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'Gujarat Kensville Challenge can become an annual affair'

Tournament Director on the European Tour, Jose Maria Zamora is pleased with the facilities at Kensville

PRASANTH MENON

The freezing temperatures deprive most top golfers of Europe any action for almost two months. The European Challenge officials were looking at destinations in India and Latin America to conduct tournaments during the period.

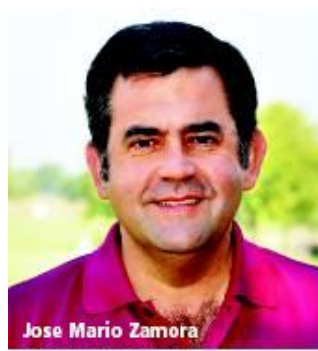
And in Ahmedabad they have found one. The Kensville golf course is set to become the youngest golf course in the world to host a European Challenge when the event tees off on Thursday and if the officials of the tournament are to be believed it could become a regular stopover for golfers in the coming years.

Speaking to *Ahmedabad Mirror*, Jose Maria Zamora, the tournament director of Gujarat Kensville

Challenge 2011 thinks that the tournament could become an annual affair. "We have signed a contract for one year. But the idea is to come back in 2012, too. We cannot play in Europe at this time of the year as the temperatures are freezing. So we were looking at other destinations and Kensville has provided us with one," said the Spaniard.

YOUNG COURSE

THE GOLF course is only two years old but that did not stop Jose from awarding the European Challenge to Kensville. "I know it is a young golf course. I was here in February last year to inspect it. I gave the caretakers of the course a few suggestions. They have done a fantastic job. Before giving the go ahead to a golf course to host such a big



Jose Mario Zamora

tournament, we take into account the design, conditions and facilities of the course. We are happy on all these aspects and are now looking forward to a great tournament," quipped Jose.

The former golfer also hoped

that people of Gujarat will come in large numbers to watch the European Challenge. "You have some very fine golfers playing here over the next four days. So the people of the region should exploit the opportunity and watch the greats in action. The golfers will also be inspired if more people are there to watch them," he added.

Jose, who has seen Indian golf from close quarters in the last five years, thinks the enthusiasm for the game has risen in the country. "I think India has got a very strong PGTI tour. Golf has also become an Olympic sport. Now India boasts of some very big names in world golf like Jeev Milkha Singh, Arjun Atwal and Shiv Kapur. All these have contributed to the rise in popularity of the game in the country," he added.