

# BMW PGA Championship 2010



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## The no. 1 on The European Tour.

Victory in the Tour's flagship tournament carries great prestige.

**Wentworth.** When Paul Casey talks about the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth, it sounds like a declaration of love. "From the history, to the course, the clubhouse, the players – that is why every one of us playing on The European Tour wants to win. Just standing in the middle of the first fairway and looking back at the tee and that famous clubhouse makes the hairs stand up on the back of your neck."

Defending champion Casey is one of an exclusive band of players who have sampled that winning feeling in the BMW PGA Championship. The Englishman's triumph last year after a hard-fought battle with his compatriot Ross Fisher lifted him into third place in the world rankings at the time.

The BMW PGA Championship has been contested since 1955 and is the second most important tournament on European soil after the British Open – as reflected in its status as the flagship event on The European Tour. It is held amid suitably salubrious surroundings at the Wentworth Club, the headquarters of The European Tour, just outside London in the county of Surrey.

The tournament was founded by the British-based Professional Golfers' Association, which led to it starting life as the British PGA Championship. The Professional Golfers' Association later spawned the PGA European Tour, an organisation controlled by the professional players rather than a sports association as such. The BMW PGA Championship is therefore the players' championship.

"The presence of all the top players on The European Tour in its flagship event underlines the prestige and importance of the BMW PGA Championship," said Tim Abbott, Managing Director of BMW UK. "It reinforces the world class status of the tournament."

BMW has been the title partner of the BMW PGA Championship since 2005. Over this period, the tournament has made another significant leap forward in terms of quality, not least through the extensive modernisation work carried out on the West Course. The prospect of winning the first BMW PGA Championship to be held on the remodelled course serves as an extra – and very special – source of motivation for the players this year.

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After all, no leading European Tour player's career can be considered complete without at least one BMW PGA Championship title in their list of honours. It is therefore no surprise to find the greats of European golf at the very top of the tournament's list of winners. The largest number of victories belongs to England's Nick Faldo, who took the title four times. Among those to have won the tournament on three occasions are German legend Bernhard Langer, Peter Alliss (England) and current European Ryder Cup captain Colin Montgomerie (Scotland). Meanwhile, Tony Jacklin (England), Severiano Ballesteros (Spain), Ian Woosnam (Wales) and Anders Hansen (Denmark) have all won the tournament twice. The only American winner so far has been Arnold Palmer in 1975.

"It would be great to join the list of players to have won the title," said Northern Ireland's new young star Rory McIlroy, currently ninth in the world rankings. "Winning the BMW PGA would be a huge achievement." World number three Lee Westwood, who topped the Race to Dubai European rankings last year, is another who can think of few other tournaments he would rather win. "The BMW PGA Championship is the most prestigious event on The European Tour," highlighted the Englishman.

The elevated importance of the BMW PGA Championship means it is particularly rich in world ranking points, while the extremely generous €4.5 million prize fund equates to a large haul of points in the Race to Dubai. All of which means that this year Wentworth may represent a key moment in the battle to qualify for the 2010 Ryder Cup. However, foremost in the minds of the golfers at the BMW PGA Championship will be the tournament itself – as Northern Irishman Graeme McDowell confirms: "When you have The European Tour, BMW and Wentworth putting everything into an event, then it is a pretty exciting time."

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