



For immediate release

Monday October 23, 2017

## **SHOT CLOCK MASTERS TO DEBUT ON THE EUROPEAN TOUR IN AUSTRIA IN 2018**

*\* Players will be timed on every shot*

*\* A one-shot penalty will be incurred for every bad time*

*\* Innovative move will help European Tour's continued pledge to combat slow play*

The 2018 Shot Clock Masters in Austria will be the first tournament in professional golf to use a shot clock on every shot as part of the European Tour's bid to combat slow play.

Earlier this year, the European Tour experimented with a shot clock on one hole at GolfSixes – a move which proved popular with both players and fans – and the concept will now be used for the first time at a European Tour event at the Diamond Country Club, from June 7-10, 2018.

In a marked difference to the GolfSixes model however, this tournament will embrace the Tour's official timing policy (similar to policies used across the world of professional golf) over 72 holes, with an intent to showcase a European Tour event played at a more compelling pace.

In accordance with this official policy, each player in the 120-man field will have 50 seconds for the first player in a group to play any given shot, 40 seconds for subsequent players. Players will incur a one-shot penalty for each bad time incurred and these will be shown as a red card against their name on the leaderboard.

Each player will have the right to call two 'time-outs' during a round which will permit them twice the usually allotted time to play the shot.

Last year, the European Tour pledged to speed up the game of golf, introducing a new pace of play policy which included monitoring penalties, handing referees additional powers to target slow players. This policy had an immediate effect, leading to a visible reduction in round times, and the additional development in Austria could have an even more dramatic impact.

It is hoped the move will cut round times by around 45 minutes, reducing three-ball timings to approximately four hours, and two-balls to around three hours 15 minutes.

Keith Pelley, Chief Executive of the European Tour, said: "The 2018 Shot Clock Masters will be a fascinating addition to our schedule next year. Not only will it help us combat slow play and reduce round times, it is also further evidence of our desire to embrace innovation."

Leading Austrian player Bernd Wiesberger said: "With this change, there will be much more attention from the international sports media during the tournament. The new Shot Clock format is an ideal way to focus on the issue of pace of play. The game of golf should definitely be faster and therefore this is a step in the right direction."

Ali A. Al-Khaffaf, director of tournament promoters Golf Open Event, said: “We are very proud that we have extended our partnership with the European Tour and that the 2018 Shot Clock Masters will be the first event in professional golf to use this format across all 72 holes.

“For the on-site viewers and for those at home in front of the TV screens, it will be an additional tool that will make golf even more interesting and faster. With this innovation we will make history.”

*-ends-*