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Press Release

## **“Golf In The Olympics In 2016”**

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Riviera Beach (USA), October 19, 2009: Golf was approved 63-27 with two abstentions after an absence of more than a century as an Olympic sport in 2016 and 2020 following their approval by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) membership during the IOC's 121st Session in Copenhagen on October 9, 2009 while “Team USA defeated the International Team for “The Presidents Cup” in San Francisco, CA. Golf was last an Olympic sport at the 1904 Games in St. Louis, Mo., when the United States and Canada were the only two competing countries. Golf will be part of the Olympic Program in Rio de Janeiro, which last week was selected as the host city for 2016 Games by the IOC.

The International Golf Federation (IGF) has currently proposed a format of 72-hole individual stroke play for both men and women. 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 also has also recommended an Olympic field of 60 players for each of the men's and women's competition, using 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 the world rankings, with a maximum of two eligible players from each country that does not already have two or more players among the top-15. Current world rankings from both the men's and women's games show that at least 30 countries would be represented in both the men's and women's competitions, from all continents, under this proposal.



PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem stated during his news conference on October 9, 2009 during the Presidents Cup that “this is a great day for the sport of golf. We are absolutely delighted with the decision by the IOC, and I think before I make a couple comments about how it happened, I'd like to say that I think there are two fundamental benefits to the game going forward that will emanate from this decision.”

“First and foremost, I think the trajectory of growth, if you will, for the game globally will be significantly enhanced. We have said all along that there is good growth in the developing areas of the world, and there is. But when you consider that over a hundred countries will now invest in the sport to grow the game, to be competitive in the Games in this particular sport, will catapult the level of growth, particularly in Asia, Eastern Europe, also in South America and other areas that have not had the level of growth historically.”

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**“The second thing is, I think golf in the Olympics is going to enhance and strengthen the image and texture of the game of golf globally. And I say that for two reasons. I think that when you consider that golf is now placed, from an athletic standpoint, along with all of the other sports, I think it is going to be more recognized as truly an athletic endeavor. And I think that in addition to that, the focus on the global diversity of the sport of golf will help us propel down the road of making golf as a sport look like the rest of the United States.”**



**“Golf, I think, is a wonderful sport to have in the Olympics just because of the history and tradition of sportsmanship, how we play the game, the etiquette,” said Tiger Woods. Tiger indicated that he would play in the 2016 Olympics. “There are millions of young golfers worldwide who would be proud to represent their country,” Woods said from the Presidents Cup in San Francisco. “It would be an honor for anyone who plays this game to become an Olympian.”**

**Jack Nicklaus also stated: “This is a great day for the game of golf. I want to congratulate all those who worked and campaigned so passionately over the last couple of years to make this day a reality. It is obvious that the unified voice of golf was not only heard but embraced by the International Olympic**

**Committee. When I was asked last year to be a part of this global effort, I was delighted to be involved because I believe so strongly in our game and what it represents—honesty, integrity, sportsmanship and good will. All of us who have spent our lives playing and enjoying the game of golf fully understand why it deserved a spot on the Olympic program, and now the sport I have always called the greatest game of all can be shared with the rest of the world on the greatest stage in sports.”**

**Inner City Youth Golfers’, Inc. Director of Golf, Clewis Wright, Jr. stated “the time is right for youth golf organizations across the State of Florida to come together and develop a comprehensive strategy to get ‘our kids’ ready to compete in future international events such as the 2016 Olympics.”**

*PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem formally announcing golf in the "2016 Olympics" during his press conference at The Presidents Cup in San Francisco, CA. & Woods sharing his excitement at press conference about Team USA in the 2016 Olympics. Photo credits: Esmeralda H. Knowles.*

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