



**THE 2010 LOUGH ERNE CHALLENGE PRESENTED BY**  
**LAKELAND & INLAND WATERWAYS**

**July 2009:** More than 3,000 spectators turned out to watch the second Lough Erne Challenge between Lough Erne's 21 year old touring professional Rory McIlroy and Ryder Cup Star Darren Clarke against three time major winner Padraig Harrington and former Irish Open Champion Shane Lowry over the Championship Faldo Course this week.

The new format of Northern Ireland V Republic of Ireland proved to be a close fought match with McIlroy and Clarke claiming victory by a single shot 66 to 67 in this prestigious 18 hole betterball strokeplay event.

This was the second time Ireland's world class players had competed in a professional event in Northern Ireland and it was World No. 7 McIlroy who got off to a flying start with three early birdies giving the homeside a three shot lead after just five holes. Undeterred the Republic of Ireland team fought on with Harrington birding the short 13<sup>th</sup> tying the scores on four under par. However, McIlroy struck the decisive blow with a birdie at the par three 15<sup>th</sup> to edge the North in front again and that proved enough for victory.

This was McIlroy's second successive victory in the challenge and following the round he said": It was quite nice that we got off to a good start but they played some good golf and came back at us and we were lucky to hold on at the end."

Darren Clarke was full of praise for the course despite the difficult conditions. "I thought the course was brilliant. It was in sensational condition. The greens were as good as I've putted on all year. This golf course would make a sensational tournament venue."

Padraig Harrington was equally full of praise for The Faldo Course and commented:

“I think the crowds would be phenomenal up here, you would like to see an Irish Open come here. The pros would love it and it would be a great event.”

The Lough Erne Challenge marked the first anniversary of The Faldo Course widely regarded as Ireland’s newest golfing masterpiece. Created by six-time major champion Sir Nick Faldo, who prepared for this year’s 139<sup>th</sup> Open Championship at Lough Erne Resort where he also took time out to inspect The Faldo Championship Course alongside Golf Course Superintendent Sean Reilly. Sir Nick was delighted with the progress of the 7,167 yard course which he regards as one of the world’s most visually stunning golf courses, “The course is in first class condition and I am delighted to see how well it has matured just one year after opening, there are some wonderful natural features in terms of vistas and atmosphere and each hole has its own individuality and that really is important to me”.

Lough Erne will further add to the Golf Experience with the opening of The Faldo Academy in September 2010, which will be a state of the art Practice and Tuition facility headed up by Lynn McCool, Director of Golf & Head Professional, Lough Erne Resort. There will comprehensive range of tuition packages available including; Individual and Corporate Tuition with Video Analysis; On Course with a PGA Professional; Golf Clinics; Tailored Golf Packages and Group Clinics

To experience The Faldo Course book your Tee Time Online or through The Golf Shop. A variety of Golf Breaks are also available online [www.loughernereresort.com](http://www.loughernereresort.com).

#### **About Lough Erne Resort**

Lough Erne opened in County Fermanagh, North West Ireland, in October 2007. It is set on a 600 acre peninsula nestled in between Lower Lough Erne and Castle Hume Lough. The privately-owned hotel has 120 luxury Rooms and Suites including 25, two and three bedroom luxury Loughside Lodge Suites which offer private, fully serviced accommodation. The Resort features The Thai Spa, a variety of innovative dining options including The Catalina Restaurant for elegant dining overlooking the lough; The Blaney Bar for the Grazing Menu and exclusive Irish Whiskey collection; The Loughside Bar & Grill for casual all day dining and prime Irish meats from The Grill; and The Garden Hall for traditional, chocolate, pink and cygnets afternoon tea. The Resort has two championship golf courses, including The Faldo Course with its Halfway House, situated directly behind the ninth green with breathtaking views over Lower Lough Erne and The Faldo Course, serving light bites for golfers and guests enjoying The Collop Walk. Lough Erne Resort is located just five minutes from Enniskillen (St Angelo) Private Airport. It is also less than two hours from Belfast International, Belfast City, Sligo and City of Derry Airports and Dublin Airport, as well as from Belfast and Dublin Ferry Terminals.

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