



P.R. Classic to host region's top golfers as part of PGA Latin American Tour

BY CB STAFF

Puerto Rico golf continues an impressive move forward despite industry doldrums that have forced industry executives and golf pros to reinvent themselves. Driven by Puerto Rico's PGA professionals, golf courses continue to be at the forefront of the sport.

The island no doubt has benefited from the international exposure afforded by increasingly stellar showings of the Puerto Rico Open, which with five years under its belt is likely to move to a bigger stage with its own separate date in 2013.

Puerto Rico's signature event will have company with the advent of the PGA TOUR's Latin American Tour, which makes a stop at the newly refurbished Dorado Beach East Course.

The road to the PGA TOUR for Latin America's elite golfers will run through Puerto Rico starting this November, when the island hosts one of 11 tournaments in the Latin American Tour and, along with it, the hopes and dreams of a generation of players who are on the brink of making it to the next level.

The event, dubbed the Puerto Rico Classic, will be held Nov. 12-18 at Dorado Beach Resort & Club, and is poised to instantly become a can't-miss date on any golf fan's calendar.

Up to 144 of the region's best players, such

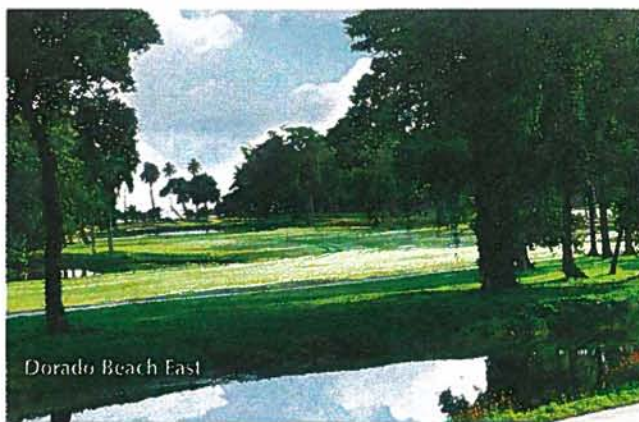
as Paraguay's Marco Ruiz, Colombia's Diego Venegas and Puerto Rico's own Rafael Campos, will tee it up with an exceptional bit of motivation: the top players on the circuit's Order of Merit will qualify for next season's Web.com Tour (formerly the Nationwide Tour) and be just one step away from the highest level of professional golf.

In addition, with the Puerto Rico Classic being the eighth of 11 tournaments, the chase for those top spots promises to be at its highest, which will surely result in some truly exciting moments on the course.

The inclusion of Puerto Rico in a circuit that will also have stops in Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil and elsewhere, speaks to the growth of the game on the island and its now unquestionable ability to hold successful international golf tournaments.

The Puerto Rico Classic now joins the Puerto Rico Open to form a spectacular 1-2 punch of events that give fans a chance to get a close look at talented players from around the world, and give Puerto Rican golfers the opportunity to test themselves against the best on their home turf.

Equally important, just like the Puerto Rico Open, the Classic will bring hundreds of visitors to the island, resulting in thousands of



hotel room nights, a substantial economic impact and international media exposure for Puerto Rico as a golf destination.

That level of exposure, both at home and abroad, will also make the Puerto Rico Classic a unique opportunity for sponsors. A multitude of available options will allow companies to promote their brand in the manner that best suits them, from skyboxes to commercial and promotional spaces and on-course signage. Sponsors can expect an estimated 15,000 eager fans who will be exposed to their products, and they can enjoy first-rate hospitality on the 18th green with more than a half-dozen private suites.

The Puerto Rico Classic is confirmed for at least the next two years, and the PGA Latin American Tour is a burgeoning circuit that is expected to have up to 14 tournaments starting next year. Because of recent changes in the Web.com Tour and qualifying standards for the PGA TOUR, the opportunity that this new tour will afford to the region's most exceptional players is even more valuable, and gives the Puerto Rico Classic some very real importance. ●



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