

Pro golf returns in September with Adams Golf Pro Tour

[By Bill Knight \ El Paso Times](#)

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Gary DeSerrano, President of Adams Golf Pro Tour Series, spoke Wednesday during a press conference for the 2010 El Paso Desert Open at **Painted Dunes Golf Course**. A portion of the proceeds from the tournament will go to the Red Cross. (Mark Lambie/El Paso Times)

EL PASO -- Professional golf is returning to El Paso in the form of the Adams Golf Pro Tour Series.

The El Paso Desert Open will be held Sept. 7-11 at Painted Dunes Desert Golf Course, featuring more than 80 golfers chasing professional dreams and a share of a purse up to \$100,000, depending on the number of players. The El Paso Association of Builders has stepped up as corporate sponsor and a portion of the proceeds will go to the El Paso Chapter of the American Red Cross.

"We will have around 85 players in the mix," said Gary DeSerrano, president of the Adams Golf Pro Tour Series, which is headquartered in the Dallas area. "Our players fall mostly into one of three categories -- older players who have been on the PGA Tour and are off now, 19-year-olds who found college wasn't really their thing, and guys who were very good college players. Our goal is to try helping young golfers make that transition from college golf to professional golf.

"We have some excellent golfers on this tour," he said. "We've had two of our alumni win on the PGA Tour this season -- Ryan Palmer won the Sony Open to start this season and Bubba Watson

won four times on our tour in '05 and '06. You could tell then it was only a matter of time for him. Our goal is to have a guy win here and, in the next few years, win on the PGA Tour."

Professional golf has danced in and out of El Paso for half a century. The El Paso Open, a PGA Tour event, was held at El Paso Country Club in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The Hogan Tour (now the Nationwide Tour) was at Coronado Country Club for one year in 1990. The Duramed Futures Tour, the official developmental tour of the LPGA, was at the Underwood Golf Complex from 2002 through 2008.

The dams Tour was at Santa Teresa Country Club in 2006 (as the Currey Adkins El Paso Open) and 2007 (as the El Paso Sunrise Open).

"We were at Santa Teresa two years and loved it," DeSerrano said. "We lost our sponsors. But we are happy to be back. We have the New Mexico Open in Albuquerque the week after so this fits perfectly."

The tour is in Horseshoe Bay in Central Texas the week before the El Paso Desert Open.

"We thought this was a great opportunity, a chance to be good neighbors and we jumped at the opportunity," said Greg Bowling, vice president of the El Paso Association of Builders. "The agreement is just for one year right now, but it is something we would love to continue looking into for the future. It's great for young golfers, great for the golf course and it is for a great cause."

Mark Matthys, executive director of El Paso chapter of the American Red Cross, said, "We are deeply honored and this is something desperately needed. A lot of people don't see everything we do. But there are 55,000 people in El Paso touched by the Red Cross each year. There are 1,000 people who have no place to go. We come to save the day and we can't save the day without this kind of help."

There will be a pro-am tournament on Tuesday, Sept. 7. The tournament will be 72 holes, stroke play, and will run Wednesday, Sept. 8, through Saturday, Sept. 11.

"There will be 36 pros involved in the pro-am," said Mark Gonzalez, head professional at Painted Dunes. "We will have 18 pros in the morning, 18 in the afternoon with teams."

There are only 13 teams left for the pro-am. It is \$500 for an individual and \$1,500 for a three-man group to play with one of the pros.

Painted Dunes Desert Golf Course will have four spots open for the tournament. Assistant pro Trent Rommann, who formerly played on the Adams Tour, will receive one of the spots. Rommann finished third in the tournament at Santa Teresa in 2007. The course has given one spot to the El Paso Association of Builders.

"We will give one spot to the winner of our Frank Redman Memorial (Aug. 21-22)," Gonzalez said. "We think that will be good for both tournaments. It will create a little extra excitement for the Redman and it will allow a talented amateur to play in the pro tournament."

Mike Frias, who will be a senior at University of the Southwest, is the defending champion of the Redman. Frias, who just successfully defended his title at the Anthony Invitational, has said he will be on hand to defend his title at the Redman. That tournament at Painted Dunes usually draws the city's top amateurs anyway.

"The final spot will be an open qualifying round here on Aug. 30," Gonzalez said. "Entry fee is \$100 and we invite anyone to try and qualify."

And so professional golf returns to El Paso.

"The agreement is one year with options," DeSerrano said. "All the feedback has been so positive I don't see why they won't re-up. Our goal is to be here every year. We would rather be here a long time."

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