



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**DRAFT 4: 23/01/18**

**Asian Tour stars ready to light up Maybank Championship 2018**

*Gavin Green, Thongchai Jaidee and Arjun Atwal are among the region's top talent in the prestigious tournament.*

Maybank today announced an impressive line-up of Asian Tour stars spearheaded by eight Order of Merit champions who will join the third instalment of the Maybank Championship 2018 from 1 – 4 February.

The reigning Order of Merit winner Gavin Green will lead the Tour's charge alongside Kiradech Aphibarnrat, Thongchai Jaidee, Arjun Atwal, Jyoti Randhawa, Liang Wen-chong, David Lipsky and Scott Hend, who are all former Asian Tour number ones.

No less than 40 Asian Tour champions including India's Shiv Kapur, S.S.P. Chawrasia and Richard T. Lee of Canada, Jeunghun Wang of Korea and Panuphol Pittayarat of Thailand will also feature in the US\$3 million event sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour.

Young Thai talent Phachara Khongwatmai, who is searching for a first Asian Tour and European Tour victory, hopes to improve on last year's tied 20<sup>th</sup> result at the Maybank Championship when he returns to the Saujana Golf and Country Club.

The 18-year-old will be joined by countryman and EurAsia Cup teammate Poom Saksansin. The Thai duo emerged as standout performers for Team Asia in the biennial team match-play event against Team Europe a fortnight ago.

Atwal, who captained Team Asia in the EurAsia Cup, will return to competitive golf at the Maybank Championship. The Indian star has a solid track record in Malaysia where he won the country's National Open in 2003 and 2008.

He came close to winning his ninth Asian Tour title in Mauritius last year but settled for second place after losing in a play-off to South Africa's Dylan Frittelli, who will also play in the Maybank Championship next month.



“I’m really excited to play in the Maybank Championship. The Saujana course is one of my favourite courses in Malaysia and I’m really looking forward to the tournament and visiting the country where I have so many great memories,” said the 43-year-old Atwal.

Thailand’s Panuphol will be eyeing another strong outing at the Maybank Championship after finishing tied ninth in last year’s edition. The result was a huge boost for the 24-year-old who went on to win his first Asian Tour victory at the Indonesia Open in October.

“It (the result at the 2017 Maybank Championship) took the monkey off my back for the rest of the season. I didn’t have to think about saving my Asian Tour card and can just focus on improving and becoming better. I hope to do the same this year and look forward to playing at the Maybank Championship,” said the Thai professional.

Maybank Championship will once again provide a significant platform for players looking to gain valuable experience and Official World Golf Ranking points. The tournament which is also co-sanctioned by the European Tour and Asian Tour, will see an international cast of 156 golfers, including current World no. 9, Henrik Stenson, and top-ranking golfers around the globe; Fabrizio Zanotti, Marcus Fraser, Bernd Wiesberger, Yuta Ikeda, Yusaku Miyazato compete for the total prize purse of USD3 million.

The tournament is becoming the platform where it sees the rise of young ASEAN and Asian players dominating the world of professional competitive golf and who are being given the opportunity to compete and showcase their skills on an international platform that promote the world’s best golfing talent across the region.

As the only full field event in Malaysia with over 33 nationalities coming together, Maybank Championship will feature top 67 players from both the European Tour and Asian Tour respectively. For further details on announced players, upcoming events and other information related to the Maybank Championship, please log on to [www.maybankchampionship.com.my](http://www.maybankchampionship.com.my)