

International Golf Federation
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News

International Players Reach out to Their Country's IOC Members on Behalf of International Golf Federation's 2016 Olympic Bid

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA (April 14, 2009) - As part of the International Golf Federation's continuing efforts to demonstrate worldwide solidarity behind golf's bid to become an Olympic sport in 2016, 18 of the game's top players are sending a customized brochure detailing the bid along with a personal letter reflecting their support to International Olympic Committee members from their respective countries.

In addition, World Golf Hall of Fame members Jack Nicklaus and Annika Sorenstam, Global Ambassadors on behalf of the IGF's bid, have sent the 32-page brochure and a personal letter to IOC representatives from 56 other countries. The brochure includes global data on golf participation, as well as supportive comments by the world's leading players on behalf of the Olympic effort.

"As we have consistently stated from the outset of the bid process, it is imperative that the best players in the world support golf's Olympic effort in order to give us the best chance of being selected by the IOC to participate in the 2016 Olympic Games," said Peter Dawson, chief executive of The R&A and joint secretary of the IGF. "It also is important for us to demonstrate the international nature of golf, underscoring the fact that 60 million people play the sport in nearly 120 countries. This personal outreach by international players is a continuation of that effort."

The players who are sending this material to their respective IOC representatives are: Karrie Webb, Australia; Mike Weir, Canada; Camilo Villegas, Colombia; Vijay Singh, Fiji; Gwladys Nocera, France; Bernhard Langer, Germany; Colin Montgomerie, Great Britain; Jeev Milkha Singh, India; Pdraig Harrington, Ireland; Ai Miyazato, Japan; K.J. Choi, Korea; Lorena Ochoa, Mexico; Suzann Pettersen, Norway; Ernie Els, South Africa; Sergio Garcia, Spain; Annika Sorenstam, Sweden; Yani Tseng, Taipei; and Tiger Woods, United States.

“We certainly appreciate the effort and support of these great players on behalf of golf’s Olympic bid,” said Ty Votaw, Executive Director of the IGF Olympic Golf Committee. “We obviously believe there is a very compelling case as to why golf should be reinstated as an Olympic sport, and these players are a compelling part of that story.”

Golf last was an Olympic sport in 1904 in St. Louis, USA, when the United States and Canada were the only countries competing. The IGF, recognized as the representative body for golf by the IOC, is leading the Olympic initiative through its Olympic Golf Committee, which consists of representatives from The R&A, European Tour, USGA, PGA of America, PGA TOUR, LPGA and the Masters Tournament.

Player support complements the support that has been shown by 119 IGF Federations from 114 countries, the recently established IGF Professional Advisory Committee, which is made up of 17 additional men’s and women’s professional golf tours and the leading PGAs from around the world, as well as other leading golf organizations, like the International Golf Association.

Golf is one of seven sports being considered for inclusion starting with the 2016 Games. The others are baseball, karate, roller sports, rugby sevens, softball and squash. The IOC's final vote on whether to add no more than two sports will take place at the 121st IOC session, scheduled for October 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The host for the 2016 Games also will be determined at that time between Chicago, USA; Madrid, Spain; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Tokyo, Japan.

Dawson and Votaw previously noted the ease with which golf would fit into any of the four finalists due to existing golf facilities in those cities.

About the International Golf Federation

The IGF was founded in 1958 to encourage the international development of the game and to employ golf as a vehicle to foster friendship and sportsmanship. Recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the official international federation for golf, the IGF is comprised of 119 Federations from 114 countries.

The IGF is recognized as the representative body for golf by the International Olympic Committee and has created the IGF Olympic Golf Committee to drive its effort for the sport’s inclusion in the 2016 Games. Organizations represented on the committee are The R&A, European Tour, USGA, PGA of America, PGA TOUR, LPGA and the Masters Tournament.

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