

# BMW International Open 2013



Press Information  
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## **25<sup>th</sup> BMW International Open: The Open Champion Ernie Els arrives in style in a Rolls-Royce Ghost.**

“The Big Easy” enjoys an exclusive tour of Munich at the wheel of a Rolls-Royce: “Magic is exactly the right word”.

**Munich.** Majestic coach doors, the iconic “Spirit of Ecstasy” on the bonnet, and a 563-hp V12 engine: ever since it was launched in 2009, the Rolls-Royce Ghost has been the epitome of elegance, dynamics and technological progress. Captivating in every way, this remarkable car allowed Ernie Els (South Africa) to travel to the 25<sup>th</sup> BMW International Open in style on Tuesday. The reigning Open Champion at the wheel of a British icon from the Rolls-Royce factory: rarely have a driver and car been better suited to one another.

Although Els himself owns an impressive fleet of cars, the outing in the Rolls-Royce Ghost was a first for the four-time Major winner. Having landed at Munich airport in his private jet, Els’s route took him past Munich’s striking squares and landmarks, including Leopoldstrasse and the famous Siegestor (Victory Gate), before he arrived at the Chinese Tower. There, Els met up with a further six players from the high-class field at the 25<sup>th</sup> BMW International Open to take part in the “Tee Time” show event in the English Garden.

Clearly inspired by his luxurious arrival in Munich, the 43-year-old made an excellent start to the tournament on Thursday. Els shot a 63 to end the opening round on nine under par. In an interview, “The Big Easy” talks about his impressions at the wheel of the Rolls-Royce Ghost and the tournament at Golfclub München Eichenried.

### **Ernie, the reigning Open Champion at the wheel of a British Icon: is that a perfect combination?**

Ernie Els: “Absolutely. Rolls-Royce is a unique brand, which speaks for itself. That is something it definitely has in common with the Open, which is the biggest of the four Majors. In that sense, they really suit each other very well.”



**The feeling of driving a Rolls-Royce is often described as a “magic carpet ride”. Did you feel like you were on a magic carpet?**

Els: “Yes, it really does feel like that. Magic is precisely the right word. It is simply fantastic. I have driven a lot of cars over the course of my life, but never a Rolls-Royce. I was actually a bit nervous about driving it. Rolls-Royce is obviously a big status symbol. If you can afford to buy a Rolls-Royce, you have obviously done something right with your life.”

**The BMW International Open is still missing from the long list of tournaments you have won. Will that change in 2013?**

Els: “I have always liked München Eichenried. I have been playing here since 1997. Unfortunately I don’t know why the other guys have always played better here than me. I have often had problems on the odd hole. That said, I love the course and the city.”

**Why are BMW tournaments held in such high regard on the Tour?**

Els: “Tournament Director Marco Kaussler has a wealth of experience when it comes to organising the tournament, and does a fantastic job. The way he looks after the players is sensational. The fact that we all feel so happy here is largely down to him. But you could say the same for everyone at BMW – and you really feel that as a player.”

**Do you like Germany and, in particular, the host city of Munich?**

Els: “I have not seen all that much of Germany or Munich over the course of my career. In recent years I have been out to some restaurants in the evening, but don’t ask me which ones. Unfortunately we never see enough of the cities, as we spend most of our time at the golf course. However, I am impressed by what I have seen of Munich. It is a beautiful and very clean city, which is very popular among South African tourists. I am sure I will come over for Oktoberfest one day.”

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**If you have any questions, please contact:**

BMW Sport Communications

Nicole Stempinsky, Phone: +49 (0)151 174 177 25

Email: [Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de](mailto:Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de), Internet: [www.bmw-golfsport.com](http://www.bmw-golfsport.com)