



THE PGA OF SWEDEN

The eighth in our monthly series that takes a random look at member PGAs in turn

Celebrating the Past: Planning the Future

The PGAs of Sweden, its officials, staff and members, have every reason to feel deeply proud of what has been achieved in the association's first 75 years of existence.

Where they are now, in world terms, is testimony to that... and how fitting it was that they could showcase their status during the 8th PGAs of Europe Teaching & Coaching Conference in Malmö in mid-October.

From their President **Jan Monier**, their studios and forward-looking managing director, **Mikael Sorling**, their Head of Training **Johan Hampf**, their Conference on-stage 'front man' **Matz Evansson** and their helpful **behind-the-scenes staff**, there exuded an atmosphere of friendly professionalism.

A superb 75th anniversary has been achieved (also featuring the staging of the Solheim Cup once again)... but the PGA of Sweden is about the future more than the past. As they look forward to the completion of what looks sure to be a most magnificent National Golf Resort and HQ, the way ahead will be exciting, indeed.

Sweden first created ripples in the golf world more than 20 years ago when Ove Sellberg and Anders Forsbrand began winning European

Tournaments and appearing in the international team events and Liselotte Neumann won the US Open in 1988...more Swedes followed them and there was talk of the 'The Swedish Model'. This basically meant 'preparation by structured education'.

The philosophy started when the first PGAs of Europe President and Chairman, Christer Lindberg and leading sports educationalist Leif Ohlsson, of the famous Boson Institute in Stockholm, got their heads together in terms of introducing the sport to juniors and families.

In a 'role model' spirit of co-operation with the **Golf Federation** and its golf clubs, the plan was simple enough but in some aspects, pioneering: encourage people to play golf, make club membership accessible, and teach the newcomers well.

Leif subsequently linked up with The PGAs of Europe, joined the Education Committee, succeeded Jean-Etienne Lafitte as its chairman and became a member of the main Board. With Mikael Sorling already on the PGAsE board, and also a member of a Ryder Cup committee, Sweden's influence on European golf is considerable.

Who knows where they might be when their centenary arrives...

The PGA of Sweden 21st Century Growth:

	2000	2007
Number of golf facilities	393	497
Number of Players		
(Male)	247,974	344,000
(Female)	117,779	164,000
(Juniors)	73,900	74,000
Number of Club Professionals		
(Male)	565	651
(Female)	41	59

OFFICIALS

President: **Jan Monier**

Managing Director: **Mikael Sorling**

Head of Training: **Johan Hampf**

Did You Know?

- *The PGA of Sweden was founded in 1932.*
- **Membership of The PGAs of Europe is regarded as 'very important for the Association in a political perspective and in sharing knowledge.'**
- *The first Swedish golf club, Gothenborg, was founded in 1902 and was quickly followed two years later by one in Stockholm.*
- **In the last 20 years the world professional tours, both men's and women's have become punctuated with Swedish names and some of these players have shared in triumphs in the Ryder Cup and the Solheim Cup**
- *Henrik Stenson has, during 2007, been as high as fifth in the World Rankings and remains in the top 15.*
- **Six Swedes are in the European Tour top 50 – Stenson, Niclas Fasth, Peter Hanson, Robert Karlsson, Frederick Andersson Hed and Pelle Edberg. Fasth, along with Stenson, is in the World top 20.**
- *Annika Sorenstam is one of the world's all-time greats while Sophie Gustafson, Maria Hjorth, Linda Wessberg and Sorenstam are currently in the LET top 20.*
- **Female Swedish golfer's have together won 12 Major's. Annika 10 titles and Liselotte Neumann and Helen Alfreidsson one each.**

The National Golf Centre Dream and How to Fund it

Mikael Sorling traces back the 21st century upgrading of the PGA of Sweden to some five years ago when the decision was taken to set up an Events Company designed to introduce the new income streams required to finance services to members.

"We had our basics in place to provide education, tournaments, legal services, international co-operation and business," he recalled. "Now we needed to create a Swedish National Golf Resort to take us up to another level.

"In order to do so we had to generate resources from outside by way of sponsorship and the staging of events. The new company was formed to enable us to find investors in the project and this has worked out very well. We have a national network of very good companies involved."

Such has been the success of both projects that the quite magnificent establishment is taking shape 15 minutes from the centre of Malmö and 30 minutes from Copenhagen Airport.

It includes three superb 18-hole, Kyle Phillips-designed golf courses, an academy with a 9-hole practice course, a 250 bedroom five star hotel, and 2,000-seater multi-purpose conference suite, plus five restaurants, indoor bowling and other facilities while providing some 400 jobs.

The resort will also feature, as a fantastic added attraction, an indoor swimming pool and aquatics centre offering fun and relaxation for all the family. "This resort is a major development for the strength of our PGA brand," explained Mikael Sorling. "A huge project for golf in Sweden."



Swedish PGA Award for Top Two

Sandy Jones and Ken Schofield were awarded Honorary Membership of the PGA of Sweden, during a celebratory dinner staged in Malmö during the recent PGAs of Europe 8th Teaching & Coaching Conference.

In presenting the commemorative plaques, Mikael Sorling, spoke of the pair's huge and highly-effective contribution to European golf in general and the Ryder Cup in particular.

Picture shows (l to r): Jan Monier (President, PGA of Sweden), Ken Schofield (President, PGAs of Europe), Sandy Jones (Chief Executive PGA and Chairman PGAs of Europe) and Mikael Sorling.

Taking Golf into the Community

As part of a philosophy of introducing the sport to the community at large, the PGA of Sweden in co-operation with the 'track and field' bodies, have 'taken golf onto the streets of Stockholm' as part of a three-year series of 'fun' promotions.

Leading professionals including Annika Sorenstam and Fredrik Jacobson have taken part in encouraging folks to try their hand at a par-3 'hole' on a floating green as youngsters were offered impromptu lessons and given the chance to try either athletics or golf in a fun way. Some 20,000 visitors have enjoyed the occasions this far.