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**2010 CHAMPION HUNTER MAHAN RECEIVES FIRST SPONSOR EXEMPTION FOR
WASTE MANAGEMENT PHOENIX OPEN PRESENTED BY THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY**

PHOENIX, Ariz. – Tournament Chairman Carlos Sugich announced today that 2010 Waste Management Phoenix Open champion Hunter Mahan will receive one of the five available sponsor exemptions for the upcoming PGA TOUR tournament, which is scheduled to be played January 29 – February 4 at TPC Scottsdale.

A six-time winner on the PGA TOUR, Mahan has appeared in 11 WM Phoenix Open's, earning a win in 2010 and a total of three Top-10s, including a T4 in 2014 and a T9 in his first start in 2005. Mahan ranks 8th overall among WM Phoenix Open money winners with \$1.7 million in earnings.

"Hunter is a great champion of our tournament and a great friend of the Waste Management Phoenix Open, and that is one of the things we look at when we award exemptions," Sugich said. "We are excited that Hunter will be able to come back and tee it up at TPC Scottsdale."

Sugich and The Thunderbirds have a total of five exemptions to handout for the 2018 Waste Management Phoenix Open. The remaining four exemptions will be announced in the coming weeks leading up to the tournament.

The 2018 Waste Management Phoenix Open Presented by the Ak-Chin Indian Community will be held at TPC Scottsdale January 29 – February 4, 2018. "The People's Open" is the best-attended golf tournament in the world and has gained legendary status for being the most unique stop on the PGA

TOUR. The 2018 edition will mark the 83rd playing of the event (one of the five oldest events on the PGA TOUR) and the ninth as the Waste Management Phoenix Open.

The Thunderbirds were founded in 1937 with the mission of promoting the Valley of the Sun through sports. The Thunderbirds consist of 55 “active” members and more than 250 “life” members. In 2017 The Thunderbirds raised a record \$10.1 million for charity from proceeds from last year’s tournament and have eclipsed \$122 million in charitable giving since its inception in 1932. For more information on The Thunderbirds or the 2018 Waste Management Phoenix Open, visit www.wmphenixopen.com.

