he also played a huge role in the development of Honda's junior golf events and said he will be recognized at the eighth annual Junior Honda Classic Jan. 2-3 at PGA National.

Privett is survived by his wife, Margaret "Boo" Previtt, who was at his side as a volunteer at many of his events, as well as three sons and 10 grandchildren. Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Thursday at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 3395 Burns Road, Palm Beach Gardens.

The family has requested donations in his name be made to the American Cancer Society and the Florida State Golf Association Future of Golf Foundation.