

The Eisenhower Trophy(The World Amateur Team Championship).

In a series of articles over the winter we will take a look at the history, competitors and stories of this great competition culminating in a firsthand account of Scotland's famous victory in Adelaide 12 months ago.

Part 2: Past Events and Players

In the previous article I left you with a question:-'who is Amar Arslanagic'?

Answer: Amar represented Bosnia Herzegovina in the 2008 competition and did so after surviving the horrors of the Balkans War whilst living in war torn Sarajevo. The course where he plays has only 4 holes all under 200 yards long and with bomb craters and uxb's all around –and in some cases on it. However that has not stopped him from playing there whenever he gets the chance chasing his dream of being a top golfer (it is great to hear that the course is being lengthened and upgraded now that peace has returned to the area).

Whilst Amar and his team mates were some distance behind the leading teams in the tournament they can be seen as pioneers of golf in their country and who knows, perhaps paving the way for some of their countrymen to be stars in the future. Who would have thought 20 years ago that Columbia would produce one of the top players in the world and had it not been for the R and A supporting and developing the game in his country and from gaining valuable experience in the Eisenhower then perhaps Villegas would not have emerged.

In essence therefore the participation of people like Amar from developing countries such as Boz/Herz is an integral part of the Eisenhower Trophy -as is the involvement of the top players in the world from the leading golf nations.

An increasing number of these players are now making their mark on the professional game- in some cases before turning pro -proof if it were needed of how close the standards are between the top amateurs and the tournament professionals.

From the players that were involved in the 2006 and 2008 Eisenhower events, Ross McGowan, Rory McIlroy, Richie Ramsay, Charl Coetzee, Pablo Martin (as an amateur) Shane Lowry (as an amateur) and Danny Lee (as an amateur) have already won on the European tour whilst two of the US team from 2008 namely Jamie Lovemark and Rickie Fowler were beaten in a play off for a US tour event last year. In addition many others are now card holders either on the main tours or one of the secondary tours.

From a team perspective the US has dominated with 13 victories from a possible 26. Next come GB and Ireland who competed as the one team until 2000, winning 3 times out of a possible 22.

Scotland have competed on their own 4 times, starting from 2002. Our best finish until 2008 was sixth in Cape Town in 2006 when I had the privilege of Captaining George Murray, Richie Ramsay and Cathkin's Scott Jamieson. The three of them put up a sterling performance including a hole in one from Richie in the last round, being in the mix for the medals right up until the end. I think that result provided a benchmark for the 2008 team to exceed, and boy they certainly managed to do that!

Next time:-'Scotland Conquer the World'!