

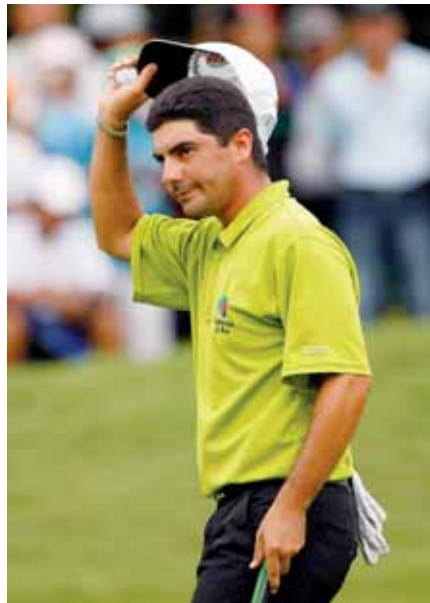
44^e Mémorial Olivier Barras

Une porte d'entrée

par Claude-Alain Zufferey

Avant d'atteindre l'European Tour, les joueurs doivent gravir les marches une à une. Le Mémorial Olivier Barras fait partie de ce long cheminement vers – peut-être – la gloire.

Le Mémorial Olivier Barras a vu sa 44^e édition se dérouler du 13 au 15 juin derniers. Comme chaque année, il a réuni 156 joueurs représentant la relève du golf européen. «*Notre compétition permet aux golfeurs moins expérimentés de prendre du galon*, explique Christian Barras, directeur du tournoi. *Elle possède aussi la particularité d'offrir au vainqueur un billet pour le tableau principal de l'Omega European Masters, étape importante de l'European*



The 44th edition of the Mémorial Olivier Barras took place from 13th to 15th June last year. As usual, it gathered together 156 players who are representative of the future European golf elite. *“Our competition enables less experienced golfers to get promoted*, Christian Barras, the tournament director, explains. *It is also distinctive in that the winner goes on to participate in the leader board of the Omega European Masters, an important event of the European Tour.”* For a

young person starting out, it is quite an obstacle course getting into the various world circuits. At the beginning of a career, the youngster must first of all stand out in his club, then be selected as a promising junior in Valais, in the French speaking part of Switzerland and finally in Switzerland. As he gets on a bit, he can participate in amateur tournaments, after which the very best will be able to measure up against the professionals. But you cannot climb the hierarchy ladder quite so easily as that. *“Competition is fierce*, continues Christian Barras. *Golf has greatly expanded and more and more people are becoming involved. The consequence: players are becoming good at a very early age.”* To start a season, European amateurs can participate in the qualifiers of the Alps Tour (one of the four tours together with Nordic League, Epd Tour and Euro Pro Tour) of the Satellite Tour. At the end of the year, the five best in each of these Tours land their place in the Challenge Tour. As for the twenty best players in the Challenge Tour, they have access to the European Tour. Also, the players can gain their admission to the European circuit by participating in the various events which enable them to reach the thirty best places of the European Tour Qualifying School, which takes place each year in November.

Vainqueur du Mémorial Olivier Barras en 2003, Felipe Aguilar est l'exemple parfait de la progression d'un joueur. Au début de cette année, il a remporté l'Indonesia Open. Un passage de l'Alps Tour à l'European Tour réussi!

The winner of the 2003 Mémorial Olivier Barras, Felipe Aguilar, is the perfect example of the progression of a player. At the beginning of this year, he won the Indonesia Open. A successful transition from the Alps Tour to the European Tour!