



Press Release

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Golf Makes Cut As IOC Executive Board Recommends Two Sports For Inclusion In 2016 Olympic Games

IOC's Final Vote on adding sports to take place this October in Copenhagen

Berlin, Germany (August 13, 2009) – Golf is one step closer to being reinstated as an Olympic sport following the International Olympic Committee Executive Board's recommendation to add golf and rugby to the 2016 Olympic Programme.

The IOC's final vote on whether to add as many as two sports will take place on October 9 at the 121st IOC session in Copenhagen, Denmark. While the membership of the IOC is not obliged to follow the Executive Board's recommendation, the Board's decision is based on an extensive review process of seven candidate sports that has included formal presentations, the submission of a Detailed Questionnaire and responses to questions raised by both the IOC Programme Commission and the IOC Executive Board. The IOC Executive Board announced its decision today following a meeting in Berlin, Germany.

"We're obviously thrilled that the IOC Executive Board has recommended that golf should be added to the 2016 Olympic Programme," said Ty Votaw, Executive Director of the International Golf Federation Olympic Golf Committee, which has been coordinating the Olympic bid. "We believe we have presented a compelling case as to why golf should be added and we look forward to the IOC's final vote in October."

Golf was last part of the Olympic Games in 1904, when the United States and Canada were the only competing nations.

Throughout the process, the IGF has stressed the unprecedented unified support by international golf organisations – including a commitment by those that conduct major championships to adjust their summer schedules to ensure that their respective tournaments won't conflict or compete with the Olympic golf competition – as well as the resounding support of golf's top-ranked male and female players.

Player support has been highlighted in various ways, including short films that have been shown to the IOC Programme Commission and Executive Board, a customised brochure detailing the bid that includes player quotes, a letter campaign in which international players sent the brochure with a personalised letter to IOC members from their respective countries, the participation by Jack Nicklaus and Annika Sorenstam as Global Ambassadors on behalf of the IGF's bid, and the appearance by Sorenstam and 2010 European Ryder Cup Captain Colin Montgomerie at the final presentation to the IOC Executive Board in June in Lausanne, Switzerland.

"We made it clear from the outset of the bid process that we absolutely needed support from the world's leading players to have the best chance of being selected for the 2016 Olympic Games, and we have demonstrated that support," said Peter Dawson, chief executive of The R&A and joint secretary of the IGF. "We also stressed the united support from the leading golf organisations throughout the world, as well as the universal nature of golf, with 60 million people playing the sport in more than 120 countries."

The IGF's Olympic Golf Committee, which originally included The R&A; European Tour; USGA; PGA of America; PGA TOUR; LPGA and the Masters Tournament, has been expanded to 19 organisations. It now also includes The Asian Tour; Australian Ladies Professional Golf Tour; Canadian Professional Golf Tour; Japan Golf Tour Organisation; The Ladies Professional Golfers Association of Japan; Korea Ladies Professional Golf Association; Korean Professional Golf Association; Ladies European Tour; Ladies Asian Golf Tour Ltd; PGA Tour of Australasia; The Sunshine Tour and The Tour de las Americas.

The IGF has 121 member federations from 116 countries with the most recent additions of the Guam National Golf Federation and Cambodian Golf Federation.

In terms of Olympic competition, the IGF has proposed a format of 72-hole individual stroke play for both men and women, reflecting leading players' opinion that this is the fairest and best way to identify a champion, mirroring the format used in golf's major championships. In case of a tie for either first, second or third place, a three-hole playoff is recommended to determine the medal winner(s).

The IGF has recommended an Olympic field of 60 players for each of the men's and women's competition, utilizing the official world golf rankings as a method of determining eligibility. The top 15 world-ranked players would be eligible for the Olympics, regardless of the number of players from a given country. Beyond the top 15, players would be eligible based on world ranking, with a maximum of two eligible players from each country that does not already have two or more players among the top 15.

Under this proposal, and based on the current world rankings from both the men's and women's games, at least 30 countries would be represented in both the men's and women's competitions, from all continents.

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 121 Federations from 116 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; the Masters Tournament; The Asian Tour; Australian Ladies Professional Golf Tour; Canadian Professional Golf Tour; Japan Golf Tour Organisation; The Ladies Professional Golfers Association of Japan; Korea Ladies Professional Golf Association; Korean Professional Golf Association; Ladies European Tour; Ladies Asian Golf Tour Ltd; PGA TOUR of Australasia; The Sunshine Tour and The Tour de las Americas.

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