



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Danny Willett, Thongchai Jaidee & Kiradech Aphibarnrat confirms participation at inaugural Maybank Championship Malaysia

Trio joins previously announced Louis Oosthuizen & Martin Kaymer, bringing five of world's top 40 golfers for tournament

Kuala Lumpur - 20 January 2016: Maybank Championship Malaysia today announced that current World No.19 Danny Willett of England as well as leading Asian players, Thongchai Jaidee and Kiradech Aphibarnrat of Thailand have confirmed participation at the inaugural golf tournament to be held at the Royal Selangor Golf Club (RSGC) from 18th – 21st February 2016.

These professionals join previously confirmed participants Louis Oosthuizen and Martin Kaymer, ensuring that the inaugural Maybank Championship Malaysia (MCM) will have at least five of the world's top 40 golfers¹ in attendance

Danny Willett was a member of the winning European team at the recent Eurasia Cup that took place in Kuala Lumpur.

The announcement reinforces the championship's aspirations of ensuring the best mix of international and regional golfing talents in a Malaysian world-class tournament. In addition to the five players confirmed, the top sixty-seven players (67) from both the European Tour and Asian Tour respectively will qualify to participate in the MCM. Another ten spots will be awarded to the top ten (10) qualifying players based on the Order of Merit from the Professional Golf Of Malaysia Tour (PGM) while up to five (5) spots will be given to ASEAN Professionals that will be awarded based on the Asian Tour Order Of Merit, Asian Development Tour Order Of Merit and National Professional Golfers Association of ASEAN Countries (where available) and an additional two (2) spots will be given to Malaysian

¹ Rankings as of 18th January 2016

professionals. One (1) spot will be accorded to the top player on the Middle East North African Tour (MENA). Two (2) spots are reserved for other top players who are not members of European PGA Tour and the Asian Tour. The final two (2) spots will be given to the top two amateurs that qualify – one (1) to the highest ranked Malaysian in the Amateur World Rankings; and one (1) to the Asian Pacific Amateur Masters Champion.

The Maybank Championship Malaysia is co-sanctioned by The European Tour, the Asian Tour, the Professional Golf of Malaysia Tour (PGM Tour), and the Professional Golfers Association of Malaysia (PGAM).

One of the richest European Tour and Asian Tour co-sanctioned tournaments in Southeast Asia and a premier event contributing to both the Race to Dubai and the Asian Tour Order of Merit, the championship offers a prize purse of USD 3 million. The Maybank Championship Malaysia will in 2016 be one of only six events at which the European Tour members will participate in the Asian region and one of only four tournaments that is co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour in 2016.

The event will provide a significant platform for Asian players to gain valuable Official World Golf Ranking points and stake a claim for a place at the 2016 Olympics.

Danny Willett

Ranked No. 2 on the 2015 Race to Dubai, Danny Willett was born in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England. As an amateur, he won the English Amateur Championship in 2007 and competed in the 2007 Walker Cup at Royal County Down. In March 2008 he became the number one ranked amateur in the world.

Willett turned professional in May 2008, and earned his European Tour card for the 2009 season coming through the Qualifying School. He finished 58th in his inaugural Race to Dubai with eight top-10s.

Following this performance, Willett moved into the top 100 of the Official World Golf Ranking for the first time. He finished the 2010 season ranked 23rd in the Race to Dubai. Willett has won three times on the European Tour and at the 2015 Open Championship, Willett finished tied for sixth at the Old Course at St Andrews, his best finish in a major.

Thongchai Jaidee

A Malaysian favourite, Thongchai Jaidee is regarded as one of Asia's best players and one that many around the region aspire to emulate.

With an unprecedented three Asian Order of Merit crowns and 13 career victories, Thongchai is one of only three players ever to win back-to-back, at the Malaysian Open in 2004 and 2005. Currently ranked at No.28 on the Official World Golf Ranking, Thongchai had an amazing year in 2015 finishing 10th in the Race To Dubai 2015. Thongchai was also the winner of the European Open 2015 making it his seventh European Tour international schedule victory. In 2014, he picked up the Player of the Decade (2004-2013) award which is voted for by the players, and claimed a second victory on European soil at the Nordea Masters in Sweden. Thongchai captained the Asian team that drew with Europe in the inaugural Eurasia Cup in 2014.

Kiradech Aphibarnrat

Kiradech is one of the most exciting young players to emerge from Thailand.

In 2013 he defeated a host of stars including Major winners Charl Schwartzel and Padraig Harrington to win the Maybank Malaysian Open. He went on end the 2013 season as the Asian Tour Order of Merit champion. This was when he became only the second golfer after Jeev Milkha Singh to earn over US\$1 million in a single season.

Kiradech initially struggled to hit top form in 2014 as he coped with the death of long-time coach Natpasit Chokthanasart, nicknamed Pro Jew. He did however recover from this and finished runner-up at the Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup Golf in Japan, ending the year on a high note when he claimed four straight top-10s. He also played a huge role in Team Asia's draw with Europe at the inaugural Eurasia Cup.

In 2015, Kiradech hit top form, winning twice on The European Tour in China and Scotland to finish the season in 13th place in the Race to Dubai and 38th in the world ranking.

He enjoyed his career breakthrough by winning the SAIL Open in India in 2009 and finished in the top-10 of the Asian Tour Order of Merit in 2010 and 2011.

For further details on announced players, upcoming events and other information related to the Maybank Championship Malaysia please log on the www.maybankchampionship.com.my