

# The North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan



## Mercedes-Benz Cup 2023



# FINAL REPORT

Organized by:



Title Sponsors:



## 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 with the first competition played at Atsugi Kokusai C.C. on September 26, 2003. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan's status changed from participating Chamber to and organizing Chamber in 2011.

## Tournament dates in the past

1st: 26 September 2003	10th: 28 September 2012
2nd: 1 October 2004,	11th: 4 October 2013
3rd: 30 September 2005	12th: 10 October 2014
4th: 29 September 2006	13th: 9 October 2015
5th: 28 September 2007	14th: 7 October 2016
6th: 26 September 2008	15th: 6 October 2017
7th: 2 October 2009	16th: 5 October 2018
8th: 1 October 2010	17th: 4 October 2019
9th: 30 September 2011	18th: 14 October 2022
	19th: 6 October 2023

## 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.

In 2015, 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. Cole Haan was the title sponsors for year 2015-2019, after which we had an unfortunate hiatus in our tournament due to global pandemic situation, with no tournament played in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, we welcomed Thomson Reuters as the new title sponsor from the North America side, with changing the name of the event to Mercedes-Benz - Thomson Reuters Cup. Due to difficult situation of world coming out of pandemic limitations, Thomson Reuters had to discontinue their sponsorship for 2022, resulting the tournament being played as Mercedes-Benz Cup 2023.

## 3. The Taskforce

To handle the planning and implementation of the event, the ACCJ, CCCJ and the EBC have respectively appointed their taskforce members. In 2023, the taskforce consisted of Kjell Yadon, Senior Global Accounts Executive, ServiceNow (ACCJ) and Kervin Go from the American side and Erik Ullner, FCCJ Chairman, Carl-Gustav Eklund, CEO, Eklund and Partners and Antti Kunnas, FCCJ Executive Director from the European side.

Antti Kunnas 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.), and exchanged hundreds of emails during the preparation period. ACCJ members of the task force were responsible for recruiting North American sponsors, European members recruited European sponsors. ACCJ was in charge of the bus transportation and the CCCJ took care of the trophies. The task force got substantial support from Lea LeBlanc at ACCJ and Noriko Ishida at CCCJ.

## 4. Date and course selection

The date selected for the event, Friday 6 October, was decided in March, after consulting the chambers and the title sponsors. In the past, the tournament has in most cases been played on last Friday of September or on first Friday of October. Lately the date has been on the first or second Friday of October, as later date decreases the risk of typhoons. Due to this and availability, Friday 6 October was selected for this year's event.

It was decided also to play the 19<sup>th</sup> 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, 88% in 2014, 93% in 2015, 82% in 2016, 81% in 2017, 91% in 2018, 97% in 2019 and 95 % in 2022.

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. This year we played all 18 holes of the East Course for a second year in a row. The East course was recently renewed and for this reason provided more challenge to players, both old and new to Atsugi Kokusai. The West course is currently under renewal and will become available as an option in the coming years.

## 5. Play format & Team competition

The target number of players in has in the past been fixed to 72 in both teams, bringing a total of 144 players, i.e. 36 foursomes teeing off from all tees (shotgun start). This year though due to companies' travel schedules increasing drastically after the corona limitations, we had a slightly smaller participation instead of our regular full setting, with 95 players being the final number for the competition. Of this, 35 for the European team, 60 for the North American. Lower number than usual resulted for faster pace of play, but we wish to bring the number back to maximum for next year.

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, based on player feedback from the earlier player surveys, to play with actual, declared handicaps, but it can be said that the system partly failed, based on the many negative comments about accuracy and fairness of the results 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, the Best 3 Net and the Best 3 Gross won prizes. The ladies also had their Best net and Best gross trophies. This year we had one longest drive (on hole No. 8 OUT) and nearest pin prizes on all par-3 (No. 5 & 7 OUT, No. 3 & 7 IN). In addition, other prizes (the most expensive items) were drawn among all the participants.

# Planning and Preparations

Tasks and events are listed below in chronological order. Many items involved and required help from people outside the taskforce. From the ACCJ – Lea LeBlanc who helped with several logistical matters, and from Mercedes-Benz Japan – Yutaka Murakami and Mio Ishii were very much involved in the planning and organizing of the event.

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 – Antti Kunnas.

As this was already the 19<sup>th</sup> tournament played with the same concept and at the same course, fewer meetings were required and most matters were handled by email.

## March 2023

- (10) Initial meeting for 2023 event to confirm situation going forward, confirming task-force members and sponsor recruitment.

## April 2023

- (24) Confirming situation with title sponsors and settings up the schedule for preparation, agreeing on budget and sponsorship levels.

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	OR	Goods/Services (retail value)
PLATINUM	300,000 yen	OR	800,000 yen and over
GOLD	150,000 yen	OR	400,000 - 799,000 yen
SILVER	75,000 yen	OR	200,000 - 399,000 yen
BRONZE	40,000 yen	OR	100,000 - 199,000 yen

## May 2023

- (9) Task-force meeting on practicalities with confirming title sponsors and discussing potential scenarios which might happen.
- (15) New 2023 web site online.

## July 2023

- (25) Registration open, announcement through chambers and email to all last year's players and sponsors announcing the opening of new web site and registration starting.

## September 2023

- (4-15) Shipping instructions sent to goods/services sponsors.
- (15) Course visit, confirming tees, rest houses, drink service, menus on course and at party, poster stands & frames, etc. ● (26) Email confirmation sent out to all registered players.
- (27) Task-force meeting regarding schedule, staffing, prizes, After-Party, etc.

## October 2023

- (2) Playing groups assigned.
- (3) Email to all participants with detailed event information, pairings and a link to the information kit.
- (2-3) Cart guide, Scorecards, signboards, near-pin & longest drive flags, etc. printed and assembled at FCCJ.
- (5) Preparations at the course; 'goodies' bags prepared, prize allocations, registration desks prepared, etc.
- (9) Email to all participants regarding the Participants' Survey.

## Schedule on the day of play - Friday, 6 October, 2023

06.15	Bus departs from Shibuya
06.30	Taskforce arrive at the club
07.00	Registration desks open
07.45	Chartered bus arrives at the club
08.15	Briefing to participants (on schedule)
08.30	Off for tees (on schedule)
08.45	Tee-off from all tees (on schedule)
14.45	Play finishes (15 min. early)
15.30	Party starts (on schedule)
16.00	Prize ceremony starts (on schedule)
16:45	Prize ceremony ends (15 min. early)
17:30	Bus departs for Tokyo (on schedule)
18:30	The taskforce leaves the club - mission completed



Preparing carts. All in all 25 carts to be used to accommodate 95 players.



# Information to participants

## 1. The Web site

The web site has its own domain: [www.northamericaeuropegolf.com](http://www.northamericaeuropegolf.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. The site domain was changed to the current in Spring 2023.

The players sign-up procedure was handled separately for ACCJ, CCCJ and the EBC 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 creation and maintenance of the website was financially supported by the title sponsor Mercedes-Benz Japan.

## 2. Email information

Prior to opening of registration, two email were sent out, ie.

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

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

- upon registration - automatic confirmation.
- 26 September - confirmation of participation, event schedule, promotion of bus and notice of when further information will be sent.
- 3 October - detailed event information, pairings and a link to the information kit (see the mail at right).

After the event, two emails were sent out:

- 9 October - thank you, information on the event report on the web site and instructions on the participants’ survey
- 25 October - Survey reminder

The group email program was set-up so that it showed “North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan 2023” as sender.

## 3. Information kit

The 6 page A4 size information kit in pdf format 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 file were placed on the server and links to these were sent in the email bulletin on 3 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, locker card and pocket guide. Some giveaways were placed in “Goodies Bags” in the lockers.

Before start of play the players were gathered for a photo-shoot and a short briefing by task-force member Kjell Yadon on the play format, main rules and charity shots. Due to the number of participants this was carried out outside in front of the club house. 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).

Kjell Yadon was also the MC for the awards ceremony.

**Basic Facts 2023**

Dates	Other Information
Registration Start: Monday, 24 July	Participation Fee: Registration fee: 3,000 yen Play/event fee: 22,500 yen all included
Registration Deadline: Thursday, 5 October or when the maximum player amount is reached.	Max Number of Players: North America 72, Europe 72
<small>(Note that if you register after we have reached our maximum, we will place you on waiting list but cannot guarantee your registration at this stage.)</small>	
The Cup Date and Time: Friday, 6 October 08:00 - 17:30	Who Can Participate: 1) Members of American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) and Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (CCCJ) and their respective embassies 2) Members of the European Chambers and other business organizations that are affiliated with the EBC and their respective embassies

2023 Tournament will be played at Atsugi Kokusai C.C.

Atsugi Kokusai has been the venue also for our previous events. Being close to Tokyo, having spacious facilities and an interesting course always in good conditions makes it an ideal venue for this event.

The North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan

Mercedes-Benz Cup 2023

Friday, 6 October 2023

**Information to Players**

Version: Tuesday, 6 October 2023

Title Sponsor

Organizers

Venue

Atsugi Kokusai Country Club



Task-force member Kjell Yadon gives instructions before start of play.

# Material produced for the event

## 1. Scorecard

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

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



## 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 3 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 and printed in-house. A1 posters were also made as promotion boards at the near pin and longest drive holes, as well as for the hole sponsors. In addition A-1 sized signboards were made for the two registration desks, the scorers' desk, as well as signage to course, party room and a sign to the networking area after the play.

## 4. Near pin and longest drive lags

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

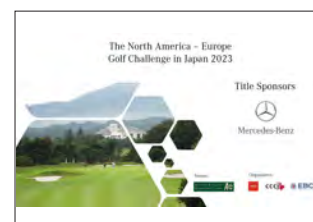
## 5. Cart signs

To enable participants to easily locate their cart (among 25) 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. Pocket guide

A 16-page pocket guide with instructions on the play, player and group list, locals rules and information map for each hole was included to help players understand the course better.



## 7. 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, 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, score card and signboards).



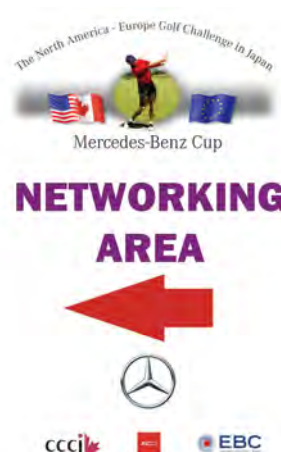
Golfball print



Information kit (6 pages, A4)



Event Signboards (A1)



Personalized Scorecards





Carts ready to go on early Friday morning



Club house ready to welcome the players



Kjell Yadon giving final brief for the players before the start



Carts heading out for to the sunny course!



Group shot before hopping on to the carts. Cheese!



Some serious poses before teeing off...



...but also relaxed ones!





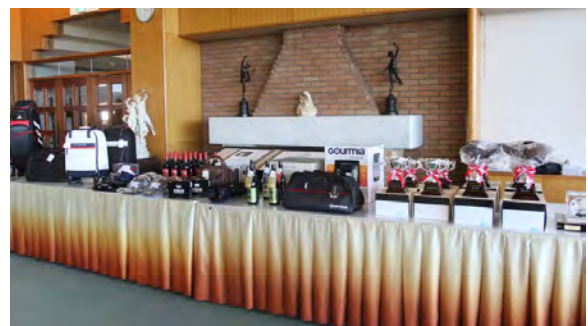
We had a team going around the course with several cameras...



...the same team ready to take on the near pin contest



On a sunny day you need to remember hydration. Our sponsor Warsteiner helped us on this



Full prize table waiting for takers! First prizes are given out for best performers, but the rest are divided by lottery



Since 2022, we have used one of the party rooms as a networking area before the start of the party ceremony



Happy winner of our main prize in this year's lottery: Delta tickets for a destination in North America!



The winning European team.

# Report from the event

## Participants

The event attracted 95 players, including 7 ladies. The Europeans had 35 players, North-Americans 60.

The players represented about 13 different chambers. Of different nationalities, the Japanese made up the largest group, with 33 players (35%).

Counting by chambers the American Chamber had 37 players, followed by the Canadian Chamber with 21, German - 9, British - 8 with other chambers having slightly less participants.

Golfers of all levels took part, from scratch players to high handicappers and gross scores ranged from 77 to 139. 20 players scored a gross of less than 90, but also 4 had over 120.

## Sponsors and Prizes

The event had 12 sponsors, including the title sponsor Mercedes-Benz 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.

As usual, the prize for winning team was the beautiful Hoya crystal Cup. Other notable prizes included a pair of Economy Class tickets to USA from Delta Airlines, a luxury putter from PXG (Parsons Xtreme Golf) and a barbecue grill and a kit from Weber. Warsteiner provided beer for the course and prize ceremony.

Amway provided energy drinks for the goodie bags, Topé offered 12 bottles of quality wines. Jarman International provided vouchers for a golf round for four people, sake testing event and for a restaurant dining. They also provided a selection of sake bottles. Tokyo American Club gave a free membership and body treatment and Titleist golf goods.

The cash sponsors were; BDO (Gold) and Asian Tigers Mobility (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 (e.g. logo golf balls, trophies, etc.).

**A big Thank You to all the sponsors. We couldn't have done it without you!**



## Results

### Team Competition

North America 75.8 strokes - Europe 74.8 strokes

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

### Individual Competition - BEST NET

Pos.	Name	Team	Gross	HCP	NET
1	William Ramsay	EU	90	20.1	69.9
2	Greg Rozitis	NA	102	32.0	70.0
3	Jacob Berman	EU	85	14.2	70.8
	Masatomo Ayame	NA	85	14.2	70.8
5	Mike Nguyen	NA	79	7.1	71.9
6	Joni Santala	EU	85	13.0	72.0
	Joey Wu	NA	98	26.0	72.0
8	Johan Hultquist	EU	84	11.8	72.2
	Shoichi Kitakami	NA	90	17.8	72.2
10	Young Soo Moon	NA	77	4.7	72.3
11	Klaus Meder	EU	87	14.2	72.8
	Chinatsu Kaneko	NA	100	27.2	72.8
13	Karl Hahne	EU	80	7.1	72.9
	Tetsuo Umigai	NA	93	20.1	72.9

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

### Individual Competition - BEST WOMEN NET

Pos.	Name	Team	Gross	HCP	NET
1	Joey Wu	NA	98	26.0	72.0
2	Chinatsu Kaneko	NA	100	27.2	72.8
3	Mieko Mizuno	NA	100	26.0	74.0
4	Asami Suzuki	NA	83	7.1	75.9
5	Hiroe Sakai	NA	90	13.0	77.0

### Special Prizes

Near Pin Winners

Hole No. 5 OUT - Goh Sugita (EU)

Hole No. 7 OUT - Mieko Mizuno (NA)

Hole No. 3 IN - Shawn Devine (NA)

Hole No. 7 IN - Katsunori Fujita (NA)

Longest Drive

Hole No. 8 OUT - Kai Yamada (NA)

### Individual Competition - BEST GROSS

Pos.	Name	Team	OUT	IN	TOTAL
1	Young Soo Moon	NA	38	39	77
2	Kai Yamada	NA	38	39	77
3	Mike Nguyen	NA	39	40	79
4	Karl Hahne	EU	38	42	80
4	Greg Reilly	EU	38	42	80
6	Asami Suzuki	NA	44	39	83
6	Johan Hultquist	EU	39	45	84
7	Jacob Berman	EU	38	47	85
8	Masatomo Ayame	NA	41	44	85
	Joni Santala	EU	43	42	85
	Mikael Anderson	NA	40	45	85
12	Neil Whitehead	EU	43	43	86



# Participants Survey

To further develop the event, we conducted a survey among the participants. The survey was ran from October 9 - 31, 2023. 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 all 95 players to get as much feedback as possible. We did not have email addresses to some of the guests, but we asked the inviting participants to forward the link, so that their guests would also have a chance to win the free round.

We received 31 valid responses after removing multiple and incomplete entries.

Thus the response rate is 32.6%, which can be considered good and gives a high statistical significance to the results.

## Survey Results

### General opinion about the event

#### Advance information to players

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	16	52%
Good	11	35%
Average	4	13%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

#### Arrangements during the event

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	22	71%
Good	9	29%
Average	0	0%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

### The Course

#### Attractiveness of the layout

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	23	74%
Good	8	26%
Average	0	0%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

#### Course condition

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	23	74%
Good	8	26%
Average	0	0%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

### Food & Beverage Service

#### On the course

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	14	45%
Good	14	45%
Average	1	3%
Not so good	2	6%
Bad	0	0%

#### At the party

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	13	42%
Good	16	52%
Average	2	6%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

### Pace of Play

Response:	No.	PCT
Good	6	19%
No Issue	21	68%
Average	3	10%
Not so good	1	3%
Bad	0	0%

### Main reason why I participated

Response:	No.	PCT
Exciting event	20	53%
To expand my ne	15	39%
Friend encourag	7	18%
I like to play golf	17	45%
Chance to win gc	7	18%

### Cost of participation

Response:	No.	PCT
Could be more	3	10%
Reasonable	26	84%
Too expensive	1	3%
No opinion	1	3%

### Play Atsugi Kokusai C.C. again?

Response:	No.	PCT
Yes	26	84%
No	2	6%
Do not know	3	10%

### Times of participation

Response:	No.	PCT
First	15	48%
Second	6	19%
Third	10	32%

### Preferred types of prizes

Response:	No.	PCT
Golf related item	21	68%
Material prizes	1	3%
Voucher prizes	9	29%

# Participants Survey - Comments

*"My partners, although I met them for the first time, were wonderful people. I enjoyed playing with them very much."*

*"As a new golfer, I found this tournament was very welcoming and encouraged me to improve my golf skills."*

*"Have to say the tournament was one of the most enjoyable events I have attended this year and the lads/ladies were a good laugh and great crowd. See you next year."*

## General Comments

- It is a challenging course in good condition.
- Overall, very happy with the event. Availability of breakfast could have been better communicated (both before event and day of) but in total availability of both food and drinks was very good.
- Well organized, lots of fun.
- Bus offering was great to have and not need to worry about transport.
- The bus meeting point was Shibuya instead of ACCJ. Shibuya is much easier to access.
- Overall experience was very positive. Day was well organized, golf course was in good shape with a competitive but fair layout, pace of play was good.
- Thank you for the all the awesome preparation and arrangement!
- My partners, although I met them for the first time, were wonderful people. I enjoyed playing with them very much.
- Good mix of prizes this year.
- Very fun and good environment. I enjoyed the attitude of the event
- Enjoy myself very much, great course, met some nice people and the weather was fantastic.
- Thank you for everything. The event TF was very helpful and great before the event and on the day!
- A very well organized event with the chance to meet many new golfers and expand my business network.
- As a new golfer, I found this tournament was very welcoming and encouraged me to improve my golf skills.
- Overall positive experience, well organized, great golf course, good networking opportunity, weather was perfect.
- Great event and look forward to next year. Perhaps name tags with company name at the awards party would improve opportunities for networking.
- Have to say the tournament was one of the most enjoyable events I have attended this year and the lads/ladies were a good laugh and great crowd. See you next year.
- Was a great experience and cant wait to come back

## Comments about food and drinks

- Thanks very much for providing drinks and light snacks to players before the start.
- Overall good and great to have mid round
- Great setup and really enjoyed the food and drink options at the rest stops and not having to take the usual hour long break in the middle of the round for lunch. For the bus, would be perhaps better to leave a bit earlier to permit time for practice.
- Nice touch to have food in houses on course and not have to stop for long lunch during the round.
- I really like the way food arrangement set up for the each 9 half rather than stopping the lunch break after the first 9.
- It was great to have the possibility to eat a few sandwiches as made available to everybody before the start of the competition.

## Comments about prizes and prize ceremony

- Very good event! Prize ceremony could be faster.
- Small suggestion at post-event party at the club: When getting into performance award, bringing team result upfront would have been better to keep the participant's engagement. Also, would be nice to make sure the rules around the raffles are stated upfront so that more will stay.
- Wish we would have a few more Prizes to give to no 4 to 10 or 15 as in the past...on the Prize Table... ex more golf goods... An advantage with this was that as we did not have more Prizes to present, we saved time during the Prize ceremony and could start the Lottery faster.
- The goodie bags were much nicer this year so kudos to the organizing and prize committee for arranging those.
- It was a very good event. The end party could have been a bit quicker or started earlier, but that is a minor point.
- It was the first time to participate and it was a fun event. I liked the idea of lots of raffle prizes as well. I definitely want to join again if I can.

## Comments about the course and pace of play

- State of course was great. I don't know if this is something the course itself can do something about, but the East Out Course was not available on Garmin watches (was available on phone).
- Great hospitality by Atsugi Kokusai staff, especially caddy.
- Golf course was in great shape, and layout was competitive but fair. Overall a very positive experience.
- It's so beautiful golf course. Fairway and green conditions are so nicely maintained.
- Great course with very fast greens that day.
- Did not have to wait at all during the round. Great pace.



# Summary & Proposals

## 1. Title sponsors

This year the tournament was played with Mercedes-Benz Japan as the title sponsor is expected to continue.

- **Proposal: Confirm as soon as possible that Mercedes-Benz Japan is prepared to continue. Recruit second title sponsor as soon as possible.**

## 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. 4 October, 2024.**

## 3. Venue

Based on the participants' survey, where 84% expressed their wish to play at Atsugi again, the task-force does not see any reason to change the venue.

- **Proposal: In 2022 we played new East course which was challenging to many. Starting 2023, the West course started going through renewal, for which reason we continued on the East course and we would have to continue on the East course also in 2024, but possibly consider moving the tees forward. Rest houses and drink stations used this year should be fine as they were.**

## 4. Play format and pace of play

The Double Peoria ("shin-peria") scoring system has been used in fifteen of the sixteen events. It is not a perfect system - too much of a lottery - and there has been criticism in the surveys towards this scoring system, although not this year. 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 h to complete the competition, which is about 30 minutes faster than our usual pace, largely due to the factor that we had one third less players than our ideal maximum. Even with a higher number of players, there would be no issue with the finishing time. This year also the participants were satisfied with the pace, as 87% in the survey reported that the pace was good or that it was no issue, although several made comments on this (see bottom of page 10).

- **Proposal: Announce same maximum number of players, 144.**

Shin-peria play format should be used as it is very difficult to find a good alternative to it.

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

There was no issue of professional level golfers participating, though it has been discussed in the past that we should consider this as this is an amateur tournament. This year no pros participated. An issue that has been discussed earlier - should beginners be allowed to participate.

- **Proposal: No major changes to this issue.**

## 6. Food and beverage service

This year's survey showed that most participants were satisfied with the food service, the ratings for food on the course being 90% as excellent or good, where only 10% saw it as average or not so good. The ratings for food at the party were also high; 94% excellent or good, with only 6% "average" (no "not so good ratings"). In the comments, there were many positive comments on the variety, but also some comments that vegan/vegetarian options would be welcome. This year we had Warsteiner as a beer sponsor, with Amway providing some energy drinks (Tope sponsored wines but these were for the prize table). Due to limited number of soft drinks, we purchased some additional soft drinks.

- **Proposal: Food menu needs to be discussed with the club catering to keep the selection interesting. The trend of having healthier food needs to be considered for next year to keep the satisfaction high.**

## 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 respectively. The play fee, including lunch service and party was 22,500 yen 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, only 3% thought the fee was too high, whereas 10% thought that it could be even higher, 84% saw the fee as reasonable.

- **Proposal: Keep current 3,000 yen non-refundable registration fee.**

## 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 Cup office collected the fees in collaboration with EBC. This year the event had a participancy of 98 players.

- **Proposal: Keep registration fee non-refundable, to secure full participancy open the registration in Spring 2023 (earlier than before to secure we get the maximum amount of players).**

## 9. Information and material

The web site was 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 for the most. However, some wished there would be more communication regularly when getting closer to the tournament date. As there was a change in domain name, some repeater participant might have had difficulties in finding the new site.

- **Proposal: Updates and renewal in information material is needed for next year. New domain released this year can be continued to be used also next year. Announcement to the players and chambers should be done at the earliest stage possible, preferably at the beginning of the year.**

## 10. Sponsors and prizes

The sponsor categories remained same this year. The number of sponsors was lower (12) than in previous years. One reason for this was the later period of contacting the sponsors than usual as we were waiting to confirm a second title sponsor.

- **Proposal: We should start contacting potential sponsors early 2024**

## 11. Charity component

This year we were unable to carry out charity component, due to having only one title sponsor.

- **Proposal: Bring back the usual charity element by confirming title sponsors as early as possible.**

## 12. Party and prize ceremony

This year there were comments that the mixture of prizes was great. We also asked in the after tournament -survey, what type of prizes the participants would like to see, with majority of answers asking for golf related prizes (68 %), next in line being voucher prizes (29 %).

- **Proposal: No significant changes needed, except that we need more sponsored prizes.**

## 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 34 players and staff used the service. Due to relocation of ACCJ office, this year the bus departed for the first time from Shibuya which caused some confusion.

- **Proposal: Continue bus service as in previous years, but reconsider place in Shibuya where the bus departs.**

## Gold Sponsors



## Bronze Sponsors

