

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**17 August 2012**

## **Perth to welcome international golf stars**

Jason Dufner, currently ranked number nine in the world, and Charl Schwartzel, the 2011 Masters Champion, are the first international stars to be announced for the Perth International to be played from 18 to 21 October at Lake Karrinyup Country Club, Perth, Western Australia.

Tourism Minister Dr Kim Hames has welcomed the announcement.

“The Perth International marks WA’s return to the international golf calendar and it’s great to see players the calibre of Jason Dufner and Charl Schwartzel heading the field. The State Government, through Eventscorp, is a proud supporter of the Perth International,” Dr Hames said.

Dufner, from the United States, was described by Sports Illustrated Magazine in June as “the hottest golfer on the planet”. The 35-year-old was runner-up at the 2011 US PGA Championship and has enjoyed a stellar 2012 season with seven top 10 finishes highlighted by wins at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans and HP Byron Nelson Championship. He sits third on the PGA TOUR money list and will make his debut in the Ryder Cup next month.

“I have a real affinity for Australia and have heard a lot of great things about Perth and Western Australia. I am really looking forward to experiencing another part of Australia and hopefully I can continue my good play down under. I am excited to have the opportunity to play in Western Australia for the first time and hope the community will really support this new event,” said Jason.

Schwartzel from South Africa has already won seven times on the European Tour highlighted by his stunning victory at the 2011 Masters Tournament where he became the first player in history to birdie the final four holes to win the coveted Green Jacket. The 27-year-old will look to emulate the feats of his fellow countrymen Gary Player, Ernie Els and Retief Goosen who are all past champions at Lake Karrinyup.

This marks Charl’s first appearance in Perth. “It has been a while since I was down in Australia for a Tour event but I have always enjoyed the people and the culture there and the great sporting rivalry between our countries in cricket and rugby. I am looking forward to visiting Perth and hopefully I can continue the South African success at Lake Karrinyup,” commented Charl.

The Perth International is owned and promoted by IMG and is the collective vision of Eventscorp, a division of Tourism Western Australia, and IMG to see a major international golf event played annually in Perth.

The Perth International is co-sanctioned by the PGA Tour of Australasia and the European Tour and with prize money of US\$2,000,000 it is the richest tournament in Australia. It is also the only event in Australia co-sanctioned with the European Tour and will be broadcasted globally via the European Tour Television platform for over 500 hours showcasing Perth and Western Australia to 350 million homes in 67 countries. The winner of the event will receive an exemption to the World Golf Championships – HSBC Champions.

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Commenting on the announcement, Robbie Henchman, Senior Vice President, Global Co-Managing Director, IMG Golf said: "We are indebted to the Western Australian Government for their outstanding support and look forward to partnering with Tourism Western Australia, Eventscorp, the PGA Tour of Australasia and the European Tour to establish the Perth International as a key event in Asia-Pacific in the years ahead. I would also like to pass on my thanks to our host venue Lake Karrinyup Country Club and our associate partners Volkswagen, Crown Perth and West Australian Newspapers who share our vision for the growth of this event."

Brian Thorburn CEO of the PGA of Australia said "On behalf of the players on the PGA Tour of Australasia, we are absolutely thrilled to see the return of such a significant professional golf tournament to Perth. Congratulations must go to the Western Australian Government and IMG for their commitment to the game and, along with our co-sanctioning partners, the European Tour, we very much look forward to working together to deliver a fantastic event."

Keith Waters, The European Tour's Chief Operating Officer and Director of International Policy, said: "We are delighted to be back on Australian soil, and in particular in Western Australia where we have enjoyed many successful tournaments in the past.

"Lake Karrinyup Country Club in Perth hosted two great events in 2002 and 2003, co-sanctioned with our partners, the PGA Tour of Australasia, and the quality of the venue was matched by the calibre of the champions, Retief Goosen and Ernie Els of South Africa.

"We thank all our partners in the 2012 Perth International, especially Tourism Western Australia, and look forward to an exciting return to this wonderful part of Australia which holds many fond memories for our players."

Tickets to the Perth International are now on sale direct from the event website [www.perthinternational.com](http://www.perthinternational.com)

Travel and sponsorship packages are currently available with details at the event website.

Lake Karrinyup Country Club is one of Australia's finest courses and the recent redesign by Ogilvy Clayton has been widely praised and will provide an exciting and challenging test for the players from both Tours.

For general event information and updates visit [www.perthinternational.com](http://www.perthinternational.com) and follow the Perth International on Facebook [www.facebook.com/PerthInternationalGolf](http://www.facebook.com/PerthInternationalGolf) and Twitter @PerthIntl

Further players will be announced in coming weeks.

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