

The North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan



Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup 2015

Friday, 9 October 2015



FINAL REPORT

Organized by:



Title Sponsors:



Mercedes-Benz

COLE HAAN

Basic Facts

1. Background

Most Foreign Chambers of Commerce have their own golf competitions as part of their social activities. Some chambers, like the Swedish and the Finnish, also compete against each other regularly.

The idea of a Europe-U.S. annual golf event was first raised in 2002 in a discussion between Mr. Robert Grondine (ACCJ Governor), Mr. Richard Collasse (EBC Chairman) and Mr. Erik Ullner (EBC Vice-Chairman). The concept was to have an annual high-profile "Ryder Cup in Japan" that will draw the attention of the media and foster closer relations between the US and European companies in Japan. In Spring 2003 discussions were taken up again and a decision was made to go ahead, and thus the project got rolling in late April 2003. The first competition was played at Atsugi Kokusai C.C. on September 26, 2003. The second cup was played on October 1, 2004, the third on September 30, 2005, the fourth on September 29, 2006, the fifth on September 28, 2007, the sixth on September 26, 2008 and the seventh on 2 October 2009, the eighth on 1 October 2010, the ninth on 30 September 2011, the tenth on 28 September 2012, the eleventh on 4 October 2013, the twelfth on 10 October 2014, all at the same venue. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan's status changed from participating Chamber to and organizing Chamber in 2011.

2. Title Sponsors

DaimlerChrysler was the title sponsor until 2007. As DaimlerChrysler AG was renamed as Daimler AG as of October 04, 2007, the name of the North-America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan was re-branded in 2008 to Daimler & Chrysler Cup, as Daimler Japan and Chrysler Japan agreed to jointly co-sponsor the event in 2008 and 2009. As Chrysler withdrew from the event in 2010, Daimler continued as sole sponsor and the tournament was renamed Mercedes-Benz Japan Cup.

This year Cole Haan Japan agreed to become a co-title sponsors from the American side and re-establishing the Trans- Atlantic link and increasing resources for producing the event.

3. The Taskforce

To handle the planning and implementation of the event, the ACCJ, CCCJ and the EBC have respectively appointed their taskforce members. This year the taskforce consisted of Robert Melson, ACCJ Special Events Co-Chair (ACCJ), Aron Kremer, ACCJ Special Events Vice-Chair (ACCJ) and David Anderson, M.D., Alberta Japan Office (CCCJ) from the American side and Erik Ullner, EBC Treasurer, Joachim Hinne, DIHKJ and Clas G. Bystedt, FCCJ Executive Director from the European side. Clas Bystedt was responsible for the web site, information to players and production of material for the event. The task force held several meetings (see page 3.), many of those with Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan. The task force also exchanged hundreds of emails during the preparation period. The ACCJ members of the task force were responsible for recruiting North American sponsors and the European members recruited European sponsors. The ACCJ was in charge of the bus transportation and the CCCJ took care of the trophies. The task force got substantial support from Ayako Nakano at the ACCJ.



4. Date and Course Selection

The date selected for the event, Friday 9 October, was decided in March, after consulting chambers and Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan. In previous years the event has been played last Friday of September or first Friday of October. But last year it was decided to hold the event on the second Friday of October, a later date would decrease the risk of typhoons. For the same reason Friday, 9 October, was selected for this year's event.

It was also decided to play the 13th tournament at the Atsugi Kokusai Country Club the same course as past years. The surveys over the years have shown a steady support for continuing at the same course; 72% in 2005, 74% in 2006, 76% in 2007, 77% in 2008, 78% in 2009, 73% in 2010, 77% in 2011, 84% in 2012 and 2013, in 2014 88% and this year 93%.

The positive experiences from the previous events, the Club's capacity to handle our large number of players and the fact that it is much easier to organize it at the same venue, made and continues to make the decision easy. Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan also supported using the same course. Due to the continuing reconstruction on the back nine holes at the East Course, also this year we played the front nine at East course and back nine at the West Course.

5. Play format & Team Competition

The target number of players in each team was basically fixed to 72, bringing a total of 144 players, i.e. 36 foursomes teeing off from all tees (shotgun start). But due to the great interest in the event, and less cancellations than in previous years, actually 149 players started in the competition, 71 for the North American team, 78 for the European. While challenging logistically, bringing on the extra players did not significantly slow the pace of play.

The tournament was played using the Double Peoria ("shin-peria") scoring system, which calculates the handicap from 12 hidden holes on the day. Due to the difficulty to assign correct handicaps to all the players it is the only realistic option. In 2005 we tried stroke play based on player feedback from the earlier player surveys with actual handicaps, but it can be said that the system partly failed, based on the many negative comments about accuracy and fairness in that year's survey.

The average score of the best 80 % of the players in each team was counted as the team scores. In the event of a tie, the team with the best net player would win.

6. Individual competition & Prizes

In addition to the team competition it was also decided to establish the Best Net (24 prizes) and the Best Gross (3 prizes) winners, as well as the Longest drive (hole No. 13) and Nearest pin prizes (on all par-3). The best 25 net players won performance prizes. In addition, 14 prizes (the most expensive items) were drawn among all the participants.

7. Special Guest

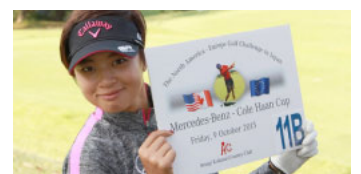
A special feature this year was that a Japan LPGA pro (Asuka Kashiwabara) participated in the event hitting tee shots with all groups on a hole and handing out trophies at the prize ceremony.

8. After-Party @ Mercedes-Benz Connection

Also this year a very successful After-Party was held at Mercedes-Benz Connection on Wednesday, 14 October and attended by more than 100 players and their significant others, sponsors and representatives for the title-sponsors, Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan. The party was free to participants, all costs of the event were borne by Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan.



North American Team Captain Nick Masee receives the trophy.



Planning and Preparations

Tasks and events are listed below in chronological order. Many items involved required help from people outside the taskforce. From the ACCJ — Ayako Nakano who helped with several logistical matters, and from Mercedes-Benz Japan — Sayoko Shimosegawa and from Cole Haan Japan — Hiromi Furukawa where very much involved in the planning and organizing of the event. Ms. Tokunaga from YMCA Japan was also involved in planning and was responsible for the execution of the charity component.

All the practical work related to the event - web site, registration procedures, information to and communication with players as well as design and production of the material (see page 5.), etc. - was handled by the Finnish Chamber of Commerce — Clas Bystedt, which acted as the MB-CH Cup Office.

Even though this was the 13th tournament played with the same concept and at the same course, a couple extra meetings were required to successfully coordinate with the new co-title sponsor, although most matters were handled by email.

December 2014 (date in parenthesis)

- (17) Wrap-up meeting of the 2014 event, discussions on North American co-title sponsor, date, venue, registration fees, etc.

February 2015 (date in parenthesis)

- (3) Cole Haan Japan expresses their interest in becoming a co-title sponsor for the event
- (9) Mercedes-Benz Japan confirms title sponsorship for 2015 and the date, Friday, 9 October is set for the event.

March 2015

- (20) Meeting with Mercedes-Benz Japan regarding the proposed North American co-title sponsor, Cole Haan.

April 2015

- (10) Mercedes-Benz Japan confirms the co-title sponsorship arrangements
 - (22) Task force meeting discussing mainly the co-title sponsors responsibilities, re-branding.
- * Cole Haan Japan was introduced to participating Chambers as the new co-title sponsor and was additionally featured in the ACCJ Journal.

May 2015

- (18) Task-force meeting with Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan regarding the co-title sponsorship.
- (19) The 2015 web site at launched.

Sponsorship categories decided (amounts 1,000 yen)

Category	Cash	Goods/services (retail value)
PLATINUM	300	800 - >
GOLD	150	400 - >
SILVER	75	200 - 399
BRONZE	40	100 - 199

Categories and Contributions

Category	CASH	LV	GOODS/SERVICES (RETAIL VALUE)
PLATINUM	300,000 yen	LV	800,000 yen and over
GOLD	150,000 yen	LV	400,000 - 799,999 yen
SILVER	75,000 yen	LV	200,000 - 399,999 yen
BRONZE	40,000 yen	LV	100,000 - 199,999 yen

June 2015

- (15) Announcement to chambers requesting them to announce the event to their members and add it to their event calendar
- (15) Email to all last year's players and sponsors announcing opening of new web site and registration starting.
- (24) Task-force meeting regarding division of labor, budget, issues with the co-title sponsors and sponsor recruitment.

September 2015

- (1) Task-force meeting with Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan regarding re-branding, etc..
- (16-19) Shipping instructions sent to goods/services sponsors.
- (25) Registration deadline.
- (28) Email confirmation sent out to all participants.

October 2015

- (1) Task-force meeting with Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan; final check, discussions re. After-Party
 - (4) Playing groups assigned.
 - (6) Email to all participants with detailed event information, pairings, promotion of After-Party and a link to the information kit. B-0 and A-1 sized posters printed at Kinko's.
 - (6-7) Pocket Guide, Score Cards, signboards, near-pin & longest drive flags, etc. printed and assembled at FCCJ.
 - (8) Final email confirmation to players, reminder about After-Party.
- Preparations at the course; 'goodies' bags prepared, prize allocations, registration desks prepared, etc.
- (12) Email to all participants regarding the event reports, Participants' Survey and last reminder about After-Party.
 - (22) Email to all participants After-Party report and survey reminder.

Schedule on the day of play - Friday, 9 October, 2015

- 06.10 Bus departs from ACCJ
- 06.30 Taskforce arrive at the club
- 07.00 Registration desks open
- 07.25 Bus arrives at the club (on schedule)
- 08.15 Briefing to participants (on schedule)
- 08.32 Off for tees (on schedule)
- 08.45 Tee-off (on schedule)
- 15.00 Play finishes (on schedule)
- 15.30 Party starts (on schedule)
- 16.00 Prize ceremony starts (on schedule)
- 17:05 Prize ceremony ends (10 min. ahead of schedule)
- 17:30 Bus departs for Tokyo (on schedule)
- 18:30 The taskforce leave the club - mission completed



Group 10B enjoying a shot break, from right; Henry Yamaguchi, Carl Eklund, Nobuyuki Hishinuma and Hiroshi Matsumoto (plus their caddie, front-left)

Information to participants

1. The Web site

The web site has its own domain: www.dccgolf-japan.com. The web site has proved to be instrumental in making the project successful. It has raised the profile of the event, given additional exposure to the sponsors and has been a very good tool in communicating with the participants, as registration, sign-up listings and sponsor recruitment were done through the site. Actually, more than half of the sponsors signed up automatically through the web site, without any "sales effort" from the taskforce, ACCJ, CCCJ or EBC.

The players sign-up procedure was handled separately for ACCJ, CCCJ and the Europeans as they required different instructions on how the registration fee was collected. After the player registered, he/she was sent an email confirming the registration and information on how the fee was collected.

The structure of the site was changed during the project period to reflect the different phases of the project, i.e. the promotion phase, registration phase, the information phase and the "after-the-event" phase, including the After-Party and Participants' Survey.

The web site has had about 265,000 page views between the launch (19 May) and 30 October 2015. The creation and maintenance of the website was financially supported by the co-title sponsors Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole-Haan Japan.

2. e-mail information

Prior to opening of registration, two email where sent out, i.e.

- 15 June - Announcement to chambers requesting them to announce the event to their members and add it to their event calendar
- 15 June - Registration open. Announcement to previous years players and sponsors about the opening of web site and registration starting.

All participants received four email bulletins before the event, i.e.

- upon registration - automatic confirmation.
- 29 September - confirmation of participation, promotion of bus and notice of when further information will be sent.
- 6 October - detailed event information, pairings, promotion of After-Party and a link to the information kit.
- 8 October - final confirmation and promotion of After-Party

After the event, two emails were sent out:

- 12 October - thank you, information on the event report on the web site and instructions on the participants' survey, final After-Party reminder
- 22 October - After-Party report and survey reminder

The group mail program was set-up so that it showed "Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup Office" as sender.

3. Information kit

The 6 page A4 size information kit contained information on how to get to the course, including a large map in English made for this occasion, other instructions, rules and the participants and groups (with company names and chamber affiliation of the players, see sample at right).

The files were placed on the server and links to these were sent in the email bulletin on 6 October. This allowed participants to download the file of their choice and did not have to receive a mail with a large attachment. This also allowed for the information to be constantly updated on the web site (e.g. with changes in groups) and available to the players in its latest version.

4. Information on the day

When players arrived at the course, they received their individualized Score Card, the Pocket Guide (which included a course guide made for the event) and the locker card. Giveaways from Mercedes-Benz Japan (MB-CH Cup 2015 cap, MB pouch & ball markers), Cole-Haan Japan (shoe horn and discount vouchers) a sleeve of MB-CH Cup 2014 golf balls, Air Canada golf balls, airplane model from K&L Gates, United DigiClean and keychains from TaylorMade were placed in "Goodies Bags" in the lockers (except for the cap which was distributed at the reception desks).

Before start of play the players were gathered for a photo-shoot and a short briefing by task-force member Bob Melson on the play format, main rules and charity shots. Players were also instructed on how to fill out the scorecard, check and sign it and how to return it after play (the scorer's desk was in front of the club house).

Task-force member Aron Kremer was the emcee for the awards ceremony.



Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup Office <fccj2@gol.com>
MB-CH Cup 2015 - Information to Players

Dear Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup Participant,

This email provides you detailed information regarding the Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup on Friday, 9 October. Please read through this mail carefully and be well prepared for the event.

1. Participants Guide

The package includes general information, instructions how to get to the course, a map, rules, participants and groups, and much more. The guide is in pdf format and as the file is rather big (2.5 MB), please download it here: http://www.dccgolf-japan.com/pdf/MB-CH_Cup_eventinfo2015.pdf

We urge you to download the information and study it to know the procedures even if you have participated before as there are some changes.

If you have problems to download the guide, please email me.

We have also put this information on our web site at <http://www.dccgolf-japan.com/> go to the new section "Info to Players", which also includes a hole-by-hole course guide. The web site always has latest information.

2. Groups

The groups in the guide might still change due to cancellations, so please check your group when you arrive at the course. The guide will be updated on the web site so you could check for the latest version on Thursday evening.

The foursomes were developed by taking a number of factors into account and the list has already been submitted to the club. Therefore changes are very difficult to make and the MB-CH Cup taskforce requests that all players accept these arrangements.

3. Cancellations

If you for some reason have to withdraw, make sure to notify us. Please do so by replying to this mail. NOTE: We will not be able to read emails regularly on Thursday afternoon and evening when we do preparations at the club and on Friday morning, so if you need to cancel, or have some questions then, rather than sending email, please call or send SMS to 090-2219-0636 (Clas)

4. Bus transportation

If you are not sure if you have registered for the bus, please check the last column next to your name in the participants list on the web site. The bus ride is free and have space for your clubs.

The bus departs from in front of the ACCJ OFFICE AT EXACTLY 6:10 AM, boarding starts at 6:00 AM. The bus will then depart Atsugi Kokusai C.C. at 5:30 PM following the party and awards ceremony. A map to the ACCJ office is available on our web site (Info to Players).

IMPORTANT

1. Please be on time and arrive at the club no later than 7:45. Better to come too early than too late - we have free use of the driving range!
2. If you arrive after players have moved to the tees (08:30) you will NOT be allowed in the tournament.
3. Your spot in the tournament is NOT transferable.
4. Please check that your golf bag has a nametag with your name, as in the players list, clearly written on it. In case you do not have a nametag, ask for one when you arrive at the club and write your name on it.
5. Remember to take your clubs and golf shoes, and a good spirit... we take care of the rest! Note: In case you do not have clubs, some sets of right-handed rental clubs are available at the club, call 045-241-1311 to reserve.

We are looking forward to see you on Friday at the club!

Best regards

The Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup Task Force

Robert Melson (ACCJ) Erik Ulmer (EBC)
Aron Kremer (ACCJ) Joachim Hirne (EBC)
David Anderson (CCCJ) Clas G. Bystedt (Administrator-sent this email)

Out course	Player	Team	In course
1A	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 28
1A	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
1A	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
1A	Shohei Nagayama	United Airlines	CCCJ 19
1B	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	ACCJ 28
1B	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
1B	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
1B	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
1C	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
1C	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
1C	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
1C	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
2A	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
2A	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
2A	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
2B	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
2B	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
2B	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
2B	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
2B	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
2B	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
3A	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
3A	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
3A	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
3A	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
3A	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
3A	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17
12A	Yoshinori Ohno	United Airlines	ACCJ 29
12A	Yuta Tsubota	United Airlines	ACCJ 30
12A	Yoshihiro Nishitani	Mercedes-Benz Japan	DMK 17



Task-force member Bob Melson gives instructions before start of play.

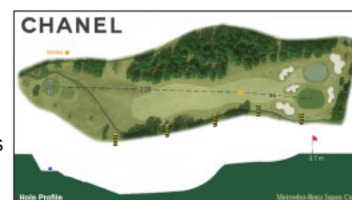
Material produced for the event

1. Pocket Guide and Scorecard

When the participants arrived at the course they received the Pocket Guide and the Scorecard. The Scorecards had name, group and team on them (see samples below).

The Pocket Guide (16 pages) contained greetings from the organizers and the title sponsors, instructions, rules, participants & groups and a hole-by-hole course guide. The back page had logos of all the sponsors.

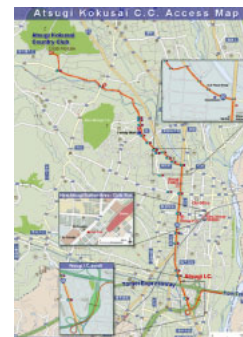
The scorecard had a feature which was appreciated - as groups started on different holes, the scorecard had a yellow mark where the marker should start entering scores



Sample of the Course Guide

2. Information kit

The 6-page Information Kit was made as a pdf file so that each participant could download it and print out if needed. A mail with a link to the location of this file was sent out on 6 October. The kit included instructions, rules, participants & groups and a large size access map to the course. This map was also made for the event. The back page had again logos of all the sponsors.



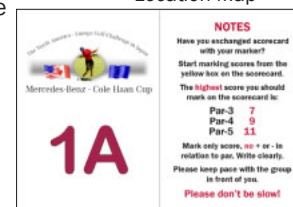
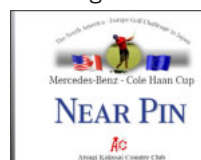
Location Map

3. Posters and signboards

Two B0 (ca 115 x 140 cm) posters were made in-house and printed at Kinko's. A1 posters were also made as promotion boards at the near pin (two for Mercedes-Benz, two for Cole Haan) and longest drive (TaylorMade) holes, as well as for the hole sponsors (Chanel, Finnair, United Airlines, Delta Airlines, Air Canada, Turkish Airlines and Warsteiner). In addition A-1 sized signboards were made for the two registration desks, the scorers' desk, as well as signage to course and party room and a signboard for the two YMCA charity shots, one for each title-sponsor.

4. Near pin and longest drive flags

Near pin and longest drive flags were also made with the event logo.



5. Cart signs

To enable participants to easily locate their cart (among 38) at the start, a number sign was made for each cart. On the reverse side (visible from inside the cart), essential rules and instructions were printed.

6. The logo

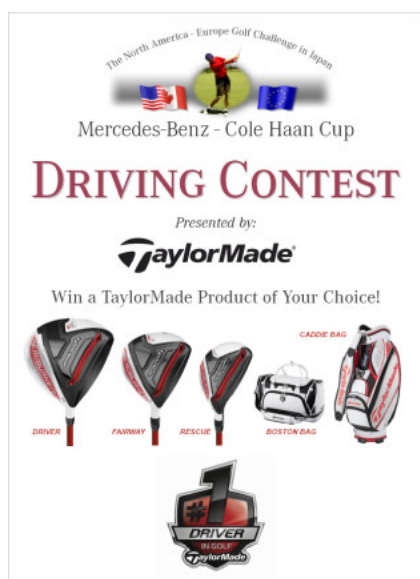
The original logo image was designed by Tomo Bystedt in 2003.

Typesetting of the title is in Corpo A.

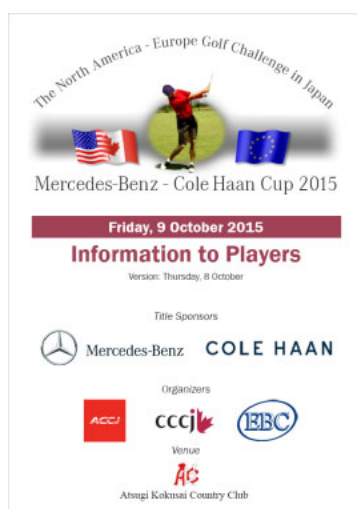


Production costs

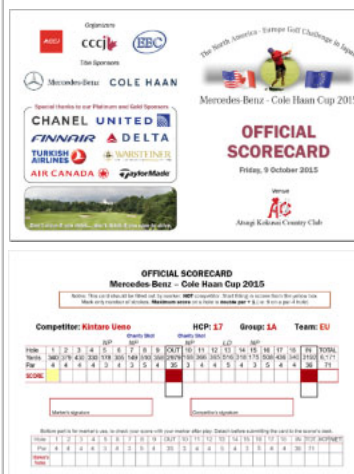
About 200,000 yen was spent on the material for the event, including printing of the B0 and A1 size posters at Kinko's, high grade paper for pocket guide and scorecards, panels and stands for posters, toners for the in-house color laser printer, near-pin and longest drive flags, cart signs, etc.. These costs were covered by Mercedes-Benz Japan, including design and assembly work (pocket guide, signboards and wine labels). Cole Haan Japan covered the costs for re-branding the event, including the large size banner at the club house entrance (which was later moved to the party room).



Driving Contest signboard (A1)



Information Kit (A4 - 6 pages)



Personalized Scorecards



Pocket Guide (A6 -16 pages)

Event Photos



Entrance to Club House



The registration area in the lobby of the club house.



The European team registration desk.



Moving out to the holes.



Groups 1A, 1B and 1C on the first tee. From left: Yuya Suzuki, Katsushi Kurokawa, Kintaro Ueno, Francis Lee, Yasutaka Nakagawa, Kenichi Negita, Toru Takahashi, Ryan Dwyer, Hiroshi Hanai, Fumiyoshi Shoji, Greg Dinges and Robert Melson.



The team captains Hiroaki Nagahara (EU) (and Nick Masee (NA)) posing for a photo with the pro, Asuka Kashiwabara.



The Charity shot on hole. no. 7 was sponsored by Cole Haan. Hiromi Furukawa of Cole Haan with YMCA representatives.



The players could enjoy nice food and drinks on five different locations on the course (drinks on additional three).



View towards the Club House form the 1st green.



The Scorers' Desk welcoming the players after the round.



The buffet table



Kintaro Ueno of MBJ presents the Individual Winner's Trophy to Dean Rogers (NA). He was also the Best Gross with a score of 65, five under par.



Winner of the United Airlines prize, presented by Fumiyo Shoji (right).



The winning North American team.

Report from the event

Participants

A record 149 players participated in this event, including 15 ladies. The European team had 78 players, the North-Americans 71. While the extra players presented a logistical challenge the pace of play was smooth and the play finished on schedule.

The players represented about 15 different nations. The Japanese made up the largest group, with 85 players (57%), followed by 20 Americans, 6 Canadians, 6 Finns, 6 Germans, 6 Swedes, 4 Brits, 3 Irish and 18 representing about 10 other nations. Counting by chambers the American Chamber had 60 players, followed by the German Chamber with 18, Finnish with 15, Canadian with 13, Swedish with 8, Italian and Dutch with 7 and British with 6. Golfers of all levels took part, from scratch players to high handicappers and gross scores ranged from 66 (Dean Rogers) to 142. 36 players scored a gross of less than 90, but also 24 had over 110.

Sponsors and Prizes

The event had 31 sponsors, including the title sponsors Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan. Thanks to this, we were able to supply tasty and refreshing food and drink throughout the day and had many quality skill and drawing prizes to give away.

Apart from the beautiful Hoya crystal Cup to the winning team and a crystal trophy for the winner of the individual competition (from Mercedes-Benz Japan) and a new trophy for the Ladies' Champion (from Cole Haan Japan) were given out. Notable prizes included a Chanel J12 watch, a pair of First Class tickets to San Francisco from United, a pair of Business Class tickets to Europe from Finnair, a pair of Business Class tickets to any of their destinations from Turkish Airlines, a pair of Business Class tickets to the Honolulu from Delta. Air Canada, also a Platinum sponsor, provided cash and golf balls for the "Goodies Bags". Warsteiner provided beer for the course and prize ceremony as well as for the After-Party on 14 October, and also donated money to qualify as Platinum sponsor. TaylorMade provided golfing goods and also provided the prize for the Driving Contest.

DoubleTree by Hilton Naha, Hilton Odawara Resort & Spa, Hilton Osaka, Conrad Tokyo and Grand Hyatt Tokyo all gave out excellent accommodations. ISG donated a BBQ set, Philips home appliances, Häfele a juicer and two table grills. Genki Art provided two photo sessions, HealthyM four vouchers for memberships to HealthyTokyo.com, Loudmouth and Titleist golf goods. Coca-Cola provided soft drinks, Michelin 36 Michelin Guides and FusionGOL web hosting services.

The cash sponsors were; Asian Tigers Mobility (Silver sponsor), K&L Gates (Silver) and Avergence (Bronze), CDAC (Bronze), EU Japan Consulting (Bronze), Seiryu Asset Management Ltd. (Bronze). The cash contributions were key to the events success as it enabled us to improve the drink and food service at the event, provide free bus service and cover other costs related to organizing the tournament.

Apart from the trophies, Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan also provided Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup 2015 golf caps and prizes for the four Near Pin competitions and several items each for the "Goodies Bags". They also covered the cost for the administration, web site and costs for posters, signboards, pocket guides, scorecards, etc., and expenses to cover the cost for re-branding the event.

Charity component

This year the tournament's fundraising was again directed to the YMCA Challenged Children Project (CCP). In addition to collection boxes the effort included Charity Shots on the par-3 7th hole sponsored by Cole Haan and on the par-3 10th sponsored by Mercedes-Benz. Both holes were also staffed by YMCA. Donation boxes were also provided in the party room.

The Charity activities, including all surplus (564,000 yen) over operating costs, brought in a total of 798,891 yen.

After-Party @ Mercedes-Benz Connection

Also this year a very successful After-Party was held at Mercedes-Benz Connection on Wednesday, 14 October attended by more than 100 players and their significant others, sponsors and representatives for the title-sponsors, Mercedes-Benz and Cole Haan. The party was free, all costs were borne by Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan.



Results

Team Competition

Team North America 74.9 strokes - Team Europe 75.1 strokes

Note: the team score was calculated as average from the best 80% in each team.

Special Prizes

Near Pin Winners

- No. 5 - Hiroaki Nagahara (EU)
- No. 7 - Dean Rogers (NA) & Hiroki Tanaka (NA)
- No. 10 - Tomoji Nogami (EU)
- No. 15 - Masanori Kanazashi (EU)

Longest Drive

Yoko Kudo (NA)



Best three net



Best three gross

Individual Competition - BEST NET

Pos.	Name	Team	Gross	HCP	NET
1	Dean Rogers	NA	66	0	66.0
2	Sakari Romu	EU	76	5.9	70.1
3	Jay Revels	NA	81	9.7	70.3
4	Latesh Kumar Gajria	NA	92	21.3	70.7
5	Yuya Suzuki	NA	85	14.2	70.8
6	William Ramsay	EU	84	13.0	71.0
7	Yasutaka Nakagawa	EU	88	16.6	71.4
8	Yoshiaki Morimoto	EU	81	9.5	71.5
9	Hiroshi Ariizumi	EU	100	28.4	71.6
10	Toru Takahashi	NA	93	21.3	71.7
11	Kieron Cashell	EU	86	14.2	71.8
12	Hiroshi Sakai	NA	85	13.0	72.0

Individual Competition - BEST GROSS

Pos.	Name	Team	OUT	IN	TOTAL
1	Dean Rogers	NA	33	33	66
2	Shuichi Hirokawa	EU	35	38	73
3	Sachihiko Yoneda	EU	37	39	76
	Sakari Romu	EU	35	41	76
5	Nobuyuki Hishinuma	NA	37	42	79
	Mathias Leroy	EU	38	41	79
7	Jay Revels	NA	38	43	81
	Yoshiaki Morimoto	EU	38	43	81
	Katsushi Kurokawa	NA	40	41	81
10	Yasuo Asoh	NA	41	41	82
	Henry Yamaguchi	NA	40	42	82
	Kazunori Kanazashi	EU	41	41	82

* if same net score and handicap, older player wins.

Participants Survey

To further develop the event, we conducted a survey among the participants. The survey was ran from October 12 - 23, 2015. . To encourage participants to complete the survey, two winners for two weekday golf rounds for four persons at Atsugi Kokusai C.C. were drawn among the survey respondents.

Survey Responses

The survey was announced to 116 participants. We did not have email addresses to some of the guests and the organizers were excluded from the total of 149 players that participated in the event.

We received 55 valid responses after removing multiple and incomplete entries.

Thus the response rate is 47.4%, which can be considered good and gives a high statistical significance to the results. 32 of the respondents represented Team Europe, 23 Team North America.

Survey Results

General opinion about the event

Advance information to players

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	50	91%	
Good	5	9%	
Average	0	0%	
Not so good	0	0%	
Bad	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Arrangements during the event

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	44	83%	
Good	9	17%	
Average	0	0%	
Not so good	0	0%	
Bad	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 53

The Course

Interesting/challenging layout

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	20	36%	
Good	33	60%	
Average	2	4%	
Not so good	0	0%	
Bad	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Course condition

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	21	38%	
Good	24	44%	
Average	8	15%	
Not so good	2	4%	
Bad	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Food & Beverage Service

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	16	29%	
Good	25	45%	
Average	10	18%	
Not so good	3	5%	
Bad	1	2%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

At the party

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Excellent	16	30%	
Good	24	45%	
Average	8	15%	
Not so good	5	9%	
Bad	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 53

Pace of Play

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
No issue	8	15%	
Good	46	84%	
Marshalling	0	0%	
No beginners	0	0%	
Penalize	0	0%	
Other	1	2%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Main reason why I participated

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Exciting event	29	53%	
Expand network	12	22%	
Friend encouraged	7	13%	
I like golf	5	9%	
Prizes	2	4%	
Do not know	0	0%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Cost of participation

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Could be more	4	7%	
Reasonable	46	85%	
Too expensive	0	0%	
No opinion	4	7%	

Total Number of Responses: 54

Play Atsugi Kokusai C.C. again?

Response	NO.	PCT.	Graph
Yes	51	93%	
No	0	0%	
Do not know	4	7%	

Total Number of Responses: 55

Participants Survey - Comments

"After 6 years I've finally been able to participate in this event for the first time as it finally worked into my schedule. I consider this one of the best organized and well run events of all the competitions I've participated in here in Japan and hope I can work it into my schedule for future dates."

Statement from a North-American participant.

"Great organization and a beautiful atmosphere! Thanks!"

Statement from a European participant.

"Looking forward to attend after party! The event was one of best golf event I have ever attend. Thank you very much for the opportunity."

Statement from two Japanese participants

General Comments

- Excellent event with good arrangement and super prizes.
- Good event and well organized.
- Great event! Really enjoyed teeing up with the Golf Pro and the group I was in.
- Great event, bad score and no luck in the raffle draw still :)
- Had good company and weather, and really enjoyed the event. The organizing team made an excellent arrangement.
- I appreciate your hospitality.
- I pretty much enjoyed this event. I would like to joint this event again in the next year.
- I cannot find my score. Every year usually it is provided. It's a shame if you don't provide it.
- I'd like to see score of all players after the party, score report has to be provided at the exit of party place as usual.
- It was a so great event. Thank you for all arrangement.
- It was an exciting event and I was very impressed with the quality of organization, which was fantastic. Would like to participate in the event next year too! Once again, thank you very much for great organization.
- It was very nice for me to play with 3 other foreigners this year, I enjoyed it very much as usual.
- It was very nice that Women Net Winner prize was added this year. I will bring more female friends next year!
- Keep up the good work, congratulations to the committee.
- Love the event and have participated 11 out of 13 years. Looking forward to next year.
- Playing with ACCJ members and Europeans were great. The atmosphere with lots of other people was very unique experience to me. Thank you very much for all supported this great event and those concerned about sponsoring! I would love to participate again!
- Really enjoyed the event - Thank you !
- Thank you for all the organizers. It was a great event and I enjoyed it a lot. Also, even in the after party, I was able to expand some connections which is also good. Looking forward to playing next year already! Thank you for the excellent organization of this event and to the sponsors for their support.
- Thank you so much for letting me have the opportunity to participate the big tournament. Great day with extraordinary hospitality, thank you everyone for made me have this great experience!!
- Thanks for all of the efforts committee members extended.
- The location Atsugi Kokusai with respect to Tokyo is convenient, the bus prepared by the committee was well prepared. looking forward for next years event.
- This is an excellent event and I always enjoy everytime I participated. It is great to play with new friends and sometime old friends. One thing I do not appreciate much is the player who is too good to be qualified as amateur and he got the first prize most of the events that I have participated. I hope this event will go on forever.
- Very interesting tournament with fantastic prizes.
- Very nice evening, perfectly organized.
- Very well organised, very timely e-mails, follow up, great summaries. (thanks to the whole Org Committee..) Good to be at the same course, even if the rebuilding has made it a bit difficult... Key is not to have a too challenging course, to support the average Golfer. NA team actually won thanks to one player, a great guy, just to good, could be soon a senior Professional..
- We would like to participate if we continue to sponsor next year.
- Well done and look forward to the next time! Thank you!

Comments about the course and play

- Distance markers to be specified in each hole to speed play.
- The only setback this time was the ongoing construction work and the related noise and not so nice landscape But basically, the tournament should stay at the Atsugi Kokusai, esp. because it is such convenient location, i.e. within 45 minutes from Tokyo!!!

Comments about food and drinks

- Food at the party continues to be a disappointment.
- Go back to the hamburger and hotdog buns used a couple years back, the buns this year were dry and not very good. Add cans of ice coffee on the course and at the party.

Comments about prizes and prize ceremony

- Speedier prize giving which was good. The prizes for the actual golf were a bit below par. Saying that, the raffle ones were great as usual. Encourage some of the lower sponsors to throw something in?

Comments about the pace of play

- The pace of play this year seemed very good considering how many players and the level of ability of at least some of the participants.

Comments about an alternative course

- Although the course itself is always great and the party space is large enough to accommodate this very big group, it would be interesting to know if any other options are worth considering. I guess after so many years playing Atsugi, that is a big part of the annual experience.

Summary & Proposals

1. Title sponsor

As Cole Haan Japan signed up as co-title sponsor this year and is expected to continue, the target of having a Trans-Atlantic link in the title is achieved.

- **Proposal: No action needed**

2. Date of the event

Almost every year there have been typhoon concerns when we have played end of September/early October. Also, end of September is busy for many companies because of the half-year book closing in Japan. Therefore we should consider keeping the date at the first part of October.

- **Proposal: Fri. 7 October, 2016. Task force needs to consult Mercedes-Benz Japan and Cole Haan Japan on this issue. Reserve date Fri. 30 September.**

3. Venue

Based on the participants' survey, where 93% (highest ever) expressed their wish to play at Atsugi again, and no-one wanted to move (7% undecided), the task-force do not see any reason to change the venue.

- **Proposal: Confirm Atsugi Kokusai C.C. and use same configuration as this year, i.e. the first nine of East Course and second nine on the West Course. As the West Course is longer and more difficult (on average this year almost 3 strokes higher than on the East half), the West Course should be further shortened if possible (this year we used Blue tees on East and white on West, although all tee markers were blue).**

4. Play format and pace of play

The Double Peoria ("shin-peria") scoring system has been used in twelve of the thirteen events. It is not a perfect system (much of a lottery) and there has been criticism in the surveys towards this scoring system. In 2005 it was decided to use stroke-play with actual handicaps instead, but as it was difficult to obtain correct handicaps from all the players and obviously, based on the results, several of the top ranked players had wrong handicap. Based on this experience it was decided to go back to shin-peria for the 2006 event, and has been used since. The average score of the best 80% of players in each team was counted as the team score.

This year it took about 6 hours to complete the competition. This was about same as last year. The pace of play seems not to have been any problem as 89% in the survey reported that the pace was good or that it was no issue.

- **Proposal: Same maximum number of players, 144, allowing for a couple of extra groups (as this year) and use shin-peria play format.**

5. Who is eligible to play /counted in the scores?

The issue of professional golfers participating has been solved as it has been decided that they could participate but not win performance prizes and would not be included in team scores. This year no pros participated, but the winner scored "pro-like", 65. As the Shin-Peria does not calculate handicaps below 0, players hitting below par have an advantage. Another issue that has been discussed earlier - should beginners be allowed to participate. This year 9 players had a gross score above 120.

- **Proposal: No major changes to this issue but on the web site we should ask players who have never shot below 125 to re-consider participation (now we say that if they have not played on a course before, they should not participate). We should also consider if we need to rectify somehow the shortcoming of the Shin-Peria regarding players scoring a gross below par.**

6. Food and beverage service

Although the survey comments suggest that all participants are not happy with the food service, the survey data show that the ratings are not bad, but a bit below last year. For the food on the course 74% (last year 81%) rated it excellent or good and one thought it was bad (last year none). The ratings for food at the party were also lower than in previous years, 75% excellent or good (89% last year), 15% "average" (11% last year), 9% "not so good" (none), none thought it was "bad". This year there were enough food and drinks at all rest houses on the course, although the drinks were unevenly distributed, on the rest-house at no. 6 there were almost no drinks left at 14:00 while there were a lot at hole no. 7. Also this year we also had Warsteiner beer as one of the main sponsors, therefore there was plentiful of beer, also at the After-Party. As for soft drinks, Coca-Cola provided less this year so we actually had to buy 8 cases from them.

- **Proposal: No need for any major changes. Perhaps also have more Japanese style food on the course (e.g. onigiri, sandwiches) and ask course to ensure the drinks are evenly distributed throughout the day. Perhaps the drink station at no. 7 can be abolished, it was introduced last year because Warsteiner had a charity shot on that hole then and we wanted to serve their beer there.**

7. Play fees

The participation fee consisted of two parts - a registration fee of 3,000 yen which was collected by ACCJ, CCCJ and EBC. The play fee, including lunch and party was 21,700 yen (same as last year) and paid directly to the club after play. In the previous years, to improve the volume and quality of food, and to get a reasonable profit out of the event, the organizers have paid 1,000 yen per participant to the club from the cash sponsor money.

In the survey, no-one thought the fee was too high, whereas 7% thought that it could be even higher, 85% saw the fee was reasonable.

- **Proposal: Keep current fees for participants; 3,000 yen non-refundable registration fee and 21,700 yen play fees to the club (if club agrees).**

8. Registration, cancellation and number of players

The registration procedure worked well and all players sign up through the web site (not by separate emails or word of mouth). Also this year the registration fee was non-refundable and players were not signed-up before the fee was collected. For the EU players the MJB Cup office collected the fees. This year the event had a record field, 149 players. For a split-down of participants per chamber, see page 8.

- **Proposal: Keep registration fee non-refundable, open registration in June, as this year.**

9. Information and material

The web site was very much appreciated, as well as the material produced for the event. Also the information (by email and web site) provided to participants seems to have been sufficient, and timely, no complaints in this respect. The web site will be kept online until next event and as soon as the date for the next event is decided, it will be announced on the site. Sponsor recruiting for next event should start on the web site early April.

- **Proposal: No need for changes; 2016 version of web site should be up on 9 May at latest; date and venue confirmed earlier.**

10. Sponsors and prizes

The sponsor categories remained same this year. The number of goods/service sponsors were higher (31 vs. 28) than last year and total sponsor value higher. Cash sponsorships improved significantly, now only 716,600 yen (430,000 yen in 2014, 388,500 yen in 2013). Total sponsor value was estimated at about 14 million yen (11.4 million in 2014), partly due to the new co-title sponsor.

- **Proposal: We should ensure that we reach same sponsor levels as this year, perhaps more performance prizes needed. Task-force members need to contact previous sponsors and potential new early 2016. We should not decide to buy logo golf balls before we have secured enough cash sponsors.**

11. Charity component

This year the charity component, for the YMCA Challenged Children Project (CCP), also included two Charity Shots, on the par-3 7th (Cole Haan Japan) and 10th (Mercedes-Benz Japan). Same as last year, there were also charity boxes in the party room. The Charity activities brought in a total of 252,891 yen, compared to 239,000 yen last year. In addition all surplus over operating costs (incl. a reserve fund) will be donated which is now estimated to be about 450,000 yen, i.e. the total charity contribution from the event will exceed 700,000 yen.

- **Proposal: Same charity activities as this year. As this year, if we get more cash sponsor money than what is required to cover costs, main part of the surplus should go to charity.**

12. Party and prize ceremony

This year there were only one comments in the survey about the party and prize ceremony, mainly positive (was speedy), but "complaining" that the performance prizes were a bit below par.

- **Proposal: No significant changes needed although ideas on how to provide better opportunities for networking should be considered.**

13. Bus Service

The project has provided bus service for participants to and from the event since 2004. Since 2010 it has been free and highly appreciated by the participants, this year 38 players and staff used the service.

- **Proposal: Continue bus service as in previous years, if sufficient cash sponsor money is secured.**

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors

