

**Ballesteros on board for star alliance open**

**Hong Kong, October 4, 2000** – Spanish golf legend Seve Ballesteros, winner of 88 international titles including five Majors, will headline the US\$300,000 Star Alliance Open at the Clearwater Bay Golf and Country Club in Hong Kong from November 9 to 12.

"We are delighted to announce that Severiano Ballesteros has agreed to feature in the Star Alliance Open. He is a great player and is widely respected in the golfing world for his many achievements. His presence will certainly be a great boost for the event and guarantee its success," said Mr Friedel Roedig, Chief Executive Officer of Star Alliance, the global partnership of 15 of the world's top airlines.

The 43-year-old Ballesteros is widely credited for the rapid rise in the popularity of golf in Europe during the 1980s. He first captivated the golfing fraternity as a 19-year-old with his daring play when he led the 1976 British Open final round before losing to American Johnny Miller.

He won the British Open three times in 1979, 1984 and 1988 and also picked up the prestigious US Masters green jacket twice in 1980 and 1983, where he was the youngest winner at Augusta until Tiger Woods triumph in 1997.

Ballesteros' brilliant short game, which he credits from the time he spent playing with a cut-down three iron on the beach when he was growing up, will certainly give him an edge at the inaugural Star Alliance Open as the short par-70 layout at Clearwater Bay rewards imaginative iron play.

"I m looking forward to my trip to Asia. The Star Alliance Open will be an exciting new tournament. The Clearwater Bay golf course is a demanding one but I m looking forward to the challenge," said the Spaniard, who won the Ryder Cup three times as a player and captained Europe to a famous victory over the United States in 1997.

Asian PGA Executive Director Ramlan Dato' Harun is equally thrilled with the prospect of Ballesteros teeing up alongside Asia's best players, which will include last year's Order of Merit winner Kyi Hla Han, Taiwan's Yeh Wei-tze and Jyoti Randhawa of India.

"Seve is a marvellous ambassador for golf. He has contributed immensely towards the development of the game in Europe and I m sure his presence in Asia next month will provide a big lift for golf in the region. I believe the Asian players will learn a few tricks from Seve," said Harun.

The best players from the Davidoff Tour will tee up for the Star Alliance Open where the 132-player field will also feature many of the top players from the PGA Tour of Australasia as well.

This is Star Alliance's first sponsorship of a major golf tournament. It offers seamless global travel to 815 destinations in more than 130 countries through its partner airlines: Air Canada, Air New Zealand, All Nippon Airways, Ansett Australia, the Austrian Airlines Group (consisting of Austrian Airlines, Lauda Air and Tyrolean Airways), British Midland, Lufthansa German Airlines, Mexicana Airlines, SAS Scandinavian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways International, United Airlines and VARIG Brazilian Airlines.

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