

The 2015 Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup Amateur Series came to a dramatic close in Belek, Antalya, Turkey with a spectacular Grand Final at Kaya Palazzo and Carya Golf Clubs on Monday 26th October and Tuesday 27th October.

A total of 128 Grand Finalists represented 68 destinations from 46 countries worldwide, all competing for just 10 available spots in the pro-am of the 2015 Turkish Airlines Open, with the overall winner receiving a once in a lifetime chance to play with golfing superstar, and four-time Major Champion, Rory McIlroy.

Players were split into two categories, A and B, which reflected the categories from which they qualified at their local qualifying event.



Round One commenced at 09:00 on Monday morning, with +2 handicapper Neil Macrae, from Edinburgh leading the way from the first tee. Macrae negotiated the front nine holes in just 33 shots and repeated the feat on the back nine, to post 39 points and set a very competitive clubhouse lead in the category A competition. Three others managed to tie Macrae in the clubhouse, namely Jordan Wilton,

Ebrahim Osman and Aamir Inam before Singaporean Terence Tan trumped them all with a very solid round of 40 points on the tight and technical Kaya Palazzo layout.

Whilst the category competition was tightly contested, category B had a very clear pace-setter following Round One. Johannesburg's Neill Bam fired a best-of -the day 43 points to lead by three from four players tied on 40 points. Bam, who was the first competitor to book his place in the Finals at The Royal Johannesburg and Kensington Golf Club all the way back in March this year, credited a conservative approach and a sharp short-game for his considerable lead.

Macrae's brilliant opening round saw him post a gross score of 41 points, enough for a more than comfortable six-shot lead from nearest competitor, Toronto's Jordan Wilton in the gross competition.

Following play in Round One, a cut was made and the 32 leading players in each category progressed to Tuesday's second and Final Round. Incredibly, the cut fell on 32 points in each category, with a card playoff being required to determine the final 32. Ireland's Brian McFadden (pictured right) was one of the lucky ones to make the cut on the mark, courtesy of a nett birdie, nett eagle finish!



Those who made the cut were rewarded for their efforts with an early start on Tuesday morning, with the Final Round commencing at 06:38 at Carya Golf Club, recent host of the Turkish Airlines Ladies Open.

Category A players took to the course first, all aiming to topple Tan from the top of the leaderboard. It was a difficult day for former Finalist Tan as a disappointing 31 points took him out of contention for one of the four coveted pro-am spots that were available in his category. His slip opened the door for the chasing pack. One of the three players who started the day three back, Dubai's Aamir Inam, made a charge



at the top with a score of 38 points, giving him a total of 77 points and guaranteeing himself a pro-am spot alongside Danie Van Rensburg (Johannesburg) and Roman Rastvortsev (Kiev). But it was Pierre-Luc Fournier (Peter to his friends and pictured left receiving his prize) who came from a shot further back than Inam who secured victory in the category A competition with a superb second round of 41 points - the lowest in his category.

Neill Bam had slept on a three shot overnight lead in category B. But anyone who thought the pressure of a potential game with Rory McIlroy would weigh heavy on the South African's mind could not have been wrong. Bam spread-eagled the field with a blistering 46 points in Round Two to dominate category B by an incredible nine points and book his place alongside Rory in the pro-am of the 2015 TA Open. Bam was shocked and surprised by his performance during the week and was unsurprisingly speechless at the opportunity that awaited the next day! Janez Kokelj from Ljubljana enjoyed a fine second round of 42 points to join Bam in the pro-am as runner up in category B whilst Beijing's Zhang Wei followed his first round of 39 points with a closing 40 points to finish in third. Susan Choi-Grant who qualified at Trump National Westchester, New York, completed the pro-am qualifiers from category B, beating Jayant Dua from Mumbai on count-back, by virtue of her better Final Round score of 41 points.

As anticipated, Neil Macrae secured his spot in the pro-am with a second round of 34 points gross, giving him a three-under par total of 75 points. Swede Lars Christensen fired a second round of 38 points to cruise into second outright in the gross competition, in doing so filling the last of the ten qualifying places for Wednesday's pro-am.

For those players who missed the cut, a consolation competition was held at Carya Golf Club on Tuesday afternoon. The late afternoon tee times gave most players the rare opportunity to experience the spectacular views of night golf. Jörg Holsten from Hamburg triumphed under the lights and in doing so secured himself a return business class flight from Hamburg to Istanbul.

Wednesday 28th October 2015 will live long in the memory of Neill Bam, for at 11:00, he teed it up on the first hole of the Montgomerie Maxx Royal Golf Club with non-other than Rory McIlroy. Neill enjoyed a fantastic day in the gentlemanly company of the Northern Irishman and also got the opportunity to play alongside former Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Turkish Billionaire Fikret Ozturk.

Bam continued his good form of the previous two days to help his team secure second place in the competition, with a score of -28.

Meanwhile, Thomas Aiken captained a team of TAWGC qualifiers (Van Rensburg, Fournier and Inam) to a third placed finish in the event, rounding of a successful week of golf for all concerned.

