

PGA Professional Championship of Europe Venue Officially Launches

The pan-European chase for places in the return of the PGA Professional Championship of Europe, is ON with a vengeance. Pravets Golf Club, Bulgaria, was recently launched in spectacular fashion, prompting PGAs of Europe member countries to begin their search for qualifiers in the forthcoming field of champions.

Bulgarian Prime Minister, Boiko Borissov officially opened the magnificent new facility in sharing the ribbon-cutting ceremony with



Ian Randell, Chief Executive of the PGAs of Europe and Vassil Zlatev, from the owning company, Terra Tour Services, to get a convivial week-end

house-warming party underway.

The ceremony took place in front of over 400 guests on the terraces of the splendid new clubhouse overlooking the Peter Harradine-designed course and the Prime Minister was then invited to make the first putt on the spectacular 9th and 18th double green of the Pravets Golf & Spa Resort.

This eagerly-awaited celebration instantly brought to life what will be the first-ever series of qualifiers across the PGAs of Europe member PGAs as each country's leading pros jostle for a place in a championship that has not been played for six years, and even then did not include the same all-embracing qualifying routine.

During the press conference of the assembled media, Ian Randell commented, "Golf is a game for all and a game for life, and I am impressed by the philosophy and motto of the Pravets Golf Club 'Anyone Can Play'."

In addition to taking part in the opening ceremony, and first 18 hole tournament, Randell had another reason to visit the golf club in Pravets, namely to check the progress of the golf course in preparation for the hosting of the Championship of Europe – the most prestigious event in the calendar for the PGAs of Europe, on September 27–30, 2011.



Peter Harradine, the golf course architect commented, "the team have done a fantastic job to get the golf course in such a great condition and the greens are some of the best I have seen for such a young golf course." He

added, "It is an emotional moment to see the course fully open and I was very pleasantly surprised when I realised that 132 people were playing in the very first 18 hole event."

Lachezar Todorov, CEO of Terra Tour Services – who last December spoke at the PGAs of Europe Annual Congress in Portugal – thanked all participants in the project. He pointed out the key benefits for the Pravets area being the creation of jobs (with currently over 50% of the staff coming from the town of Pravets), the development of quality tourism in Bulgaria, and the increased financial impact on the local economy.

The opening event was the inaugural “Braemar Golf Team Challenge” held on Sunday 15 May, with the winning team from Golf Club Bulgaria, taking home the traditional ‘Scottish Quaich’ trophy. The day included junior clinics using SNAG Golf equipment, clinics for the sponsors Renault and sponsored holes from Chivas Regal and Domaine Boyar, which were greatly appreciated by the players.

An indication of the huge significance to Bulgaria of the project came in the array of Ministers and government officials who supported Pravets Golf Club at the Opening, including the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Sports, the Deputy Minister of Sports, the Governor of Sofia Region, mayors of Pravets and Etropole among others.

The ceremony encapsulated everything that Pravets stands for in a first-class high quality operation that bodes well for the re-launch of the PGAs of Europe's premier tournament in September.