

# mikkoilonen

**MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Finnish golfer Mikko Ilonen retires from professional golf**

The Finnish golf professional Mikko Ilonen has today announced that he is ending his active career as a professional golf player. Mikko's decision is the result of months of holistic contemplations concerning not only his professional career, but mainly his family, social life and not the least his future opportunities.

"I made a conscious decision to not involve golf in my off-season that started post World Cup of Golf in November last year. Instead, I have focused on my family and my own wellbeing. I have used the time well, which means that I have enjoyed the proper winter and I have done some things as I used to do as a kid, such as skiing and snowboarding. The quality time I have had with my wife and two kids has meant so much to me and I have realized that I don't want to prioritize other obligations ahead of my family.", Mikko says about the past three months.

Mikko has been a professional golfer on the European Tour since 2001. Except for his historic win in the Amateur Championships in 2000, Mikko has five wins on the European Tour in his 398 starts. Mikko's career best year was 2014 when he won two tournaments and also finished tied for seventh place in the US PGA Championships. The success in 2014 propelled him to a career high 37th place on the world rankings.

Mikko continues:

"As a professional golfer, or as an athlete, you sometimes have to be very selfish. I have been selfish for twenty years now and I think it is about time for me to care about others as they have cared for me. I am very grateful for what golf has given me, but now I want to focus on giving back to those that have supported me and to golf in general."

Mikko will now take some time to formally end his professional career but is not planning to leave golf.

"I am convinced that my retirement is not an end to one thing, but instead the beginning of something new and exciting. My passion is golf and I am determined to find a way of supporting golf in general and Finnish junior golfers in particular. I am really looking forward to what the future has in its hands and I hope that I can inspire young boys and girls in Finland and abroad to reach their goals in golf and in life."



Hanna Hartikainen, President of the Finnish Golf Union:

"Mikko's influence on Finnish golf has been significant. The Finnish Golf Union congratulates Mikko on his wonderful career and we are grateful for the work he has done and the model he has created with his team for golfers and elite golf in Finland. Mikko is a great asset for golf and we are both looking forward to having him involved in golf also going forward and also finding ways to collaborate together."

Mikko has been represented by Sportyard since 2003 and that is a relationship that will continue also after Mikko's professional career. Johan Elliot, founding partner of Sportyard says:

"Mikko is the first of Sportyard's active clients that retires, and the fact that he is doing that whilst still being competitive on the tour, we consider a success and a job well done. Our relationship goes way back and Mikko is Sportyard's longest standing client. I am happy that this will not change even though he will not compete on the world tours going forward. Our relationship with Mikko is not based on business, instead we consider Mikko being a close friend and a true ambassador of Sportyard as we share so many values and views with regards to golf and life in general."

Mikko finishes:

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people around me and commercial partners that have supported me through the years. I am looking forward to doing great things together with you also in the future."

For any questions or media requests in regard to Mikko Ilonen, please email in English or phone Robert Whitlock, manager: +46 70 3676730 | [robert@sportyard.com](mailto:robert@sportyard.com)

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Mikko Ilonen (born 1979, [mikkoilonen.fi](http://mikkoilonen.fi)) is Finland's most successful golfer in all times. Mikko has made history three times in the world of golf; firstly, as the first and only Finnish player ever, and since 1885, to win the Amateur Championship in 2000. Secondly to be the first player from Finland to win on the European Tour with his maiden victory at the Indonesian Open in 2007. Thirdly when he the same year broke into the top 100 in the Official World Golf Ranking as the first Finnish player ever. Mikko also has four additional wins on the European Tour in his career; Scandinavian/Nordea Masters in 2007 & 2013, Irish Open and Volvo World Match Play Championship in 2014. Mikko has made a total of 398 starts on the European Tour.

Sportyard International Ltd. ([www.sportyard.com](http://www.sportyard.com)) is a boutique management agency based in Stockholm, Sweden. Sportyard represent twelve professional golfers, with more than 30 combined victories on the World tours, and Jenny Rissveds, Olympic mountain bike Champion 2016.