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Press Release

For Immediate Publication

Atwal, Chowrasia Look to Starting Off In Style at Avantha Masters

New Delhi, India, February 9: Arjun Atwal, whose last in India was at this very course seven years back is looking forward to finding that form once again at the Avantha Masters starting Thursday.

Atwal will be one of the top Indian stars looking to contend on this new event which is a part of Asian and European Tours and is also co-sanctioned with Aircel PGTI Tour.

"I am looking forward to playing more this year since I have now fully recovered from my shoulder injury. Unfortunately I got injured just when I was getting into rhythm last year. I did not have much of a season from there on. But want to make up for it now. The challenge for me now is to get back into contention again," said Atwal, who won the Asian Tour event Hero Honda Masters here in 2003.

"I have been in the process of trying to change my swing since last season so just want to concentrate on that aspect for the time being and as such have not set any targets for myself," he added. "It's a very competitive field this week and I'm all keyed up to give it my best shot as I really like the layout of this course."

Atwal's Kolkata-mate SSP Chowrasia, who is one of the great success stories of Asian golf in recent times, is delighted to return and play in front of his home fans again. It has been two years since the 31-year-old secured his maiden Asian Tour triumph at home and he is looking to produce another memorable win over Asia's and Europe's best at this week's marquee event in India.

"I've always enjoyed playing at the DLF Golf and Country Club. I've changed my swing a little and I'm experiencing a better feel to my game. My form is very good," said Chowrasia.

Atwal and Chowrasia along with Jeev Milkha Singh, Jyoti Randhawa, Gaganjeet Bhullar, Anirban Lahiri and Shiv Kapur will be among India's leading stars.

Meanwhile, China's Liang Wen-chong, winner of Asian Tour Order of Merit in 2007 has expressed his strong desire of getting his season off to a winning start by sacrificing his all-important annual Chinese Lunar New Year reunion dinner to compete at this week's inaugural Avantha Masters. India has been a happy hunting ground for Liang as he won his second Asian Tour title – the Indian Open - here in 2008 and he is looking forward to another happy return.

The Chinese Lunar New Year falls this weekend and while it has always been a tradition for Liang to celebrate the auspicious occasion, the 2007 Asian Tour Order of Merit champion has decided to give it a miss in pursuit for glory at the €1.5 million (approximately US\$2.1 million) tri-sanctioned event.

"As a professional, there are sacrifices to be made and this week's event will be one of them. Hopefully I can bring home a big red packet for the family," said Liang whose target is to take home the winner's prize purse of €250,000.



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Liang came close to winning his second Asian Tour Order of Merit title last season but was piped by Thailand's Thongchai Jaidee. Although the 2010 Asian Tour season has just started, Liang believes that a win at the DLF Golf and Country Club will give him a good head start.

"This is a big event and I like to get my season off to a good start. I had a top-25 finish at the Sony Open in the US back in January and I'm feeling good about my form," said the 31-year-old Chinese.

"It's always nice to return to the place that brought you fond memories. I hope I'll leave here with sweet memories again at the end of the week," said Liang.

Meanwhile Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant who is just one victory short of matching Thongchai's decorated record of 12 victories is looking to extend his winning record since his last victory in Macau last year.

"It'll be nice to match Thongchai's record, but I do not want to put too much pressure on myself now. I'll go out there and play my best this week," said Thaworn.

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