



Friday 14th May 2010

Note for editor

Fáilte Ireland, the national tourism development authority, was established in 2003 to guide and promote tourism as a leading indigenous component of the Irish economy.

The tourism and hospitality industry employs an estimated 200,000 people and generates more than €6 billion in revenue a year.

Golf in Ireland

Spread throughout the length and breadth of Ireland are more than 400 golf courses nestled against a backdrop of spectacular scenic landscapes. Indeed, Ireland is famous for having a third of the world's true "links" courses.

These spectacular links are complemented by an array of parkland courses which combine high-quality facilities and scenic beauty and offer a challenge to every golfer from beginner up to championship level.

It is little wonder, therefore, that Ireland has been chosen to host a succession of international championships - from the Ryder Cup in 2006, to the Smurfit European Open, The American Express WGC Championship (2002 and 2004) and the Seve Trophy in 2002 and 2007.

The Irish golfing community meets and welcomes almost 150,000 visitors annually. Golf is one of Ireland's greatest tourist attractions, contributing an estimated €110 million to the economy.

The Golf Forum

The Golf Forum was established in September 2008 to further develop the golf product in Ireland. The group is made up of representatives from across the golf industry including the North American and Irish tour operator groups, golf courses, golf marketing groups as well as an independent facilitator and an expert from Enterprise Ireland. Working actively with the industry, the forum has focused its work on:

- The development of a unique brand for the Irish golf product for the home and international markets.
- The development of an enhanced e-business model for the sector.
- The introduction of a Quality and Standards system for Irish golf clubs.

Padraig Harrington

Three time major winner, Padraig Harrington, became the first European player to win back-to-back Major Championships when he added the 2008 USPGA Championship to the 2008 Open Championship crown, having been the first Irishman to win a Major in 60 years at the 2007 Open Championship. In addition, Harrington has been a member of Europe's Ryder Cup team five times, won the 2006 European Tour Order of Merit, was the first Irish winner of the Irish Open for 25 years and has a total of 25 tournament titles worldwide.