



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Betsy McDonald, 775-784-9400 x 119  
[pr@thebausermangroup.com](mailto:pr@thebausermangroup.com)  
Michael Stearns, 775-322-3900  
[michael@legendsrenotahoeopen.com](mailto:michael@legendsrenotahoeopen.com)

## LEGENDS RENO-TAHOE OPEN ANNOUNCES FOREIGN, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA EXEMPTIONS

*Two top-80 ranked golfers, northern California "Player of the Year" to hit the links at  
Montr eux Aug. 6 – 9*

RENO, Nev. (July 30, 2009) – The Legends at Sparks Marina Reno-Tahoe Open announces three noteworthy additions to its field list – foreign exemptions Francesco Molinari of Italy and South African golfer Charl Schwartzel – along with Jason Schmuhl of the Northern California Section of the Professional Golfers' Association (NCPGA). Molinari, at No. 79 in the Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR) and Schwartzel, No. 64 on the OWGR, were granted Foreign Exemptions by PGA TOUR Commissioner Tim Finchem as both are quickly rising stars in the international game of golf. Schmuhl earned himself the 2008 NCPGA "Player of the Year" award in 2008, one of just 17 recipients in the NCPGA's Annual Section Awards.

"These are very exciting additions to our field," said Michael Stearns, Legends Reno-Tahoe Open tournament director. "These are top golfers who have displayed a tremendous amount of success in recent years and I have a feeling they're certainly going to be near the top of the leader board all four days. Players are coming from around the globe to play in Reno- Tahoe – with Charl from South Africa, Francesco from Italy and then back to northern California with Jason. This is going to be a very competitive week of golf and entertainment here at Montr eux."

At just 23 years old, Charl Schwartzel is shooting for a top-50 position in the OWGR this year, after having already won three times on the European Tour and taking the Sunshine Tour Order of Merit for three consecutive years. Schwartzel marks his 24<sup>th</sup> birthday this weekend, Aug. 1, and is seeking to celebrate with a Legends Reno-Tahoe victory, what would be the first ever by a foreign exemption player. And it wouldn't be his first record. In 2002, at the age of 18, Schwartzel became the second-youngest South African golfer to secure a European Tour card with a 24<sup>th</sup> place finish at Qualifying School. Schwartzel has also recently accepted an invitation to play in the PGA Championship at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., which starts immediately following the Legends Reno-Tahoe Open on Aug. 10., his second invite to the event where he tied for 52<sup>nd</sup> place last year. Other notable finishes include 30<sup>th</sup> at the 2007 U.S. Open and 22<sup>nd</sup> in 2006 at the Open Championship.

With two professional wins under his belt by the age of 26, in May 2006 Francesco Molinari became the first Italian to claim a European Tour victory since Massimo Mannelli accomplished the feat in 1980 with a win at the Telecom Italia Open. He also took the top spot at the Italian PGA Championship earlier this year. Prior to his professional debut, Molinari won the Italian Amateur Stroke Play Championship twice, adding the Italian Match Play Championship in 2004. Quickly climbing the ranks of the OWGR, Molinari also is an invitee to the PGA Championship and has finished 27<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. Open and The Open Championship, respectively. Currently sitting at No. 21 on the European Tour Order of Merit and regarded as one of the European field's fiercest competitors, Molinari is another young star who stands a chance at upsetting the field at this year's Legends Reno-Tahoe Open.

Jason Schmuhl, PGA "Class A" head professional at northern California's Windsor Golf Club, earns himself the 2009 Legends Reno-Tahoe Open NCPGA exemption. Regarded as one of the top playing club professionals in the region and known for his extraordinarily long drives, Schmuhl is the recipient of NCPGA "Player of the Year" award for 2008 thanks to four first-place finishes including the NCPGA Pro-Scratch, Senior/Junior Championship, NCPGA Professional Championship and the NCPGA McGladrey Team Championship. His win at the NCPGA Professional Championship earned him the title of Stroke Play Champion and a berth in the 42<sup>nd</sup> PGA Professional National Championship in 2009 at Santa Ana, Calif. Among other exemptions earned with his "Player of the Year" distinction are the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am and the Nationwide Tour event at TPC San Francisco Bay. Schmuhl is also the top Section purse money winner in 2008.

For more information on this year's Legends at Sparks Marina Reno-Tahoe Open, including ticket sales, volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, visit [www.LegendsRenoTahoeOpen.com](http://www.LegendsRenoTahoeOpen.com) or contact the tournament office at 775-322-3900.

*The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Legends at Sparks Marina Reno-Tahoe Open, an official PGA TOUR event, takes place Aug. 3 – 9, 2009 at Montréux Golf & Country Club in Reno, Nev. As the PGA TOUR's only summer West Coast venue, the tournament is a regular full-field stop on the TOUR schedule and is part of the FedExCup series, a points competition for PGA TOUR professionals. The nationally-televised tournament brings in millions of dollars in coverage for the Reno-Tahoe region through its affiliation with The Golf Channel as it follows 132 PGA TOUR professionals competing for a share of the tournament's \$3 million purse. The Legends Reno-Tahoe Open is operated and managed by the Reno-Tahoe Open Foundation comprised of its members including RED Development's The Legends at Sparks Marina, Eldorado Hotel Casino, EMPLOYERS, Montréux Development Group, NV Energy, and Reno-Tahoe, America's Adventure Place.*

###