

# Irina, Saaniya to miss Women's Pro Golf Tour

**Rs 13.50 lakh eight-leg event begins today**

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The lady golf icon of Chandigarh, Irina Brar, will miss out on this year's DLF Women's Professional Golf Tour as she is away to the US, pursuing a doctorate in psychology. The first of the eight legs will be held on the greens of the Delhi Golf Club from September 10 to 12.

Being played under the aegis of the Women's Golf Association of India (WGAI), the 2008-09 tour will visit eight golf courses, including the Panchkula Golf Club (October 10 to 12) and the Chandigarh Golf Club (October 14 to 18) in which Indian women golf professionals will compete for a total prize money of Rs 13.50 lakh, with the winner of each leg pocketing Rs 50,000. The cash prizes will be for the top eight positions in each leg.

Last season's order of merit winner Simi Mehra

joins the tour from the 2nd leg onwards that will be played at the Qutab Golf Course (September 17 to 19). The other Chandigarh golfer Saaniya Sharma (last year's rookie of the year) will also be missing out from the competition as she is recuperating after surgery.

Unique to the first leg will be the Pro-AM competition that will be played concurrently over the three days and 54 holes. Nine top lady amateur golfers will each partner with a woman professional to make up a team. Tee-off will commence daily at 8 am.

The field includes a blend of experience and youth and the players to be watched include Delhi stalwarts Arjuna Awardee Nonita Lall Qureshi and Shalini Malik who will be challenged by Nalini Singh and recently turned professional Vandana Agarwal of Kolkata.

The Delhi Golf Course is

not playing at its easiest and will provide opportunity for any player to excel who is able to play consistently.

The tour has attracted two new co-sponsors in Aegis Communications, a leading BPO that is a part of the Essar group, and GRAAVAA, a premium natural stone retail chain, who have contributed generously along with the main sponsor DLF Limited.

Sita Rawley, a thrice All-India Champion and an Arjuna Award recipient will "tee-off" the tour on September 10 at 7.45 am.

Players finishing in the four top positions on the overall money list at the end of the eight legs will automatically qualify to play in the Ladies Indian Open to be held in the last week of February 2009 at the DLF Golf & Country Club.

The overall two top players at the end of the 5th leg will represent India at the World Cup in South Africa.