

TEEN STAR MANASSERO EYES DATE WITH MCILROY IN EGYPTIAN OPEN

- Cairo Calling For 'The New Seve' -

The 2010 Egyptian Open will play host to two of the sport's brightest young stars when Italian teenage prodigy Matteo Manassero joins world number seven Rory McIlroy at the JW Marriott, Mirage City Golf Club from Wednesday 20 – Saturday 23, October.

The 17 year-old Italian – considered by many to be 'the new Seve' – will be in a strong lineup in the penultimate tournament on the 2010 European Challenge Tour calendar when the Middle East's oldest golf event takes on Challenge Tour status.

Last week, Manassero edged closer to his first professional title with second place at the Rolex Trophy in Switzerland, while Northern Ireland's 21 year-old McIlroy continued his meteoric rise to the top with joint third place at the USPGA Championship, a Major won by Challenge Tour graduate Martin Kaymer.

"These are exciting times for everyone connected with the Egyptian Open," said Egyptian Golf Federation Chairman Ayman Hussein. "There is little doubt Rory McIlroy is one of the most popular and talented players in the game, while Matteo Manassero has lit up the sport of golf with his talent at such a young age. It's a great way for us to announce Egypt on the Challenge Tour stage."

Manassero shot to prominence by winning the silver



Teen star Matteo Manassero of Italy will rub shoulders with Rory McIlroy and the best of the European Challenge Tour at the Egyptian Open

medal as a 16 year-old amateur at last year's Open Championship before becoming the youngest player to make the cut at the Masters.

In addition, the Italian even has a better record as an amateur than McIlroy having won more and at an earlier age, including the British Amateur Championship at just 16.

In 2009, Manassero was only four shots behind eventual winner Stewart Cink and Tom Watson in the Open and his elevation to the professional ranks will see the teenager aiming to match the achievements of fellow Challenge Tour alumni such as Kaymer and last year's Challenge Tour champion Edoardo Molinari who has gone on to reach number 21 in the world rankings.

Manassero said: "To win on my first appearance in Cairo would be amazing but the field will be one of the strongest of the year and with Rory in the line-up, it's going to be even harder to win. I'm looking forward to it."