



Reigning British Open Champion Louis Oosthuizen to Play the John Deere Classic

A week before he defends his British Open title at Royal St. George's in England, reigning British Open champion Louis Oosthuizen will compete in the John Deere Classic at TPC Deere Run.

The 28-year-old South African, who won his first major championship at St. Andrews last year by a remarkable seven strokes, has one victory this year on the European Tour, finished in the top 10 at this year's U.S. Open, and currently is ranked 31st in the world.

"The John Deere Classic is honored and extremely excited to welcome Louis Oosthuizen to our 2011 field," said tournament director Clair Peterson. "This will be only the second time in the 41-year history of our event that a reigning British Open champion has competed in the John Deere Classic the week before defending his title - and we couldn't be happier. Louis' participation here - and his reasons for coming - is bound to bring more attention to a unique and very special event on the PGA TOUR schedule."

Oosthuizen has had a special connection to John Deere since childhood, as he was raised on his family's farm in the coastal town of Mossel Bay, South Africa located on the Indian Ocean. There, John Deere equipment was a major

presence in the family's every day life and work, and Oosthuizen, like many farmers, developed a long-term loyalty to the company and its products.

Last year, a few days after winning the British Open, a reporter asked Oosthuizen how he planned to spend his British Open earnings. He immediately replied that he would purchase John Deere equipment for the farm, as he did, buying a John Deere 6000 Series tractor.

"Being a farm boy, it was one of my big dreams, and I bought myself a nice John Deere tractor for my farm back in South Africa," Oosthuizen told reporters at the Scandinavian Masters, the tournament the week after the British. "John Deere is very close to my heart."

Oosthuizen subsequently expressed an interest in visiting John Deere manufacturing sites and its world headquarters in Moline, Ill., located a couple of miles from TPC Deere Run.

"When we heard Louis was interested in visiting John Deere's world headquarters, we were hopeful - but not overly optimistic due to the timing element - that he would schedule his visit the week of the John Deere Classic and would play in the tournament," Peterson said. "We are absolutely elated that it worked out the way it has."



2010 British Open Champion Louis Oosthuizen with his wife, Nel-Mare, and their daughter, Jana, in their John Deere Series 6000 tractor, which Louis purchased with his British Open winnings.