

## Teeing off India's richest domestic golf tournament

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Louis Philippe is a premium brand synonymous with sophistication, style and success, qualities that are essentially associated with golf as well. And in a perfect match between the Madura Fashion & Lifestyle brand and the prestigious sport, Louis Philippe has come to be associated with India's richest domestic golf tournament, the Louis Philippe Cup, to be held at the KSA Golf Course, Bangalore, between March 5- 10, 2012.



The event will see eight city-based teams comprising India's top professional golfers, and featuring star players, competing for the prestigious Louis Philippe Cup. Top golfers from Bangalore, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Lucknow, Delhi, Gurgaon and Chandigarh – selected on the basis of the rankings of top players in the respective cities – will join in the tournament, formulated on the lines of the successful Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket 20:20 series.

Each of the city teams will comprise three players – two selected on the basis of their Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) 2011 rankings, and one a team choice. Top Indian players slated to participate in the tournament include Anirban Lahiri, Jyoti Randhawa, Himmat Rai, S.S.P. Chowrasia, Shiv Kapur, Chiragh Kumar and Gaganjeet Bhullar and all top-ranked PGTI Tour players.

The Rs1.14 crore (nearly \$225,000) prize money makes the Louis Philippe Cup the richest golf tournament in India. The winning team will take home Rs36 lakh (to be shared among the three players), while the second, third and fourth teams will win Rs24 lakh, Rs18 lakh and Rs12 lakh respectively. The remaining four teams will each receive Rs6 lakh by way of prize money.

According to Jacob John, Brand Head, Louis Philippe, fan involvement is a key element of the Louis Philippe Cup. "We want to build a platform where true golf fans have a chance to play alongside pros," he adds. Pointing out that the values and qualities of Louis Philippe blend with those of golf, he feels this association with the premier sport is "a perfect match," and will help the brand to move up to the next rung in the ladder.

Rishi Narain, former Asiad gold medalist and founder of Rishi Narain Golf Management – which has conceived and promoted the event – hopes that the Louis Philippe Cup will create true superstars out of India's pro golfers, besides connecting fans with their home team players. "Our aim is to establish India's immensely talented golf pros as genuine superstars in the eyes of sports fans across India," he says. "They deserve the recognition and fan following considering their consistent international victories over the past 15 years."

The new, IPL-style format is a first for professional golf in India, though internationally similar events have been organised, explains Mr John.

Padamjit Sandhu, director, PGTI, believes the Louis Philippe Cup "could potentially be a game changer in the way fans relate to India's top golf stars."

The five-day event will feature a day of celebrity pro-am, followed by two days (36 holes) strokeplay, in which all eight teams will compete. The four teams with the best total team scores over 36 holes will advance to the semi-finals. The format then changes to knock-out and individual match play.

The one-on-one matches between the three players in each team will earn each team one point for a win and zero for a loss. No match will be halved as tied matches after 18 holes will advance to sudden-death playoff. The two winning semi-final teams will play the finals on the final day on three individual matches.

The Louis Philippe Cup is creating a buzz in India's 100,000-strong golf community, which is growing phenomenally. The event promises to tee-off greater interest in the sport, raising its profile across India.