

# PHOTO FINISH

*John Baldwin edged George Zahringer III at the wire to win his second consecutive MGA Amateur Player of the Year title*

**I**n one of the closest Amateur Player of the Year races in Metropolitan Golf Association history, John C. Baldwin of the Meadow Brook Club in Jericho, NY, narrowly edged George J. Zahringer III of The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT, by five points. It was Baldwin's second consecutive such title. (For final standings, see "Scoreboard" on page 55.)

Baldwin, a national sales director for First Boston Corporation and one of the Met Area's leading competitors since 1967, earned his total of 645 points with consistent play throughout the entire season. He coupled victories in the Long Island Amateur and New York State Mid-Amateur with top performances in numerous other area events. He was a finalist in the Richardson Memorial, was the local qualifying medalist for the U.S. Open, reached the semifinals of the Havemeyer Memorial and the quarterfinals of the Travis Memorial, survived the cut at the Ike Championship and Met Open, qualified for the U.S. Amateur and closed the year with a tie for seventh place in the Mid-Atlantic Amateur.

Early in the year Baldwin was locked in a close race with Jeff Thomas of Plainfield West Golf Club in Plainfield, NJ. Thomas won his seventh New Jersey State Amateur, the New Jersey State Mid-Amateur and finished second in the Ike. But a mid-season wrist injury curtailed his schedule and dropped him out of the running for his first Player of the Year title.

Zahringer qualified locally for the U.S. Open and won the Hochster Memorial early in the season. But he lay



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well back in the standings until August, when he tied for eighth and finished low amateur in the Met Open. Zahringer continued his fine play into September, advancing to the quarterfinals of the British Amateur. As the final weeks wound down, he trailed Baldwin by only 45 points.

Zahringer continued his charge by qualifying for the U.S. Mid-Amateur and winning a match, but the 115 points he earned for that effort still left him five points in arrears as Baldwin picked up another 75 points for his tie for seventh place in the Mid-Atlantic Amateur played the same week. The final tally showed 645 points for Baldwin and 640 for Zahringer.

When notified of his success, Baldwin said he was ecstatic that he had proven that his win in 1990 (which he termed "a dream season") was not a fluke. "I came into the season thinking very positively about my game," he said, "and even though I had some mid-season disappointment in the Ike and the Met Amateur, I just tried to keep improving. Hopefully I'll perform even better next year, and maybe be successful at the national level."

The rest of the 1991 Honor Roll included both new and familiar names. Newcomers included Joe Sommers of Mt. Kisco Country Club in Mt. Kisco, NY, whose 539 points gave him his best season ever and a third-place finish. Fourth, with 514 points, was another new face, Malcolm Smith of Huntington Crescent Club in Huntington, NY, who made the semifinals of the Met Amateur Championship. Veteran Jerry Courville Jr. of Shorehaven Golf Club in East Norwalk, CT, who won his second consecutive Ike Championship this year, finished in fifth place with 448 points.

Baldwin, who lives in Manhattan with his wife Nancy, will collect his award at the MGA's Annual Meeting at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY, in December. ■