Local Teen Selected to Play in Official PGA TOUR Champions Event

Trace Thomas heads to Pebble Beach for PURE Insurance Championship this September

Hamilton, OH (September 19, 2017) – The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley (TFTGMV) is sending Trace Thomas to compete in the 2017 PURE Insurance Championship, an official PGA TOUR Champions event to be held at Pebble Beach Golf Links and Poppy Hills Golf Course in Pebble Beach, CA, the week of September 19-24, 2017. The tournament, which is hosted by the Monterey Peninsula Foundation, will be televised internationally on Golf Channel.

This exciting opportunity is a result of last year’s 2016 tournament, when the PGA TOUR and Privilege Underwriters Reciprocal Exchange (PURE) Insurance announced an agreement making the policyholder-owned property & casualty insurer for high net worth families the title sponsor of the longstanding event, which dates back to 2004.

“We have been anticipating this day since PURE was announced as title sponsor of this prestigious event,” said Ross Buchmueller, President & CEO of the PURE Group of Insurance Companies. “This tournament has the ability to impact the lives of youth throughout The First Tee, and we are thrilled to serve an integral part in the PGA TOUR’s mission of creating a strong community footprint while also helping to grow this great game.”

Thomas will join 80 other participants from The First Tee chapters, selected by a national panel of judges. Participants were selected based on playing ability and comprehension of the life skills and core values learned through their involvement with The First Tee. The juniors will be teamed with 81 PGA TOUR Champions players and 162 amateurs as they compete for the pro-junior title at Pebble Beach and Poppy Hills. As of June 28, players currently committed to compete in the PURE Insurance Championship include World Golf Hall of Fame members Tom Watson and Colin Montgomerie, as well as three-time tournament winner Jeff Sluman and defending champion Paul Broadhurst. Players have until Friday, September 8 to commit, with additional commitments to be announced in the coming months.

Trace Thomas, a senior at Hamilton High School, has been a participant at TFTGMV since 2009. In 2015, Thomas attended The First Tee’s Life Skills and Leadership Academy after being nominated due to his outstanding leadership skills. Outside of TFTGMV, Thomas is an avid athlete playing Varsity Golf and Varsity Baseball, as well as playing on a travel baseball team.
“The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley has had several of its players achieve distinctive national honors, and Trace is clearly one of them,” said Mike Wolf, recognized head coach at TFTGMV. “We’re very glad to send someone to Pebble Beach, who has, like the others in the chapter, embraced The First Tee life skill of "Go-To Team" to help transform his life in a positive way.”

Thomas described the chance to play in the 2017 PURE Insurance Championship as “a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. This has been a goal of mine for years, and to not only get nominated but to get picked was amazing. To play Pebble Beach, and with a Tour Champ, is more than a dream come true.” As Thomas recalled the moment he said, “On the day I got picked, July 5th, we had to rewind the Morning Drive on the Golf Channel three times to make sure it was real.”

The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley is one of 155 chapters around the country and in select international locations. Serving the Greater Miami Valley since 2005, more than 12,500 young people have been impacted in 2016 alone through nine chapter programs, The First Tee National School Program, The First Tee DRIVE, and outreach events. The golf-based programs are focused on building character through The First Tee Nine Core Values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy, and judgment.

To learn more about The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley, visit www.thefirstteegmv.org. For more information on the 2017 PURE Insurance Championship, visit www.pureinsurancechampionship.com. For more information on Trace Thomas, to request an interview or photos, please contact Dana Schlotzer, Program Coordinator, at dschlotzer@thefirstteegmv.org or 937-432-9600.

**About The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley**

Founded in 2005, The First Tee of Greater Miami Valley serves youth in Butler, Montgomery and Warren Counties. In 2016, our chapter was able to IMPACT over 12,500 participants at nine golf courses, 23 The First Tee National School Programs, and 12 DRIVE locations. The mission of The First Tee is to impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf. www.thefirstteegmv.org

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