



Official World Amateur Golf Ranking Event

"Live the dream"

Press Release:

ROYAL MELBOURNE LANDS TOURNAMENT DOUBLE

The Royal Melbourne Golf Club, which will host next year's Presidents Cup, has now also won the right to stage the world's fastest growing amateur event.

The top 20 ranked amateur golfers in the world are expected to compete in the 2011 Master of the Amateurs, which will be staged on Royal Melbourne's famed West Course over 72 holes on January 11-14.

The tournament is Australia's top ranked amateur event on the R&A World Rankings list, eclipsing the Australian Amateur title in recent years.

With the Presidents Cup to be held in November, it means Royal Melbourne will bookend 2011 with the biggest professional and amateur tournaments in the land.

"Staging the Master of the Amateurs is a tremendous coup for Royal Melbourne," said Paul Rak, Chief Executive Officer of The Royal Melbourne Golf Club. "It will add to our record of staging the best tournaments for the best golfers and also fits perfectly with our history of fostering the next wave of talent."

Master of the Amateurs Tournament Director Peter Mann said the transfer of the event to Royal Melbourne will take the rapidly growing tournament to the next level.

"Royal Melbourne's international reputation will ensure all of the world's best amateur golfers will not want to miss the Master of the Amateurs," Mann said.

"Melbourne's sandbelt courses are renowned throughout the world and Royal Melbourne is at the top of that list."

The tournament is the only Australian event with a Category A ranking with the R&A, rising to number 17 in the world off the back of the last two years when both times the event attracted four top-ten players.

Mann has already received assurances from the UK and the US that members of their prestigious Walker Cup teams will be sent to Australia to compete in the Master of the Amateurs. The Walker Cup is the amateur equivalent of the Ryder Cup.

Mann said he was confident every top 10 ranked amateur will compete and is aiming for the top 20. Last year, golfers from more than 12 countries came to Australia for the tournament, including the number one ranked Victor Dubuisson from France and rising US star Bud Cauley.

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Dubuisson has since turned pro but Cauley will have another year in amateur ranks and will return to avenge his play-off defeat at the hands of South Australian amateur Jordan Sherratt.

Since its first year in 1997, the Master of the Amateurs has been used as a stepping stone by amateurs on their way to professional careers. Past winners include current tour professionals Brendan Jones, Jason Day and Andrew Tampion. The tournament received its biggest boost in 2009 when US amateurs Mark Anderson and Rickie Fowler staged a thrilling play-off.

Anderson, now on the US Nationwide pro tour, defeated Fowler, who has since exploded onto the US PGA Tour and is tipped as a strong chance to win a place on the US Presidents Cup team.

Mann established the Master of the Amateurs as an opportunity for amateur golfers to "live the dream" by playing a 72-hole tournament under pro tournament conditions. His ultimate aim is for the winner to be given a place in the US Masters field. Currently, the tournament has exempt status for top international amateur tournaments including The Amateur Championship in the UK, the Porter Cup, the Players Amateur and the Dogwood Invitational in the US, and the Canadian Men's Amateur Championship.

As part of the tournament week, the Srixon Master of the Amateurs Am-Pro Invitational also attracts a strong field of professionals to play with the amateurs in the reverse of the traditional Pro-Am. Previously, the Am-Pro has been played in conjunction with the opening round of the four-round stroke event, but in 2011 it will be conducted separately on Monday January 10, the day before the amateurs begin their tournament.

"The move to Royal Melbourne and the West Course means the tournament has dedicated facilities for an entire week and enables us to add an extra day into the program," said Mann.

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