

HONG KONG OPEN

LAST MONTH MILLIONS of TV viewers around the world watched as Briton Graeme McDowell held his nerve in the final singles match of the Ryder Cup, as Europe beat the United States 14½-13½ and regain the Ryder Cup.

Next month, golf fans in Hong Kong will get the chance to see three of these British Ryder Cup Champions in action at the UBS Hong Kong Open; Colin Montgomerie, Rory McIlroy and Graeme McDowell.

For the 52nd successive year, the historic Hong Kong Golf Club in Fanling will play host to the Hong Kong Open. Beginning in 1959, the Hong Kong Open is Hong Kong's oldest professional sporting event. It became part of The European Tour International Schedule in the 2002 season and has a rich history of winners including nine different Major Champions who have amassed 25 Major titles between them.

George O'Grady, Chief Executive of The European Tour, said: "The Hong Kong Open holds a special place in the sporting

affections of Asia as well as amongst our Members, given its rich heritage which stretches back over 50 years. It is a truly prestigious tournament whose history is steeped in golfing folklore."

The total prize fund has increased every year since 2006 from US\$1.2 million to the US\$2.5 million figure which will be on offer at the Fanling venue this November. The winner will pocket a cheque for US\$416,660, compared to the US\$200,000 won by Colin Montgomerie four years ago.

This year's tournament runs from November 18th to 21st at the Hong Kong Golf Club in Fanling and adult ticket prices range from HK\$120 (Thursday and Friday) to HK\$300 (Sunday). A four-day season ticket can be bought for HK\$500 and admission is free for children under 16 years.

Tickets are now on sale and available online from www.cityline.com or www.europeantourtickets.com, from the Cityline booking hotline on 2111 5333 or from Parsons' Music stores.

GRAEME MCDOWELL

"Graeme [McDowell] was put there [at the bottom of the order] for a very good reason. He is the US Open champion and full of confidence and that birdie on 16 was quite unbelievable." Europe captain Colin Montgomerie speaking after the Ryder Cup victory.

The Northern Irishman continued his sensational season at The Celtic Manor Resort in Wales by winning the vital point that ensured Europe regained The Ryder Cup following a pulsating battle with the USA.

With his captain, team-mates and thousands of on-course spectators watching the gut-wrenching conclusion to the match, McDowell showed remarkable aplomb as he brought home Team Europe for an unforgettable victory.

McDowell's performance further confirmed his reputation as a man who lives for the big occasion following his US Open victory in June when he held off the challenge of Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Ernie Els at Pebble Beach to become the first Irishman to win the season's second Major.

"I have enjoyed the best season of my career this year. The US Open win and then what happened in The Ryder Cup have been the two greatest moments in my professional life and winning the UBS Hong Kong Open would be the icing on the cake.

"Hong Kong is a very cool city and UBS is renowned on Tour for putting on a great show at Fanling. It's my kind of town – there is a real buzz to the city and I know that all of the players love coming back to Hong Kong as they are guaranteed a great week."



RORY MCILROY

Northern Irishman Rory McIlroy has unfinished business after two successive second-place finishes at the UBS Hong Kong Open.

McIlroy is one of the games fastest rising stars and one of the biggest draws in world golf. He currently lies seventh in the Official Golf World Rankings after his recent debut in the Ryder Cup.

"Hong Kong is one of the most exciting cities in the world. I love the city and the golf course at Fanling so it was an easy decision to come back this year and try to win the title." Rory McIlroy

A big fan of Hong Kong, McIlroy recently said, "It is a very important week in the schedule. It's the last tournament before the Dubai World Championship so if you can perform well in Hong Kong it gives you great confidence for the final event of the season.

"I hope to come to Hong Kong early this year to experience more of the city. We don't always have time to enjoy some of the great destinations that we visit - and for me, Hong Kong ranks as one of the best cities in the world."

