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NATIONWIDE TOUR HEADS TO MELBOURNE

The PGA Tour of Australasia today announced an exciting three year agreement that will see a new AU\$850,000 tournament staged in Melbourne beginning in February 2008. The event will be co-sanctioned between the PGA Tour of Australasia and the US Nationwide Tour and will be one of the largest prize pools ever offered on the Nationwide Tour.

The PGA Tour of Australasia, in partnership with the PGA of Australia and The Handbury Group, will conduct the event from February 21-24 at Moonah Links, on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. The event consolidates the strong US Tour relationship and player pathway, and provides an enormous opportunity to the next generation of Australian golfers to make their way on the world stage.

"We are delighted to be building upon what has been a highly successful relationship with the US Nationwide Tour in announcing this new event, and at the same time enhancing our early season playing schedule", said PGA Tour of Australasia CEO Ben Sellenger.

"The creation of this new event, made possible by the partnership with PGA of Australia and The Handbury Group, will provide Australian players with a huge start to the beginning of the 2008 golfing calendar."

Paddy Handbury of the Handbury Group echoed the importance of these events within the Australian golfing landscape. "We are delighted to join with the PGA of Australia and PGA Tour of Australasia in staging this truly international tournament and develop another world class opportunity for our professional golfers to perform on a global stage. We look forward to building this tournament into something special on the calendar".

"The Nationwide Tour relationship has been an amazing career platform for Australian golfers over the past five years – players like Paul Sheehan, Gavin Coles, Stephen Bowditch, Jarrod Lyle, Euan Walters, Paul Gow and others have been able to take advantage of this pathway to make their mark on the US PGA Tour. This year we have seen Nick Flanagan post back to back victories on the Nationwide Tour, and Jason Day become the youngest victor in US Tour history by winning on the same circuit, which will no doubt signal their arrival on the world stage" said Tour CEO Ben Sellenger.

The new as yet unnamed event replaces the Jacob's Creek Open on the PGA Tour of Australasia schedule, and will follow the co-sanctioned HSBC NZ PGA Championship, staged at the Clearwater Resort in Christchurch NZ from 14-17 February, creating a strong Australasian start of the Nationwide Tour season.

Jacob's Creek, a long time supporter of golf and sponsor of the South Australian Open since 2002 have also announced it will not be continuing its sponsorship of the Adelaide based event.

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