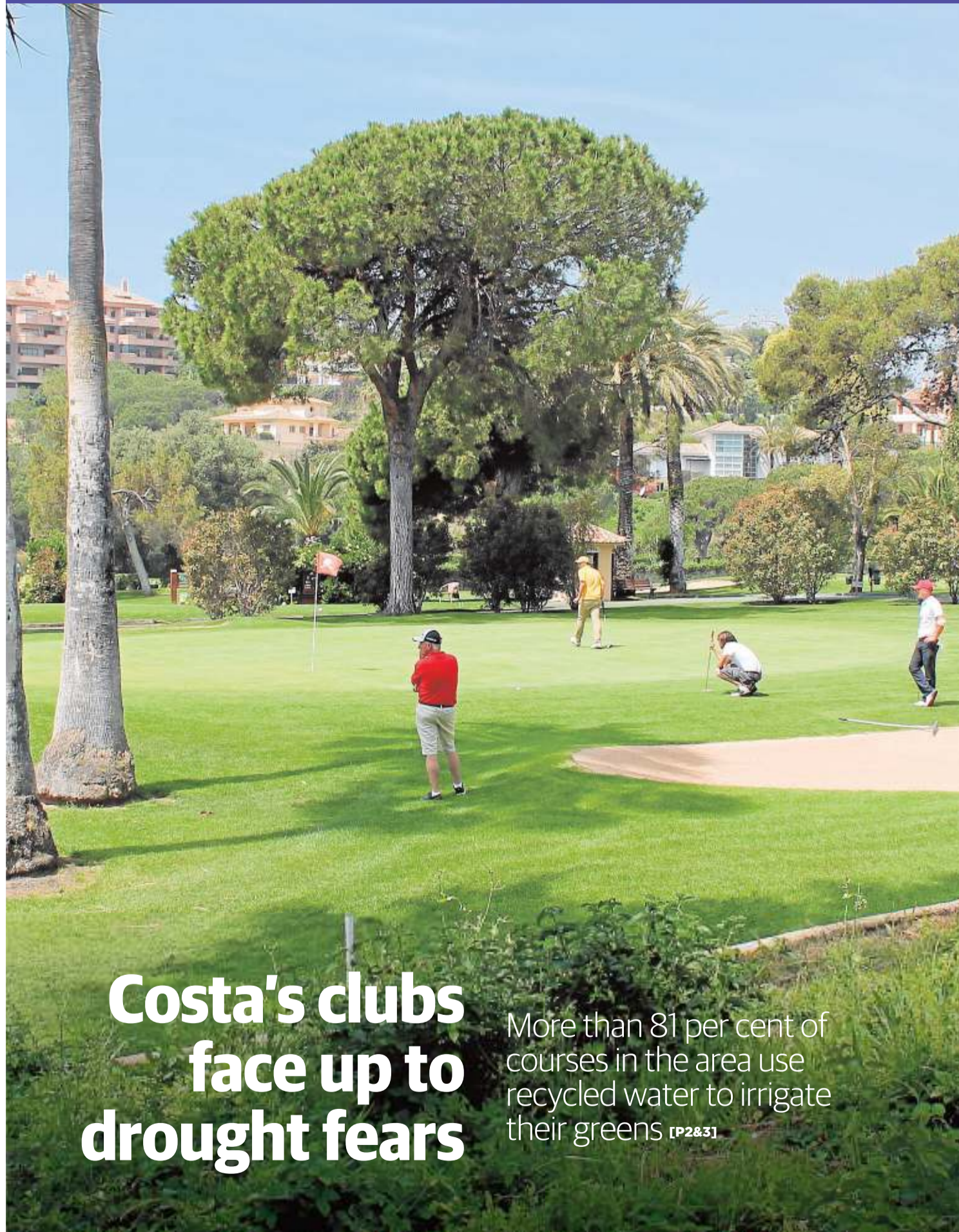


Andalucía Costa del Golf



**Costa's clubs
face up to
drought fears**

More than 81 per cent of courses in the area use recycled water to irrigate their greens **[P2&3]**



THE ARMADA

Continued growth for Spain's golfers

Sergio García and co have finished the year with eleven titles between them **[P4&5]**



ADAPTED GOLF

Juan Postigo: just one leg, but no lack of spirit

The Cantabrian in February became the first Spaniard to play without a prosthesis **[P7]**

Marbella, a destination for sport and leisure

The courses in this resort town are enjoying unseasonably high temperatures for this time of year **[P6&7]**

More than 81% of golf courses on the Costa del Sol use recycled water

A report by the Chair of Golf at UMA shows the environmental and economic benefits of this practice, which generates more employment than the agricultural sector

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

The Chair of Golf Tourism at Malaga university (UMA) has produced a report about the environmental and economic benefits and the savings made by the use of recycled water on golf courses on the western Costa del Sol.

The document, which is 259 pages long, analyses the territorial framework, the regulation of watersheds, the present situation, water consumption on golf courses and the employment which is generated by this type of irrigation, among other aspects.

The report, which was commissioned by the Acosol water company (which is part of the Mancomunidad de Municipios of the western Costa del Sol) and the Royal Golf Federation of Andalucía, shows that 0.45 per cent of employment is created through the use of recycled water on the golf courses, while in the agricultural sector the figure is only 0.3 per cent.

Over 81 per cent of the golf courses analysed for the report irrigate their whole courses with recycled water, and only five per cent never use recycled water for this purpose.

The report describes the Mediterranean basins in Andalucía, their present reserves and methods of exploitation, as well as the municipalities which have demonstrated that they specialise in industry and agriculture, using the Nelson method of calculation. It also describes the golf courses in terms of economic variables (VAB and employment), occupied area, quantity and type of water used and efficiency of irrigation.

In addition to these variables, the researchers also looked at local agricultural and industrial activities, in order to produce a co-relational analysis. This, in turn, enabled a comparative analysis to be made under the hypothesis of using regenerated water for agriculture, and correlating the economic activities associated with the golf courses, whether they are hotel tourism or residential models.

This method of study has provided a series of "very interesting" results and conclusions, says the president of the Mancomunidad



The majority of courses on the western Costa del Sol use recycled water for irrigation. :: SUR

A PROFIT OF 850,000 EUROS A YEAR ON AVERAGE

According to the report, the average benefit for the golf courses studied in the report amount to 850,000 euros a year and the most profitable is Las Brisas, in Marbella. The months with highest occupancy levels associated with golf tourism are October, November, March and April.

There is an almost linear correlation (99 per cent) between the gross aggregate value of the golf courses and the productivity of the water used for irrigation, so that if one variable increases the other does as well, and in the same proportion.

According to the study, this correlation is less when measuring the gross aggregate value of agriculture irrigated with used water (86 per cent). In other words, the water used to irrigate agriculture on the Costa del Sol has a lower productivity than that used on golf courses. "Acosol is strongly committed

to sustainable tourism and also respect for the environment with the services it provides to the 11 municipalities with recycled water for golf courses, parks and gardens. We are a European benchmark in this process thanks to the hard work and efficiency of our staff," say sources at the Mancomunidad.

Acosol's work in irrigating with recycled water has already enabled it to promote itself at specialist fairs as a pioneering company in this field, although the practice is becoming more widespread now and will be obligatory in the future.

de Municipios of the western Costa del Sol, Margarita del Cid, who is also the president of Acosol. She points out that this type of study shows the success of collaborating with the other institutions involved in the Golf Observatory.

The report highlights that recycled water is ideal for irrigating golf courses. For the CEO of Acosol, Manuel Cardeña, this project is just the first of many.

"Acosol will form part of and will lead initiatives at a provincial, regional and, in the near future, national level, thanks to the work we are doing in irrigating golf courses with regenerated water," he stresses.

The president of the Royal Golf Federation of Andalucía, Pablo Mansilla, says the Observatory should serve as a tool to provide information to those who have no links to the golf sector or are sceptical about its benefits.

"We have to make people see how important the golf sector is for the economy of Andalusia and the Costa del Sol, the jobs it creates and the wealth it produces and, among other things, its real environmental impact," he explains.

Meanwhile Josefa García, director of the Chair of Golf Tourism and Associate Dean of the Faculty of Tourism at Malaga university, says relations are being intensified with the business sector to make it a motor of economic and social development. "We need to overcome the old idea that the university and society travel on separate paths," she says.

Research

This research has not been limited to the present situation; it provides estimations of water consumption up to 2027, from forecasts made by the golf courses and other associated information.

This report means that any additional deterioration in the quantity and quality of the water can be foreseen in advance and managed in accordance with the characteristics of the relevant watershed. The analysis will also serve as a way of obtaining information and establishing price policies, so that all users make a suitable contribution to the cost of water services.

The western Costa del Sol has 48 golf courses, run by 40 companies. As the report points out, all these courses are concentrated within a small geographical area, and there is nowhere else like that in Europe.

The increase in population and irre-

Although water supplies are guaranteed at present, the report predicts problems in the future because of the lack of rain in recent years

gular rainfall in the area have already resulted in several consecutive dry years. Technicians at the UMA who produced the report say that although the supply of water is guaranteed at present, there could be a lack of it in forthcoming years.

The study analysed the water consumption of 17 of the golf courses, which have 261 holes between them and use more than 3.6 million cubic metres of water a year. This is an average of 13,863 cubic metres a year per hole, about 5,000 cubic metres lower than the estimation under the Hydrological Plan of the Mediterranean basin of Andalucía.

This report was officially presented in Marbella last month, and it concludes that in the municipalities on the western Costa del Sol, the use of recycled water is more profitable when used to irrigate golf courses, not only in terms of the creation and maintenance of jobs but also in terms of added value.

Acosol uses recycled water on 700 holes on golf courses in the area, as well as some emblematic parks and gardens such as La Paloma, in Benalmádena, and the Tres Jardines, in Marbella.



There are 48 golf courses on the western Costa del Sol. :: **SUR**

Finca Cortesin awarded for its commitment to the environment

:: **ALEJANDRO DÍAZ**

MÁLAGA. The Finca Cortesin Hotel, Golf & Spa, in Casares, Málaga, has been awarded the 2018 Prize for Sustainability by the International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO) for the efficiency of its resources, especially its commitment to saving water.

Every year IAGTO, in association with the GEO Foundation, celebrates sustainability achievements at golf courses, resorts and destinations all over the world. Now in their fifth year, these awards focus on three main areas: nature, resources and community.

Miguel Girbés, golf director at Finca Cortesin, said during the award ceremony that it was “a great honour for this resort to receive this prize and world recognition for our work in preserving the environment. The privileged location of Finca Cortesin means that our guests can enjoy the magnificent natural beauty of our surroundings and we know how important it is to preserve and improve that,” he said.

“It has never been as essential for golf courses in Spain to save water as it is now, and the programme we have carried out in the past 12 months will guarantee us a sustainable strategy in the long term which will be beneficial for the environment, but also allows us to continue to provide the luxury experience that our guests expect.”

Last year Finca Cortesin completely updated its 18-hole championship course and became the

first course in Spain with a new type of ecological Bermuda grass on all its putting surfaces. Ignacio Soto, the head greenkeeper, wanted a more sustainable option, and the complex began a three-year implementation process with Soto trying a variety of different grasses on the greens and practise areas.

Last summer drainage of the bunkers was also improved through a ‘Better Billy Bunker’ system to provide maximum drainage and enable the water to flow to drainage areas more quickly than any other method of construction.

The complex won particular recognition for its focus on saving water. Finca Cortesin uses 100 per cent recycled water from a nearby village and has managed to reduce its consumption by 40 per cent.

The grass on the greens was changed to ‘Bermuda Ultra Dwarf’ in just one month, and the latest generation irrigation system was installed. Finca Cortesin has also reduced the amount of pesticides it uses.

Native flora

The environmental strategy is also extended to the trees and shrubs which grow within and around the complex. The club is implementing a sustainable programme to allow native plants to flourish in their natural environment, as this reduces the amount of water and maintenance necessary without affecting the appearance of one of Europe’s most prestigious golf resorts.

The Costa del Sol promotes golf in its bid for year-round tourism

The tourism authorities are carrying out numerous activities designed to attract visitors from abroad to the more than 70 golf courses in the area

The CEO of Costa del Sol Tourism, Arturo Bernal, stressed last month that “the promotion of the Costa del Sol as a golfing destination continues all year round,” and that “we know that having a presence at major promotional and sporting events makes us stronger as a brand and also places us in a good position compared with ri-

val markets.”

He also highlighted the value of golf tourism for the destination itself, because this is a segment which generates as many as 4,400 direct jobs and it is also an interesting and highly profitable field of investment.

“With more than 70 courses, our ‘Costa del Golf’ has the highest concentration in continental Eu-

rope,” said Bernal, adding that “these tourists are loyal to our destination and they are of great interest to us economically because they spend on average more than 100 euros a day and stay for at least 11 days.”

Winter is the high season for golf tourism on the Costa del Sol - it coincides with the low season for other types of holiday - and the tourism authorities take advantage of this by promoting the segment in several important international events. They also focus on identifying potentially significant markets for this sport.

One of these events was the International Golf Tourism Forum, which took place in October.

“The Golf Tourism Forum was a good way for us to sell the Costa del Sol as a golfing destination and we were also able to present the latest news, and learn about the new trends which are emerging in this type of tourism,” explained Bernal.

In fact, the Costa del Sol was also represented at different dinners and activities at the Forum, as a way of raising awareness of the destination’s golf facilities and its parallel gastronomy.

At the workshop the representatives were able to make professional contacts with about 20 specialist tour operators and promote the destination’s different products and facilities.

Most of these professionals were from the UK, which is the principal source market for golf tourists to the Costa del Sol, although companies from Portugal, Belgium, Sweden, the USA, Austria and Germany were also present. The Costa del Sol representatives also provided information about other golf facilities in Málaga province, such as Baviera Golf in La Axarquía region, for example.

Swedish tourism

At the beginning of November Costa del Sol Tourism, together with Andalusian Tourism and the EOT of Stockholm, organised a familiarisation trip for members of the Swedish PGA. One of the activities was a guided tour of the historic centre of Málaga city for 22 people, all of them from different golf clubs in Sweden.

The objective was to show that Málaga would be a good base for golfers who want to travel around to the numerous golf courses of a destination which is now making progress towards its aim of year-round tourism.



The 'Armada' poses at Valderrama, which hosted a tournament on the European Tour again in 2017. :: **SUR**

Spanish golf ends the year with numerous trophies to display

The meteoric eruption of Jon Rahm, a great year for Sergio García and victories by Azahara Muñoz and Rafa Cabrera-Bello made 2017 special

Spanish golf had a historic year in 2017 and it can boast numerous titles, starting with Sergio García winning the Masters in April at Augusta, and with newcomer Jon Rahm erupting on to the world stage. Both won three titles last year: García finally achieved his first 'major' and was able to don the long-awaited green jacket, while Rahm, in his second year as a professional, certainly fulfilled all the potential he had shown as an amateur.

Álvaro Quirós, Rafa Cabrera Bello, Azahara Muñoz, Miguel Ángel Jiménez and Adrián Otaegui also triumphed, in what was a fantastic season for the 'Armada'.

Sergio García, at the age of 37 years and 27 days, became the third youn-

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

gest Spanish player to achieve a dozen wins on the European Tour, behind only Seve Ballesteros and Chema Olazábal. On 9 April, he fulfilled his greatest dream: to win a major. It was at the Masters, the legendary Augusta National. He succeeded after an exciting play off against the UK's Justin Rose, who months beforehand had become Olympic champion.

Before finally being entitled to put on the green jacket, García had played in 73 'majors' since turning professional in 1999. Victory came

in the 74th, on the same day that the legendary Seve Ballesteros would have been 60 years old. The Masters was the eighth major title to be won by a Spanish golfer, after the five of Seve Ballesteros and Chema Olazábal's two. García completed the trio of titles on 22 October back home in Spain, at the Andalucía Valderrama Masters, a tournament which he was also hosting through the Foundation which bears his name.

Last year was also excellent for 23-year-old Jon Rahm, who ended it as the fourth best player in the world. He also won the Sir Henry Cotton prize for the best newcomer of the year on the European Tour.

In 2017, like Sergio García, Rahm celebrated three victories. He star-



Azahara Muñoz and Carlota Ciganda. :: **SUR**

Jon Rahm became the fourth Spanish golfer to win a PGA tournament after Seve Ballesteros, Chema Olazabal and Sergio García

Azahara Muñoz won her second consecutive Spanish Open despite the pressures of playing at home and being the local favourite

ted with his first title on the PGA Tour, when he won the Farmers Insurance Open on 29 October at the Torrey Pines club in San Diego. Rahm, who attended the Arizona State University, only had to wait 12 professional tournaments before lifting his first trophy. The youngest-ever winner in the history of this tournament did so within three strokes of Charles Howell III, from the USA, and C.T. Pan, from Taiwan, who shared second place.

Rahm, who became professional in 2016 after being world number one amateur for 60 weeks, arrived at the final day in San Diego in 13th place, three strokes behind the leaders, Patrick Rodgers and Brand Snedeker, both from the USA. This win directly classified Rahm to play in the Masters, for the first time in his life. He became the fourth Spanish player to win the PGA Tour, following in the footsteps of Ballesteros, Olazabal and Sergio García.

He also won the Irish Open on 9 July and the DP World Tour Championship on 19 November, both on the European Tour. This dream of a year for Spanish golf was completed by victories from Álvaro Quirós, who hadn't won since 2011, at the Rocco Forte Open; Rafa Cabrera Bello in the Scottish Open, nearly five and a half years since his last triumph, and Adrián Otaegui in the Paul Lawrie Match Play.

Away from the two principal circuits there were important victories from Pedro Oriol in the Rolex Trophy, one of the most prestigious tournaments on the Challenge Tour, and Miguel Ángel Jiménez's triumph on the senior circuit, the Champions Tour, where he won the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic.

A separate mention must be made of Azahara Muñoz's victory in the Spanish Open, which is part of the European Tour. The player from Malaga won the title for the second consecutive year despite the pressure of playing at home, one of the major feats of 2017.

That year has now moved on, paving the way for a new season during which Spanish golf faces the difficult challenge of revalidating its successes of the past 12 months. However, 2017 was definitely a year that few Spanish golf fans will ever forget.

SERGIO GARCÍA

He broke the spell of bad luck in his best season yet

Defined for years as the best golfer in history without a 'grand' title, he had started to believe he was incapable of ever winning a 'major', but Sergio García broke his spell of bad luck in April by winning at Augusta. Travelling light, the Spaniard now competes with the calm of someone who has closed old wounds. In 2017, as well as the green jacket, García also won the Andalucía Masters and the Dubai tournament, a triple victory in an unforgettable year, during which he also got married. He has been recently named the Hilton Player of the Year.



JON RAHM

The great promise of world golf lived up to expectations

In Dubai Jon Rahm made it clear that his aim was to place his name as high as possible in the world ranking and that is exactly what he is doing, with victories such as the DP World Tour Championship. Last year he also won the Farmers Insurance Open and the Irish Open, and his victory in Dubai in November enabled him to reach fourth place in the classification, very close to the top in his first year as a professional. His career so far shows many similarities to those of the most famous names in this sport.



MIGUEL ÁNGEL JIMÉNEZ

He will continue to alternate the senior circuit and major tournaments

In April Miguel Ángel Jiménez won his fourth title on the senior circuit, the Champions Tour, by winning the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic, for the second year and after a play off. "I don't care what my ID card says, I feel young," said 'El Pisha', who in November played the lowest round in the history of the European Circuit for his age. His card in Hong Kong had 63 strokes. "I can still give the youngsters a kick up the backside," he joked. Pure charisma.



AZAHARA MUÑOZ

She regained her confidence and retained the Spanish Open

In the Spanish Open at Guadalmina Azahara Muñoz played the best game of her season, with an epic round on the second day of the competition (-8) and she made history on the final day by winning again at home. It wasn't an easy year for Azahara. The problems from her wrist injury, appendicitis and a change of coach had dented her confidence, but she got back on track and won the European Tour title for the second consecutive season.



RAFAEL CABRERA-BELLO

Putting a final end to five years with no titles

Although overshadowed by García and Rahm, Rafael Cabrera-Bello is achieving important successes despite the lack of finesse on the final days. In July 2017 he won a title, nearly five and a half years after the last one, at the Scottish Open, a tournament on the European Circuit which took place at Dundonald Links. The Spanish golfer, who has come second on numerous occasions, won in Scotland after a play-off with the UK's Callum Shinkwin, which he achieved at the first hole.



ÁLVARO QUIRÓS

Recovering from injuries and loss of confidence

In May Álvaro Quirós triumphed at the Rocco Forte Open, a tournament on the European Tour, by beating South African Zander Lombard at the second hole of an agonising play-off when both players were at -14. The victory put an end to a run of bad luck for Quirós, who hadn't won a tournament since 2011 despite accumulating six victories between 2006 and 2011 and becoming number 21 in the world. After a decline which ended with the loss of the card in 2016, he is now making a comeback.



Marbella is a favourite destination for sports and leisure in the winter

This is the peak season for golf courses, thanks to the lovely climate at this time of year and an increasing number of tourists



Marbella has many charming and traditional streets. :: SUR



The town also has very good football facilities. :: SUR



The beaches can be enjoyed nearly all year round. :: SUR

**ALEJANDRO
DÍAZ**

For the sports tourism sector, which includes golf, southern Spain is an ideal winter destination because it fulfils the requirements of this demanding but at the same time attractive traveller profile: it has quality facilities and the climate is lovely. That is why Marbella is becoming increasingly popular as a destination for players of different sports - including golf, for which winter is the high season - and is even attracting professional football clubs from all over the world.

As an example, the Marbella Foot-

ball Center calculates that 134 clubs will be spending time on the Costa del Sol this winter (22 more than last season), including the Italian Inter Milan, Germany's Borussia Dortmund, Switzerland's Basilea and Russia's Lokomotiv and Rubin.

Each of these clubs normally brings between 40 or 50 people, including the players, employees and journalists, and on average they each spend 150 euros a day. The economic impact is estimated to be about 8.4 million euros.

Marbella is an outstanding destination because of the quality of the infrastructure of its golf courses, and it is a favourite for golf tourists in the winter months. There is a huge variety of golf clubs, including the emblematic Río Real, nestling in the most privileged enclave of Marbella, just five minutes from

The town is famous for its quality golf facilities and its lovely climate at all times of the year

the town centre and inaugurated in 1965. This golf course is beside the Río Real river, from which it takes its name. The river forms an integral part of the course, which accompanies it to the point where it flows into the Mediterranean sea.

Another renowned club is Aloha, which has hosted the Andalucía Open on three occasions. In parkland style and with par 72, it has a traditional design with four par 5 holes, ten par 4 and four par

3, distributed uniformly between the two rounds. It is 6,293 metres in length, and demands precision at the tee and a good approach to the green. Aloha is also known for its undulating terrain, trees and lakes, as well as spectacular views of La Concha mountain, the Sierra Blanca and the Mediterranean. Not only did the famous Jaiver Arana design the course, but he also chose the type of trees and plants, because he wanted players to be able to enjoy seeing trees in flower at any time of the year.

For its part, Los Naranjos is one of the best golf courses on the Costa del Sol, and is situated in the heart of Marbella. From its inauguration to the mid-1970s, a number of professional and amateur championships were played at Los Naranjos and then in 1988 it

hosted the Marbella Ladies Open. This is part of the Ladies European Tour, and on that occasion Laurette Maritz, from South Africa, took part and won the tournament. In 1989 the PGA Spanish Championship also took place at this club, with the participation of José Rivero and Severiano Ballesteros.

Close to Marbella, there is also the Villa Padierna Golf Resort, whose courses are an important part of the Costa del Golf. Some of the best players and celebrities from all over the world have visited here. The courses at Villa Padierna are famous because they are ideal for experienced golfers and also for beginners. One of the resort's many attractions is the fact that it has three different courses, suitable for any level of handicap, high or low. This means that every player can find and enjoy a course which is best suited to their level of game. The environment is also unique, with no noise and far from the bustle of the towns on the Costa del Sol.

These are just some examples of a destination which boasts 25 kilometres of coastline, four marinas and a wonderful climate. Marbella is the town with the second highest population in Malaga province, and the eighth in Andalucía. Its microclimate gives it a privileged average temperature, all year round. Its beaches of white sand are another attraction and as a place for shopping, Marbella is a very special destination on the Costa del Sol, with some of the most luxurious brands in the world. In fact, its 'Golden Mile' is internationally famous: four kilometres which connect the historic town centre with Puerto Banús, lined with the most luxurious residences in Marbella and hotels such as Puente Romano and the Marbella Club.

Unequalled beauty

The Plaza de los Naranjos, the public square designed after the Christian conquest of Marbella, is home to the Santiago chapel, the town hall and the Casa del Corregidor, built between the 15th and 16th centuries. They are in the heart of the historic centre of the town, with its white houses and balconies filled with flowers.

Near the square are the chapel of San Juan de Dios and the church of Santo Cristo de la Vera Cruz, which date back to the 16th century, and the 17th century church of La Encarnación. The latter has three naves and its main entrance, carved from ochre stone in Rococo style, is a real marvel.

The historic town centre still has remains of the wall which used to surround the town during the Moorish era, and a castle which

THREE NEW HOTELS TO OPEN IN MARBELLA

Three new hotels are due to open in the historic town centre of Marbella this year. Councillor José Eduardo Díaz announced last month that the town hall had granted three licences for these boutique hotels, and they are now being built in Calle Ancha, Plaza Santo Cristo and Plaza San Bernabé. The councillor also said that the new owners of the emblematic Don Miguel now have a licence to run a hotel in the town, and this means that they are entitled to be granted works licences. He also revealed that local bylaws are to be reviewed and made simpler, using new technology to make administrative procedures less cumbersome. "This will be latest generation technology, which is already being applied with regard to council regulations in major cities," he explained. In addition to the three new hotels, it should not be forgotten that another boutique establishment, the Touch Puerto Banús hotel, opened in Marbella last month. It has been designed to attract clients with high spending power, with prices ranging from 140 to 1500 euros, depending on the time of year.

also dates back to that period. On one tower you can see embedded Roman capitals, which shows that the Moors used materials from even older buildings to construct the defensive enclosure.

The Bazán hospital, which is nearby, houses the Contemporary Spanish Print Museum, with works by Picasso, Miró, Tapies and Chillida, while the Bonsai Museum, not far away, has on display one of the most comprehensive collections of this type in Europe.

In addition to these treasures, we must add the beaches of fine sand, beautiful mountains and gardens, and the infinite range of gastronomy, restaurants and leisure facilities. Marbella has everything needed to satisfy wealthy tourists from the whole of Europe and, now, America as well. Nor should we forget that the Costa del Sol is so named because it is estimated to have around 3,000 hours of sunshine throughout the year.

These facilities and exceptional climate make the Costa del Sol (or Costa del Golf, as it is also known) and, of course, Marbella, the favourite destination for the thousands of people who decide to holiday in the winter. The forecasts for this season are positive, and it appears that seasonal tourism, with most visitors arriving in the summer and few during the rest of the year, is gradually becoming a thing of the past.

Just one leg, but a great deal of determination

In February Juan Postigo will become the first disabled Spanish golfer to play on the professional circuit, and without a prosthetic limb

■ ALBERTO GÓMEZ

MÁLAGA. February 12th will be a historic date in Spanish golf and world sport. On that day two amputees will be playing in a professional golf tournament in the same category as their companions: Cedric Lescut, who is Belgian, and Juan Postigo, from the Spanish region of Cantabria.

This will be in the PGA European Pairs Championship, which is being held in Lumine (Tarragona). Cedric will be playing with a prosthetic limb but Juan, as usual, will not. He is missing a leg due to a congenital problem and says he has never found golf difficult.

"I've never known what it is like to have two legs, so I don't know anything different," he explains. "The only difficulties I have faced are those which are posed by the sport itself and they affect any player, such as trying to get out of a bunker, for example."

In the past six years, Juan Postigo's handicap has gone from an initial 36 to 1.4, although it went back to 4 for a short time because he had an operation and had to stop for a while, to recover.

Although Juan insists that he has faced no additional challenges as a result of his disability, some aspects are harder for him. For example, he uses crutches to walk around the courses, carrying his bag of clubs on his back. He did start playing with an artificial leg for a while, but that changed after he had an operation which was meant to make it easier for him to use one.

"It slightly affected a nerve and now I can't bear anything against the stump because it's painful, so I can't use a prosthetic leg," he explains.

Juan lacks "natural power" compared with other players because he has to balance on one leg when hitting the ball, so he goes to the gym six days a week to train, with a double session on three days. Now, he says, he feels "quite consistent in the long game," which was his weak point at the beginning when his body wasn't prepared for distance and stability. He says he has nothing to envy about any player in this sense, but admits that, "like many others," his putting is weak.

He began training with Santiago Carriles, which he describes as "revolutionary" because he needed to

"change rhythm," although beforehand, thanks to Pepe Heras, he was Spanish adapted golf champion on three consecutive occasions (2014 to 2016), as part of his particular battle with Antonio Llerena.

Postigo's best result was at the Barbra Golf Resort in the Czech Republic, where he became Spanish adapted golf champion despite tendonitis in his knee which he says

"slightly affected" his game.

"Without pressure"

"I think that's why I won, because I couldn't hit the ball hard so I played calmly and without pressure," he explains. He reached a play off with French golfer Charles Henri Quelin at the 18th hole and ended up winning at the second hole of the play off and feeling

"over the moon."

Once he becomes professional, which should be in a few weeks, Juan Postigo is confident that he will be able to make a living from golf, because unlike adapted golf in which "you can't earn money", he will be able to do so, mostly through sponsorship.

Although he will start by competing in lower leagues, he hopes he will soon be invited to play in more important ones, and says the idea of doing that holds no fear for him, despite his disability.

Now aged 21, Juan already has a date for his first professional match, but after that he has no idea what the future will hold. Not that he's worried. For this young golfer, nothing is impossible.



Juan Postigo, during a 'pro-am' at Valderrama. ■ SUR

THE MONTH IN PHOTOS



▲ **Gala.** Spanish golf gave itself a huge pat on the back at the recent Gala del Golf 2017 which paid tribute to the sport's success stories over the last 12 months. :: **SUR**



▲ **Tourism.** Andalucía was once more present at the International GolfTravel Market (IGTM) held in Cannes. The region aimed to show a "strong, united front" and capitalise on the positive numbers coming from the sector. :: **SUR**



▲ **Copa Baleares.** There was success for young Malaga golfer Ángel Hidalgo who finished on the podium in third place after a great week of golf at the recent Copa Baleares. :: **SUR**



▲ **Award.** Rafael Cabrera-Bello, from the Canary Islands, has received a Medalla de Oro (gold medal) from the RFEF, the Royal Spanish Golf Federation, for his performances throughout 2017, though namely his first win on the European Tour in five years at the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open in July. :: **SUR**



◀ **Indonesian Masters.** Justin Rose cruised to a victory at the Indonesian Masters at Royale Jakarta Golf Club in mid-December. The Brit, who led after all the first and later delayed rounds, had a 72-hole total of 29-under 259. Phachara Khongwatmai of Thailand (65) came second. :: **AFP**

Costa del
Golf

Published by Prensa
Malagueña, S.A.
Director General
José Luis Romero

Andalucía Costa del Golf
is a Diario SUR publication

Editor in chief
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del Sur, S.L.

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MA- 343 96

2018 CALENDAR

9 January
Guadalmina
Copa de Andalucía Masculina
Open tournament

Atalaya Park
Copa de Andalucía Femenina
Open tournament

28 January
Mijas
Asoc. Clubes sin campo And.
Open tournament

16 February
Costa Ballena
Cuadrangular Femenino
Carácter abierto

6 March
Parador de Málaga
Senior y Dobles Femenino
Open tournament

20 April
Baviera
Gran Senior Femenino
Open tournament

1 June
Lauro
Camp. España. 3ª Cat.
Open tournament

2 June
Mijas
Gran Premio AFA Fuengirola

Open tournament

14 June
Mijas
ASGA
Open tournament

23 June
Mijas
Gran Premio Solidarios
Open tournament

7 July
Mijas
Memorial Blas Fernández
Open tournament

14 July

Mijas
Maderas Gómez
Carácter abierto

21 July
Mijas
Gran Premio Electrónica
Carácter abierto

28 July
Mijas
Premio Lucha Conrta el Cáncer
Carácter abierto

10 August
Mijas
Memorial Felipe Pérez
Carácter abierto