



**PAYNE'S
VALLEY
CUP**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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American Golf Greats Tiger Woods and Justin Thomas Face Off Against European Standouts Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose in Grand Opening Event at Payne's Valley Course at Big Cedar Lodge in Missouri's Beautiful Ozark Mountains

Legends of the game Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player will be on hand to help dedicate the opening of most anticipated golf course in years... Payne's Valley Nature Golf Course, the First Public Access Tiger Woods designed golf course in America, with epic 19th hole designed by Johnny Morris, to open September 22.

RIDGEDALE, Missouri – A shared dream of golf icon Tiger Woods and noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, the new Payne's Valley course, built as a tribute to golf legend and Ozarks native, Payne Stewart is set to open on September 22nd with a head-to-head match between American greats Tiger Woods and Justin Thomas taking on European standouts Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose.

Everything about this remarkable event – from the roster of world-class players, to the one-of-a-kind course which features 300 million-year-old limestone rock formations, to the extraordinary natural environment setting – guarantees a golf tournament unlike anything any fan or player has ever seen before. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the not-for-profit Payne Stewart Family Foundation, with over \$1 million already raised.

“Tiger Woods and I have been fishing and golfing friends for 20 years and we have long dreamed of designing and building a truly special experience for golf and conservation right here in the Ozarks,” said Johnny Morris. “Payne's Valley fulfills that dream and doing it with Tiger in honor of our late friend Payne makes it deeply special to me,” Morris added.

“It’s all about enjoying the people you work with,” said Tiger Woods. “Johnny Morris is an incredible visionary and one of the premier conservationists of our time. To build this extraordinary golf course with him has been a privilege and something I’ll always cherish,” Woods concluded.

Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player will join the foursome on the stunning 19th hole for a ceremonial finish. The vision of noted conservationist Johnny Morris, the 19th hole was designed to be both a challenge for golfers at all levels and a one-of-a-kind showcase for the beauty of the Ozarks. Those who have had the privilege to see it say it may well be **the most extraordinarily stunning golf hole in the world.**



“The 19th Wonder of the World”

The 19th hole is where Johnny Morris let his imagination run wild to show the world why he’s earned the reputation as, “The Walt Disney of the Great Outdoors.” Morris envisioned the bonus hole as an epic expression of his vision of nature golf and a stunning tribute to Payne Stewart. Morris spent hundreds of hours hiking through the untouched property to determine exactly how to maximize the beauty and drama of the site for the perfect golf setting.

Below a massive rock wall, an island green rises from Lunker Lake. If a golfer is skilled enough to land the ball on the green protected by two white sand bunkers from the tee box 140 yards away, he or she can reach the island by crossing a tiny bridge. But they won’t be alone. In classic Johnny Morris fashion, Lunker Lake has been stocked and is teeming with giant Missouri Trout and Largemouth Bass. Golfers will even have the opportunity to feed the fish.

Once golfers complete the hole, the nature adventure shifts dramatically into high gear. Morris’ epic tribute continues on the “Cliffhanger Trail,” a nearly one-mile nature trail that ascends the sheer

rock face before returning to the clubhouse. Missouri is known as the “Cave State” and Morris and his team of naturalists discovered and worked for over five years to expose the magnificent Karst formations, which were created over 300 million years ago when the oceans receded creating the Ozark plateau. Golfers travel through a breathtaking natural spring-fed cavern system that dates back millions of years as they traverse alongside 250-foot cliffs, across a handcrafted metal bridge that spans a 100-foot-deep gorge, and through ancient waterfalls.

“This hole is a tribute to all nature gives us, to great friends and families enjoying happy times together outdoors, and to the amazing legacy of Payne Stewart,” Morris said.

Morris and Woods bring conservation to the forefront of course design – Payne’s Valley being designated as Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Course

Through their partnership, Johnny Morris and Tiger Woods hope to foster a deeper connection between the game of golf and nature. The walkable course is challenging yet player-friendly, and the strength of conviction of its two legendary designers has given the course special recognition in the conservation community. Payne’s Valley will be one of less than 100 courses worldwide designated as a Signature Sanctuary site by Audubon International, one of the nation’s leading conservation organizations.



Payne’s Valley is part of the not-for-profit Johnny Morris Conservation Foundation, reflecting Johnny’s lifelong passion for connecting people to nature and the great outdoors.

“The dream for this course was to create a place where the best of golf and the beauty of the Ozarks could be brought together for a truly unforgettable experience,” Morris said. “We believe this course is destined to become legendary among golfers and nature lovers alike and serve as a lasting tribute to our local hero, Stewart Payne,” Morris added.

NBC’s Golf Channel will air the tournament on September 22 from 3-7 PM EDT and re-air the event as a major international feature on NBC on December 26 and 27.

About Big Cedar Lodge

Located in the heart of Missouri’s Ozark Mountains, [Big Cedar Lodge](http://www.bigcedar.com) is America’s premier wilderness resort. A passion of Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, the 4,600-acre lakeside retreat connects families to the outdoors with a variety of nature-based experiences including fishing, boating, hiking, spa and wellness offerings, hosting 2.4 million guests annually. Signature attractions include Top of the Rock, home to world-class golf, dining, and entertainment; and Dogwood Canyon Nature Park, a 10,000-acre nonprofit wildlife nature park. Named “Number One Resort in the Midwest” by the readers of *Travel + Leisure*, the resort offers genuine Ozarks hospitality and a convenient location just south of Branson. Learn more at www.bigcedar.com.

About Big Cedar Golf

Founded by Bass Pro Shops’ Johnny Morris in 1987, Big Cedar Lodge is not only a family-friendly wilderness resort, but also a coveted world-class golf destination. In the fall of 2020, Payne’s Valley, Tiger Woods first public designed course with his firm TGR Design, will open for play. Payne’s Valley joins the four existing and top-rated courses at the resort – Buffalo Ridge (Tom Fazio), Ozarks National (Bill Coore & Ben Crenshaw), Mountain Top (Gary Player) and Top of the Rock (Jack Nicklaus). These “Missouri’s Best” courses bring to life Morris’ vision to create an unparalleled golf experience in the Ozarks, attracting visitors from across the world, and solidifying it as

“America’s Next Great Golf Destination.” To book tee times or rooms for your next visit, go to <https://bigcedar.com/golf/>

SPECIAL NOTE: Due to COVID-19 concerns, no tickets will be sold however there will be limited invites for sponsors to be onsite for the event. Fans can follow the action worldwide by tuning-in to The Golf Channel, which will provide extensive coverage throughout the match. All four players will be mic’d up throughout the match so viewers won’t miss a beat. The opening ceremony will commemorate the life of Payne Stewart and will include Stewart’s wife Tracy and his children.

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