

## 21st Edition of Canon South Africa Disabled Golf Open scheduled for May 2019

The Canon logo is displayed in a large, bold, red font. The letter 'C' is significantly larger than the other letters, and the 'o' contains a white dot, which is a characteristic element of the Canon brand identity.

**THE** dates for the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the prestigious Canon South Africa Disabled Golf Open have been confirmed. This year's tournament, which will once again see some of the best golfers with disabilities from around the world compete, takes place from 13 to 16 May 2019 at the Magalies Park Golf Club.

This will be Canon South Africa's third year as the title sponsor of the tournament which is organised annually by the South African Disabled Golf Association (SADGA). This international amateur event incorporates golfers with varying disabilities, with divisions for leg amputees, arm amputees, deaf golfers, the visually impaired and Les Autres (such as cerebral palsy and deformities).

"This year sees the South Africa Disabled Golf Open coming of age. For 21 years, the tournament has helped to unite, inspire and acknowledge golfers with disabilities. Canon SA is proud to sponsor the competition for the third consecutive year. It is sure to be another tremendous showcase of sportsmanship, passion, talent and perseverance," says Dana Eitzen, Corporate and Marketing Communications Executive from Canon SA, which has a proud legacy of support

for South African sport.

The company is a primary sponsor of SADGA's First Swing program which encourages young children with disabilities to live beyond their physical limitations and play golf. Canon is also associated with the Sunshine Ladies Tour as a sponsor of the season opening event for the past two years. This year, Canon SA is also sponsoring The Player's Fund Project Hero, through which the stories of four fallen rugby heroes are being told to offer hope to former rugby players whose lives have been forever changed by serious injuries on the field.

According to Eitzen, entries are streaming in from South Africa and abroad for the 2019 Canon SA Disabled Golf Open. Amongst the internationals that have entered are Mike Browne from the United Kingdom; Bjorn Harkenson from Sweden; Graeme Mazur and Johnny Rhea, both from the United Kingdom. Female players who have entered include Vernita Wirth and Charlene Pienaar, a blind golfer who participated and won the ladies stableford division last year.

Winner of the Canon SA Disabled Golf Open 2018, Browne is the top contender for this year's tournament.

He turned pro in October 2017 and competed on the Gecko Tour in Spain where he notched a top 15 finish in one event. In 2018 he won his first professional event at Ashridge Golf Club, where he shot 66 in the second round. He boasts a zero handicap.

Four up and coming golfers from SADGA's First Swing Program Elite Squad, which teaches the game of golf to young people with disabilities and organises competitions for schools, will also be hitting the course at Magalies Park in May. The First Swing Program has helped to uplift hundreds of children through playing golf. One of its youngsters, 20 year old Ignation Douries placed 9th overall in the Canon SA Disabled Golf Open in 2018 and will be playing his 7th tournament this year. In 2018, another First Swing Program member, Daren Hanekom won the South African Deaf Championships which runs concurrently with the Canon SA Disabled Golf Open.

South Africans have historically dominated the tournament, with Ben van Zyl winning the event from 1998 to 2003; Pieter Jansen in 2004; Nico Wentzel in 2008; Igin Grobler in 2009 and 2010; and Daniel Slabbert from 2011 to 2013, and again in 2015. ■