



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SPANISH STAR JIMENEZ SHOOTS FOR WINNING DEBUT AT VENETIAN MACAU OPEN**

Macau, October 21: Spanish veteran star Miguel Angel Jimenez plans to enjoy a winning week in his debut appearance at the US\$900,000 Venetian Macau Open which starts on Thursday.

The 50-year-old, who has won 25 titles around the world, hopes to make up for last week's disappointment when a stomach bug dented his title defence at the Hong Kong Open but he is determined to make quick amends at the Macau Golf and Country Club.

The likeable Spaniard will be amongst the headliners at the full-field Asian Tour tournament, which is offering its highest prize fund since the event's inauguration in 1998.

The elite field at the Venetian Macau Open includes four-time Major champion Ernie Els, three-time Asian Tour number one Thongchai Jaidee, Chinese stars Liang Wen-chong and Zhang Lian-wei, title holder Scott Hend of Australia, who also triumphed last week, and 17 of the top-20 players from the current Order of Merit.

"I've been playing a long time in Asia and I love playing over here where I have several wins," said Jimenez, who has a total of six victories in the region.

"I played nine holes yesterday and it's a nice course. I feel better now after last week's food poisoning which wasn't a great way to play as I was very sick. However, I'm fine now and I'm ready to fight for the Venetian Macau Open title. We have a strong field with Ernie, Scott and the top Asians here, so it will be a big fight."

Els, who is an honorary member and international ambassador of the Asian Tour, finished joint third in his debut at the Venetian Macau Open last season and is ready to mount another title charge after finishing tied fifth in Hong Kong despite playing with a sore back in the final round.

"I'm happy to be back in the Venetian Macau Open. I don't think we stay in a resort like this anywhere else in the world which makes it totally different," said Els, who has a partnership

with this week's title sponsor where he wears The Venetian Macao logo on his right collar, back of hat and back yolk.

"The back is better. It locked up on me on Sunday and I felt quite difficult playing. My trainer got in late last week and it's getting better and I'm feeling really good for this week," he said.

With a buoyant Hend arriving for his defence in winning form, Els is predicting the long-hitting Aussie's name to show up again on the leaderboard.

"Every time I play, Scotty wins ... I should travel around the world with him. He's playing great, last week was a great win. I'm sure he's going to play the European Tour a lot and I hope he doesn't forget about the Asian Tour. He's going through a golden period now. I will try to play as good as I can and see where we finish. Anybody around here can win. It'll be a good battle out there," said Els.

Hend revealed that reverting back to his old driver has helped turn around his poor run of form which included five missed cuts in his last six tournaments before his Hong Kong high.

"I feel great. It was an exciting week last week and hopefully this week will be as exciting if I can deliver the same level of golf," said the 41-year-old. "I went back to my old driver from three years ago. I loaned it to a mate in Bangkok and I went back there after the Mercuries Taiwan Masters and asked if I could have it back.

"He gave me the head and I put in a shaft and played three rounds with it and started hitting in on the short grass. I went to Hong Kong last week with the belief that I could get it on the fairway.

"Driving is not the 'be it and end all'. But if you're coming out of trees all the time, it's hard to make birdies. There was a lot less pressure on my short game and I thought that was the key last week.

"It's very hard to back up a win ... not impossible but very hard. I haven't got great expectations but you'll never know. I know where my game is at the moment and it's a steady progression. I think I'm getting there and playing as good as I was last year."

Zhang, the only two-time champion at the Macau Open, is not writing off his chances of landing a third title in the city which he calls his second home despite restricting his playing schedule these days. "You'll never know in golf. I'll try my best to get my third crown in the Macau," said the five-time Asian Tour champion.

The Venetian Macau Open is jointly organised by Macau Sport Development Board of Macau SAR Government (MSDB) and Golf Association of Macau. It is sanctioned by both the Asian Tour and the Golf Association of Macau, and promoted by IMG. The Venetian Macao is the title sponsor of the event for a third successive year.

Sponsors joining The Venetian Macao in support of the tournament include Rolex, Air Macau, Blue Girl, Lamborghini and Hong Kong Descente, which carries both the Le Coq Sportif Golf Collection, Twinwood Wine and Munsingwear.

For more details on the Venetian Macao Open, please visit [www.thevenetianmacauopen.com](http://www.thevenetianmacauopen.com)

### **About Macau Sport Development Board of the Macau Special Administrative Region Government**

Macau Sport Development Board, under the capacity of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macau SAR Government, is a public organization of administration autonomy. The organization is responsible for the implementation of sport strategy and policy formulated by the Macau SAR Government. Its objective is to stimulate, encourage, and promote all kind of sports in Macau, also to create an essential condition for sport development.

For the development of competitive sports and 'Sport for all', the Macau Sport Development Board organizes various high level international sport competitions as well as recreational classes and thematic 'Sport for all' activities each year, in an endeavor to promote the international status of Macau, reinforce communication and co-operation with other countries and cities, enhance citizens' quality of life and arouse their interest in sport, so as to accelerate and facilitate the enhancement of the level of sport in Macau.

For more information, please visit [www.sport.gov.mo](http://www.sport.gov.mo).

### **About Golf Association of Macau**

Founded in 2000, the Golf Association of Macau is a non-profit organization, with the mission to promote, support and ensure the quality, traditions and development of the game of golf in Macau.

With the mission to encourage and promote golf in Macau, it provides coaching, training and selection of the Macau teams for participation in international events at all levels, and promotes and runs appropriate international and domestic golfing events in Macau, which helps to represent Macau in the golfing world and be a member of appropriate regional and world governing bodies.

### **About The Venetian<sup>®</sup> Macao-Resort-Hotel**

Opened in 2007, The Venetian<sup>®</sup> Macao-Resort-Hotel is Macao's first integrated resort featuring stunning replicas of the famous canals and architectural icons of Venice, Italy. The Venetian Macao features 3,000 suites, 1.2 million square feet (111,000 square metres) of convention and meeting facilities as well as a 15,000-seat Cotai Arena designed for world-class sports events and electrifying entertainment. The Venetian Macao is also home to the unique, 1,800-seat luxury Venetian Theatre, hosting the best in international and Chinese entertainment; more than 30 renowned restaurants; TAIVEXMALO Day Hospital & Spa; the incredibly fun QUBE indoor playground and more than 300 retailers at Shoppes at Venetian. Outdoor recreation areas include swimming pools and cabanas and a mini-golf course.

For more information, please visit [www.venetianmacao.com](http://www.venetianmacao.com).

### **About Cotai Strip Resorts Macao – Macao’s Integrated Resort City**

Sands China Ltd. is the leading developer, owner and operator of integrated resorts in Macao. The befittingly named Cotai Strip Resorts Macao, situated on reclaimed land between the islands of Coloane and Taipa, is the one destination that provides a stunning array of experiences at the heart of Cotai. Cotai Strip Resorts Macao has transformed a gaming-centric day-trip market into an integrated resort city and international hub for business and leisure travellers.

Pulsating with life, both night and day, Cotai Strip Resorts Macao features an expansive offering of affordable luxury available nowhere else in Macao, with approximately 9,000 hotel rooms and suites, international superstar live entertainment, duty-free shopping with 600 retailers offering an unparalleled array of name brands, 1.3 million square feet (120,000 square metres) of meeting and exhibition space for Asia’s leading conferences and exhibitions, gaming excitement, transportation offerings and well over 100 dining options, including international restaurants, bars and lounges. Cotai Strip Resorts Macao is a must-see destination providing every guest with an unforgettable experience and unparalleled excitement.

Comprised of The Venetian<sup>®</sup> Macao-Resort-Hotel; The Plaza<sup>™</sup> Macao, featuring the Four Seasons Hotel Macao; and Sands<sup>®</sup> Cotai Central, featuring the world’s largest Conrad, Sheraton, and Holiday Inn hotels, Cotai Strip Resorts Macao is where Asia’s ultimate destination is all within reach.

Cotai Strip Resorts Macao....Macao Starts Here. For more information, please visit <http://en.cotaistrip.com>.

### **About the Asian Tour**

As the official sanctioning body for professional golf in Asia, the Asian Tour leads the development of golf across the region, enhancing the careers of its members while maintaining a commitment to the integrity of the game. The Asian Tour, through its membership of the International Federation of PGA Tours, is the only recognised pan-Asian professional golf tour in Asia. This unique feature positions the Asian Tour at the pinnacle of professional golf in Asia; providing its events with Official World Ranking status. Tour Partners include Abacus (Official Apparel Partner), Inetol Headwear (Official Headwear Sponsor), Oakley (Official Eyewear and Footwear Sponsor), PRG (Official Accessories Supplier), Saxo Capital Markets (Official Statistics Partner), Srixon (Official Ball), Titleist (Official Web Partner) and Rolex (Official Timekeeper). The Asian Tour has offices in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Also, visit us at [www.asiantour.com](http://www.asiantour.com), [www.facebook.com/asiantourgolf](https://www.facebook.com/asiantourgolf), [www.twitter.com/asiantourgolf](https://www.twitter.com/asiantourgolf), [www.youtube.com/theasiantour](https://www.youtube.com/theasiantour) and [www.weibo.com/asiantourgolf](http://www.weibo.com/asiantourgolf).

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