



Gary Player
INVITATIONAL
PRESENTED BY
Coca-Cola

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JESPER BRINGS A LITTLE PARNEVIK STYLE TO THE GARY PLAYER INVITATIONAL

(Zimbali Coastal Resort, South Africa) – Eccentric Swedish golfer Jesper Parnevik returns to South African fairways for the first time since 1993 when he brings his volcanic dust and fashionable wardrobe to the Gary Player Invitational presented by Coca-Cola next week.

Parnevik, who has an affinity for eating volcanic dust and wearing drainpipe trousers, will join a stellar cast led by South Africa's only Grand Slam champion in the 12th edition of the popular pro-celebrity tournament at the Zimbali Coastal Resort from 11-13 November 2011.

The international champion will join a cast of worldwide winners in the regular Tour category, including countryman Peter Hanson, South Africa's Lee-Anne Pace, Italy's Diana Luna as well as rising Scottish star Carly Booth.

Hanson is a four-time European Tour winner who also makes his debut in Africa's premier charity event, while the home challenge is strengthened by James Kamte and Jaco van Zyl.

Kamte, who recently claimed his fourth Sunshine Tour title at the BMG Classic, made his GPI debut in 2006, while it's a debut for Van Zyl, an eight-time winner on the Sunshine Tour. The Johannesburg professional has spent most of his season on the European Tour where he has climbed to 48th on the Race to Dubai, boosted especially by a third-place finish in the Omega European Masters.

But Parnevik will be one of the biggest drawcards in the field. He rose to fame when he spent 38 weeks in the top 10 of the official world golf rankings in 2001. He represented Europe in three Ryder Cups (1997, 1999, 2002) and four Dunhill Cups and played for Sweden at the World Cup in 1994 and 1995.

A four-time winner in Europe, Parnevik won five times on the PGA Tour between 1998 and 2001. But shortly after beating Phil Mickelson and Davis Love III in a playoff to win the GTE Byron Nelson Classic in September 2001, disaster struck and the Swede had to undergo hip surgery.

For years Parnevik struggled to get back to his winning form. His slow climb back and his passionate effort to make the European Ryder Cup team in 2010 was derailed in 2009 when he had right hip surgery in July. Then, in 2010, he had just five starts when it was discovered that he had suffered a broken lumbar vertebrae. The Swede went back under the knife for back surgery in February.

But the irrepressible Parnevik is once again in ascendancy. Although he only started 10 events on the PGA Tour this year and only made three cuts, he dipped well below par in eight of those 13 rounds, including a scoring run of 70-65-70-68 at the Humana Challenge.

The only previous time South African spectators were treated to Parnevik's antics and his trademark upturned bill was in 1993, when he teed it up at the Gary Player Country Club in the Nedbank Golf Challenge that year.



But this time around, Parnevik is not chasing a million dollars for himself. He has thrown his weight behind Gary Player in the quest to raise funds for charity.

“It is an honour and a pleasure to have been invited to the Gary Player Invitational in South Africa,” he said.

“Gary Player has been an inspiration to many people around the world, trying to make their way in life, in either sport or business. The Gary Player Invitational series is doing an incredible amount of good in raising funds for less fortunate children around the world. In these tournaments, it is the taking part that counts, not the winning.”

The Gary Player Invitational presented by Coca-Cola will feature a mix of stars from the European Tour, the Ladies European Tour, the Champions and European Senior Tours, the LPGA Tour, a mix of local and international celebrities and, of course, eight businessmen who will captain the teams.

In addition to his peers from the regular Tour, Parnevik will share the fairways of Zimbali with Gary Player and other Champions Tour stars including 1991 Masters champion Ian Woosnam, European Ryder Cup captain Mark James, Champions Tour and European Senior Tour winners DJ Russell and Tony Johnstone, former French Open champion Vincent Tshabalala and SA PGA Championship winner Roger Wessels.

Further participant announcements to follow.

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Tickets are available from Computicket at R75 per adult per day. Entry for children under 18, accompanied by an adult, is free.

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Notes to the Editors:

About the Gary Player Invitational Global Series

The Gary Player Invitational Series, with events in the United Kingdom, United States, China and South Africa, is aimed at raising money for non-profit charitable organisations, whose mission is to provide quality education for disadvantaged and underprivileged children and strengthen impoverished communities plagued by disease and crime.

For over a decade, top professionals, all-star sportsmen, celebrities, and businessmen have come together for the annual Gary Player Invitationals in support of underprivileged children. For more information about our charity series, please visit www.garyplayerinvitational.com .

About Black Knight International

Black Knight International, the global holding company for all divisions of The Player Group, maintains a strong presence in North and South America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Gary Player’s penchant for wearing black attire on the golf course, coupled with his competitive style of play and courteous demeanour, earned him the name, “The Black Knight.” The recognizable Black Knight logo identifies all the companies of The Player Group, including the Gary Player®, Player® and Black Knight® brands.

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