

The North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan



Mercedes-Benz - Francis Ford Coppola Winery Cup 2024



FINAL REPORT



FRANCIS FORD
COPPOLA
WINERY

Organized by:



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 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	11th: 4 October 2013
2nd: 1 October 2004,	12th: 10 October 2014
3rd: 30 September 2005	13th: 9 October 2015
4th: 29 September 2006	14th: 7 October 2016
5th: 28 September 2007	15th: 6 October 2017
6th: 26 September 2008	16th: 5 October 2018
7th: 2 October 2009	17th: 4 October 2019
8th: 1 October 2010	18th: 14 October 2022
9th: 30 September 2011	19th: 6 October 2023
10th: 28 September 2012	20th: 4 October 2024

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 2023, resulting the tournament being played as Mercedes-Benz Cup 2023. In 2024, we were happy to welcome our new title sponsor, Francis Ford Coppola Winery.

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 2024, the taskforce consisted of Kjell Yadon, Kervin Go and Satya Osawa from the American side and Erik Ullner, Carl-Gustav Eklund, Karl Hahne and Antti Kunnas 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. 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 4 October, was decided already in October 2023, 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 4 October was selected for this year's event.

It was decided also to play the 20th 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, 79% in 2022 and 92% in 2023.

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). After a slightly smaller participancy in 2022 and 2023, this we returned to our full setting with 148 players participating after few last minute cancellations. Of this, 70 were for the European team and 78 for the North American team. Rain affected the starting time slightly which resulted the play finishing slightly behind schedule, but due to good pace of play there was no bigger issue for the schedule.

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 two Longest drives, on hole no. 8 OUT and on no. 4 IN, with nearest pin prizes on all par-3 holes. 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, from CCCJ - Noriko Ishida, from Mercedes-Benz Japan – Yutaka Murakami and Mio Ishii, and from Francis Ford Coppola Winery - Tom Kriegshauser 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 20th tournament played with the same concept and at the same course, fewer meetings were required and most matters were handled by email.

February 2024

- (20) Initial meeting for 2024 event to confirm the event date, title sponsor participation, the sponsorship levers, task-force members and sponsor recruitment tasks. Also, the date to open the player registration was decided for much earlier timing than used to be in the past.

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

March 2024

- (23) Task-force confirming final details and sponsor recruitment situation before announcing the tournament the following week through organizing chambers marketing channels and directly by email to previous year's participants.

April 2024

- (3) Registration open (three months earlier than during past years, to make sure to reach full number of participants)
- (3) Announcement to chambers requesting them to announce the event to their members and add it to their event calendar.
- (3) Email to all last year's players and sponsors announcing opening of new web site and registration starting.
- (4) Task force meeting to follow-up on the first response after the registration opening.
- (25) Task force meeting to follow-up on the registration status.

May 2024

- (13) Task force follow-up call on player and sponsors registration status.

June 2024

- (10, 21) Task force follow-up call on player and sponsors registration status.

August 2024

- (13, 28) Task force follow-up call on player and sponsors registration status.

September 2024

- (2-18) Shipping instructions sent to goods/services sponsors.
- (13) Course visit, confirming tees, rest houses, drink service, menus on course and at party, poster stands & frames, etc.
- (27) Email confirmation sent out to all registered players, final task force meeting confirming event details.
- (29) Playing groups assigned.
- (30) Email to all participants with detailed event information, pairings, promotion of After-Party and a link to the information kit.

October 2024

- (1-2) Cart Guide, Scorecards, signboards, near-pin & longest drive flags, etc. printed and assembled at FCCJ.
- (3) Preparations at the course; 'goodies' bags prepared, prize allocations, registration desks prepared, etc.
- (5) Email to all participants regarding the Participants' Survey.

Schedule on the day of play - Friday, 4 October, 2024

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)
09.05	Off for tees (30 minutes delay to planned time)
09.15	Tee-off from all tees (30 minutes delay to planned time)
15.30	Play finishes (30 min. late)
16.00	Party starts (30 min. late)
16.15	Prize ceremony starts (15 min. late)
17:30	Prize ceremony ends (15 min. late)
18:00	Bus departs for Tokyo (30 min. late)
19:00	The taskforce leave the club - mission completed



Preparing carts. All in all 38 carts to be used to accommodate 148 players.

Information to participants

1. The Web site

The web site has its own domain: www.northamericaeuropégolf.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 participants’ survey.

The creation and maintenance of the website was financially supported by the co-title sponsors Mercedes-Benz Japan and Thomson Reuters Japan.

2. Email information

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

- 3 April - Announcement to chambers requesting them to announce the event to their members and add it to their event calendar
- 3 April - 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.
- 27 September - confirmation of participation, event schedule, promotion of bus and notice of when further information will be sent.
- 30 September - detailed event information, pairings and a link to the information kit (see the mail at right).

After the event, two emails were sent out:

- 5 October - thank you, information on the result report on the web site and instructions on the participants’ survey
- 14 October - Survey reminder

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

3. Information kit

The 4 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 30 September. 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 and the locker card. Giveaways from various sponsors, Francis Ford Coppola Winery (wine bottle opener), K&L Gates (koozie for drinks), Computec (golf ball), Skechers (discount vouchers for stores), Swan & Lion (discount voucher for restaurant), Mixed-up (cocktail drink), Red Bull (energy drink) and the task force (a sleeve of North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan 2024 golf balls 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 rain this was carried out inside the club house at a party room. 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.



North America - Europe Golf Challenge in Japan

Thank you for all the 149 players who participated the event on October 4th (FRI) 2024!



Mercedes-Benz - Francis Ford Coppola Winery Cup 2024

Friday, 4 October 2024

Information to Players

Version: Monday, 30 September 2024

Title Sponsors



Participants & Groups

(Blue represents Team Europe - Red the Team North America) - Version: Wednesday, 2 October at 8:00

Page 4

Out course				In course			
1A	Kinano Ueno	Mercedes-Benz Japan Co., Ltd.	DIRKU 18	Stefan Albrecht	Mercedes-Benz Japan Co., Ltd.	DIRKU 24	
	Hiroaki Nagahara	Finnet	FICCI 28	Gen Sugimoto	Individual	Other 11	
	Jiyoung Samson	Robert Walters	ACCJ 19	Carl Miller	Empire Entertainment Japan Inc.	Other 35	
	Chris Lee	PGA Tour International Japan, LLC	ACCJ 8	Ryan Dwyer	K&L Gates LLP	ACCJ 11	
	Koichi Hasegawa	Mercedes-Benz	DMPC 38	Carl Eklund	Hogan Japan KK	CCCJ 15	
1B	Johs Hamington	Nikka	FICCI 20	Kjell Yadon	Sanjosek Japan K.K.	ACCJ 30	
	Mark Sheehy-Hart	Taylormade Golf Co.,LTD.	Other 18	Kevin Go	Canadians Japan	ACCJ 19	
	Henry Yamashita	Hilton	ACCJ 18				
	Takashi Higashimura	Lifebana Group	DIRKU 23	Christian Wolf	J&S Forwarding Japan Co., Ltd.	DIRKU 25	
2A	Shota Takahashi	Brand Loyalty Japan KK	NCCU 14	Dean Rogers	Rosetta Stone Learning Centers	ACCJ 3	
	Takashi Kamei	Cole Haan Japan	ACCJ 30	Ryan Hart	Cole Haan Japan	ACCJ 24	
	Hiroaki Morikuchi	Hertko Handaru	ACCJ 39	David Garmann	Swiss	ACCJ 35	
	Yoshiaki Morimoto	Commerzbank AG	DIRKU 11	Hiroshi Arizumi	Phitas Japan	NCCU 21	



Task-force members Erik Ullner (left) and Kjell Yadon (middle) give instructions before start of play.

Material produced for the event

1. Scorecard

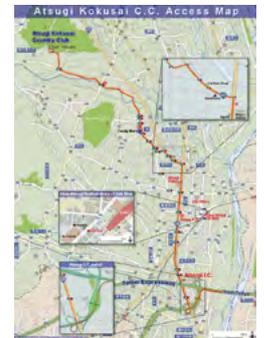
When the participants arrived at the course they received the Scorecard and team cap at the registration. The Scorecards had name, group and team on them (see samples below).

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 4-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 30 September. 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 in-house. A1 posters were also made as promotion boards at the near pin (one for Francis Ford Coppola Winery, one for BDO and one for Fidel Technologies) and longest drive (prizes provided by Karl Hahne) holes, as well as for the hole sponsors (Finnair, Robert Half, BDO, Fidel Technologies). In addition A-1 sized signboards were made for the two registration desks, the scorers' desk, as well as signage to course, party room, networking area, and a signboard for the Unleash Potential charity shot.

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 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.

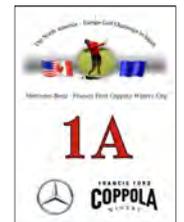


6. Pocket guide

An 16-page pocket guide with a map and other information of each hole was included in each to cart 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



Driving Contest signboard (A1)



Pocket Guide (A6 - 16 pages)



OFFICIAL SCORECARD Mercedes-Benz - Cole Haan Cup 2019												
Name: _____												
Member Name: _____												
Competitor:	CCP											
Group:	CCP											
Handicap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Score												
Total												

Personalized Scorecards



Group picture after briefing at the party room



You can rarely find a rest house with a great serving of premium wine!



2024 Task Force team posing at hole out 2.



A lot of smiling faces



Though the morning was rainy, many commented that the course dried up rapidly after that



View from the club house of the carts heading out to the course for a shotgun start



Hole sponsor posters displayed at the after party



Trophies waiting for the winners



Best net finisher Ryan Faw receiving a bottle of Francis Ford Coppola Wine made for Academy Awards from Tom Kriegshauser



The winning European team.

Report from the event

Participants

The event attracted 148 players, including 17 ladies. The Europeans had 70 players, North-Americans 78. Golfers of all levels took part, from scratch players to high handicappers and gross scores ranged from 77 (Sakari Romu) to 157. 33 players scored a gross of less than 90, but also 16 had over 120.

Sponsors and Prizes

The event had 28 sponsors, including the title sponsors Mercedes-Benz Japan and Francis Ford Coppola Winery. 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.

Notable prizes included a business class and premium economy tickets to Finnair destinations and a pair of Economy Class tickets to US destination by Delta Airlines. Fope provided a unisex bracelet for the prize table

Dale Carnegie provided a voucher for their training, PXG offered a golf club with a fitting experience at their flag ship store. Titleist donated a wedge club, Jarman International provided a round of golf for four people at Eastwood Country Club and Tokyo American Club gave one month trial membership for their services.

For the goodie bags, Swan & Lion Modern British Pub provided vouchers, K&L Gates provided koozies for drinks, Mixed-Up provided cocktails and Skechers provided vouchers for their stores, and separately 3 pairs of golf shoes for the prize table.

Hilton Shinjuku gave out several restaurant vouchers for their restaurants, Genji Kyoto, JW Marriot Nara and Noku Kyoto supported with excellent accommodation vouchers. Funeral Support Services presented luxury whisky, and Golf in Japan provided services for the tournament arrangements.

The cash sponsors were; Robert Half (Platinum), BDO (Platinum), Fidel Technologies (Gold), Pipeline Security (Silver), Computec (Silver) who also provided golf balls, Asian Tigers (Bronze) and Momentum - World Wide Movers (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!

Charity component

This year we welcomed a new charity partner, UP - Unleash Potential helping challenged children. The players participating the challenge could win a bottle of wine if they hit on the green on par 3, with 1,000 yen participation donation for a good cause.

The Charity activities at the course brought in a total of 140,000 yen. UP - Unleash Potential and the organizers very much appreciate the players kind contributions.

Results

Team Competition

Europe 75.4 strokes - North America 76.0 strokes

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

Individual Competition - BEST NET

Men Best Net : Ryan Faw (NA) (70.7) (Note: same net as Stephan Kroel but better gross)

2nd Best Net : Stephan Kroel (EU) (70.7)

3rd Best Net : Shinji Sakamoto (EU) (70.8)

Individual Competition - LADY BEST NET & GROSS

Lady Best Net: Yukiko Suzuki (EU) (71.6)

Lady Best Gross: Yukiko Suzuki (EU) (87)

Individual Competition - BEST GROSS

Men Best Gross : Sakari Romu (EU) (77)

2nd Best Gross : Ryan Faw (NA) (79)

3rd Best Gross : Jiro Omura (NA) (80)

Special Prizes

Longest Drive : @ Hole OUT 8: Micah Sadayama (EU)

Longest Drive : @ Hole IN 4: Kohei Hasegawa (EU)

Near Pin @ Hole OUT 5 : Ryan Faw (NA)

Near Pin @ Hole OUT 7 : Norman Tweebloom (NA)

Near Pin @ Hole IN 3 : Sakari Romu (EU)

Near Pin @ Hole IN 7 : Katsushi Kurokawa (NA)

Participants Survey

To further develop the event, we conducted a survey among the participants. The survey was ran from October 5 - 23, 2024. 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 148 players to get as much feedback as possible.

We received 62 valid responses after removing multiple and incomplete entries.

Thus the response rate is 41.9%, 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	33	53%
Good	25	40%
Average	3	5%
Not so good	1	2%
Bad	0	0%

Arrangements during the event

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	42	68%
Good	19	31%
Average	1	2%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	0	0%

The Course

Attractiveness

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	36	58%
Good	22	35%
Average	2	3%
Not so good	1	2%
Bad	1	2%

Course condition

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	32	52%
Good	24	39%
Average	5	8%
Not so good	0	0%
Bad	1	2%

Food & Beverage Service

On the course

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	19	31%
Good	33	53%
Average	7	11%
Not so good	2	3%
Bad	1	2%

At the party

Response:	No.	PCT
Excellent	19	31%
Good	31	50%
Average	8	13%
Not so good	3	5%
Bad	1	2%

Pace of Play

Response:	No.	PCT
Good	12	19%
No Issue	29	47%
Average	13	21%
Not so good	4	6%
Bad	4	6%

How many times participated

Response:	No.	PCT
First	19	31%
Second	11	18%
Third	32	52%

Cost of participation

Response:	No.	PCT
Could be more	3	5%
Reasonable	56	90%
Too expensive	2	3%
No opinion	1	2%

Play Atsugi Kokusai C.C. again?

Response:	No.	PCT
Yes	51	82%
No	3	5%
Do not know	8	13%

My reason to participate

Response:	No.	PCT
Exciting event	43	69%
To expand my network	29	47%
Friend encouraged me	24	39%
I like to play golf	40	65%
Chance to win good prizes	16	26%

My preferred prizes

Response:	No.	PCT
Golf related item	29	47%
Material prizes	2	3%
Voucher prizes	15	24%
Other	16	26%

Since 2023 we have asked the participants for their reason for participation (several points selectable) with the majority of the respondents saying the nature of the event being exciting encourages them to join. Many also join just for the pure reason of loving to have a good game of golf in good company.

Though golf related items are most popular as prizes, many also raise vouchers, such as hotel and restaurant gift cards as their preferred prize items. A considerable amount of those who replied other prizes, commented that they enjoy airline tickets and high value prizes.

Participants Survey - Comments

"Great tournament and very well organized. Thank you for putting on a successful event. I will be sure to sign up again next year."

"Great event!! Happy to be back on the course and played this one again!! Very nice flight, even with HDC between 2 to 36...myself!!!"

"I have made a number of good golf friends and a few business connections over the years playing in this tournament and enjoy the fun competition and appreciate the fact that you guys have a gross prize and attract some pretty good golfers as well as beginners to play in this event."

General Comments

- Staff were helpful and friendly. Organized from start to finish.
- I love the pre-assigned locker and the goodie bag already stowed within.
- There was a bit of a delay between finishing and the after-party, food and presentation. Everyone is eager to beat traffic and get back to Tokyo at a reasonable time on Friday so it is good if the dinner and presentation can commence sooner.
- Bit of confusion around finding the designated golf cart... the numbering system was not so clear.
- I think the communication about the event details was crystal clear and easy to understand.
- Despite the rain, the organizers were flexible in arranging the program and in a timely manner, which I appreciate very much.
- The abundance of beer definitely impacted me in a positive way.
- Really appreciated having round trip bus transportation. The bus departure time and place was not clear. Please allow additional time for rest stop, especially on the return trip.
- Overall great but the award ceremony needs to be shorter.
- Thank you for hosting the great event!
- Thanks for organizing excellent event! I am very much looking forward to playing again in 2025 event!
- Even though over 150 players joined the event, the play speed was not bad. However, the presentation of the performance prize was a bit dragging. Also, I believe there was not enough food during the after-golf party. I had several players ask if we would provide golf caps for next year's event.
- Thank you so much for preparing such a great event ! I would like to participate if I have chance next time.
- Thank you for organizing this fantastic event. I highly appreciate the event project team, staff, volunteers, and sponsors very much. I hope this event will continue in many years to come.
- Thank you for such a wonderful event. Your entire team did a tremendous job. You should all be very proud. My one suggestions. Instead of 2 longest drives, have an individual male and female longest drive. Depending on the tee box is can be unfair for each. Looking forward to 2025!
- Just wanna commend the organizers. This was a very well run event. Considering the 150+ players, the pace of play was good and even with the numerous winners, the awarding was reasonably well timed. Congrats!
- Thank you for your great arrangement! This year's event must be greater than last year's one.
- Great event - the only improvement would be if there was a bit more time to network following the golf/before the bus leaves.

Comments about food and drinks

- Very good event. No major issues but just thinking that the food buffet could have been better. Lunch on the go was a great idea!
- Foods and beverage were great and please tell our deepest appreciation to the sponsors!
- Best ever I experienced ! Food, snacks, drink, etc perfect !
- Amazing with the food in the morning and at the half-way houses, but as a vegetarian I was not able to eat a whole lot. Would be great to have a few more *healthier* options next year than just burgers/hot dogs at the turn.

Comments about prizes and prize ceremony

- This year's event was more exciting than last year's, with more prizes to give away. Thank you very much for everything.
- It seemed like one table won all the prizes. Not sure how to combat that. Maybe more smaller prizes instead of big prizes.
- All as expected but award ceremony needs to be cut shorter.

Comments about the course and pace of play

- Considering that it was raining so heavily the night before, I thought the course conditions were very good.
- The course is probably the best looking course I played in Japan. Easy access from Shinjuku and the lounge plus service bus near the Hon Atsugi station makes for a very comfy arrival at the course.
- Just this time it took a bit long for the after party to start and hence it's become very late that we left the club. But it's a minor point as everything else was perfect.
- Course was much improved in layout and condition since the last time I played in this event, in 2017.
- Greens were a bit worn. The OB between holes a bit too tough rules in my taste and should be possible to play even though on wrong fairway.

Summary & Proposals

1. Title sponsors

This year the tournament was played with Mercedes-Benz Japan and Francis Ford Coppola Winery as the title sponsors.

- **Proposal: Confirm as soon as possible that title sponsors are prepared to continue.**

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. 3 October, 2025.**

3. Venue

Based on the participants' survey, where 82% expressed their wish to play at Atsugi again, the task-force does not see any reason to change the venue.

- **Proposal: In 2023 and 2024 we have played new East course which was at first challenging to many, but this year we received comments that the course was easier to play than before. As the West course is going through renewal, we should continue on the East course also in 2025, but possibly consider moving the tees forward if deemed necessary.**

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 roughly 6 h to complete the competition, which is our usual pace. With a slight delay due to rain at the beginning, we commenced the play 30 minutes late, which pushed also the finishing time. This year also the participants were mostly satisfied with the pace, as 66% 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 84% as excellent or good, where only 16% saw it as average or not so good. The ratings for food at the party were also high; 81% excellent or good, with only 8% "average". In the comments, there were many positive comments on the variety, but also some comments that vegan/vegetarian options would be welcome. This year our title sponsor provided wine as drinks. In addition, we received some sponsored soft and energy drinks. Mixed-Up cocktails were available in the goodie bags, but as we had no beer sponsor, we purchased some additional beer for 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 23,000 yen and paid directly to the club after play.

In the survey, only 3% thought the fee was too high, whereas 5% thought that it could be even higher, 90% saw the fee as reasonable.

- **Proposal: Keep current 3,000 yen non-refundable registration fee. There is expected to be a hike in pricing from Atsugi side in 2025.**

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 149 players.

- **Proposal: Keep registration fee non-refundable, to secure full participancy. Open the registration in Spring 2025 (same as in 2024 to secure we get the maximum number 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. Current domain 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 higher (28) than last year. One reason for this was that we started contacting the sponsors earlier than the year before.

- **Proposal: We should start contacting potential sponsors at the beginning of 2025 or even late 2024.**

11. Charity component

This year we managed to bring back the charity component on par-3 (jointly with UP and Francis Ford Coppola Winery).

- **Proposal: Continue same charity activity next 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 we received several comments in the survey saying that the party and prize ceremony should finish faster. Many also voiced their opinions on preferred prizes. We managed to increase the number of prizes from last year, but still received critical comments on having more prizes available. Also, need for women's longest drive was brought out by many.

- **Proposal: No significant changes needed although women's longest drive should be considered to be added.**

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 45 players and staff used the service. This year though there was some misunderstanding with the bus company, resulting the return ride having no bathroom breaks which caused challenging situation for many. Also, the cost of the bus service has risen significantly which gives financial pressure for the arrangement.

- **Proposal: Continue bus service in the future, but communicate more with the bus company to avoid misunderstanding. Consider changing the free service to a 2000-3000 yen additional fee service for those who wish to use the bus.**

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors

