

BMW Masters 2013

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Press Information
24th October 2013

BMW Masters: “Stars and Stripes” in Shanghai.

Rising US star Guthrie produces stunning opening round to lead Daly and Uihlein – McIlroy, Stenson and McDowell poised to strike.

Shanghai. Blustery start in Shanghai: the 78-strong field took to the course at Lake Malaren Golf Club, on the outskirts of the Chinese metropolis, for round one of the BMW masters on Thursday – and were faced with testing conditions. It was American Luke Guthrie who coped best with the gusty wind, shooting the lowest score of the day – a seven-under round of 65. Already with five birdies to his name, the 23-year-old chipped in for an eagle on the 15th to put clear air between himself and the chasing pack at the opening tournament of the European Tour’s Final Series. The pursuers are led by Guthrie’s compatriots John Daly (68, -4) and Peter Uihlein (69,-3) in second and third respectively.

Only 13 players broke par on Thursday. Among this exclusive group were Graeme McDowell (NIR, -2), who is currently second in the “Race to Dubai”, two-time Major winner Rory McIlroy (NIR, -1) and local favourite Wen-yi Huang (CHN, -1). FedExCup winner Henrik Stenson (SWE) and former world number one Lee Westwood (ENG) were two of eight players who carded rounds of 72 to end day one on level par.

However, the man of the day was unquestionably Guthrie, who is regarded by many as one of the most promising youngsters on the PGA TOUR. “That was a great start,” said the man from Quincy, Illinois. “It was one of the better rounds I’ve ever played. It was playing difficult out there, but I only took 19 putts today. That was definitely the key to my round. For a young American, it is important to expand your horizons and experience something different. That is why I am here. I have to say: I love Shanghai and am very happy with the opening day.”

These sentiments were shared by the flamboyant Daly, who marked his return from a lengthy injury with an impressive opening round at the BMW Masters. “I am a bit surprised that it felt so good after my long break from competition,” said the two-time Major winner. “It’s nice to be able to hit some shots again that I wasn’t able to before my operation. That’s encouraging.” BMW had invited Daly, who is hugely popular all over the

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world, to the BMW Masters courtesy of a wild card. "I have struck up a lot of good friendships with the BMW guys since my victory at the BMW International Open in 2001," said the big-hitting American. "The company has done wonders for the game of golf – not just on the European Tour, but also on the PGA TOUR."

"I have never witnessed wind like this in China," said McIlroy after his opening 18 holes in Shanghai. "It's tough to score out there with the way the conditions were. But tee-to-green was really, really good. I had a couple of three-putts and a bogey on the 13th – probably the easiest hole on the course – but apart from that it was good."

BMW Golfsport Ambassador Maximilian Kieffer was also able to take a lot of positives out of his opening round in Shanghai. The 23-year-old German was in the first flight out on course at 06:50 and ended the day tied in 14th place on level par (72). "I was lucky to play so early today," said Kieffer. "The wind was not so strong at first. I played a lot of good shots and, on the whole, par is an okay score in these conditions. I actually putted well on the back nine, apart from the 18th. Unfortunately I three-putted on the final hole, but these things happen."

In contrast, reigning BMW Masters champion Peter Hanson (SWE), who was hindered by a back injury, had to settle for a disappointing round of 79 (+7) that puts him well down the leaderboard with plenty of work to do.

Thursday's scores have thrown up plenty of interesting flights for the second round. The leading trio of Americans join the action together at 11:20 local time. McIlroy tees off alongside Kieffer and David Horsey (ENG), winner of the 2010 BMW International Open, at 10:40 local time. Stenson is joined on day two by Westwood and his compatriot Tommy Fleetwood, who claimed his maiden European Tour victory in August.

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BMW and golf – the “Global Golf Player”.

BMW first became involved in professional golf almost a quarter of a century ago when the BMW International Open was held for the first time in 1989. In the meantime BMW is an integral part of the golfing world. As a strong and highly regarded partner it is the only brand represented on all the major tours. BMW organises another two tournaments on the European Tour. The BMW PGA Championship at the Wentworth Club near London is known as the “Players’ Flagship” and is one of the most prestigious tournaments on the tour. When the BMW Masters (Shanghai) made its debut in 2012, it features one of the biggest prize purses on the European Tour and a world-class field. On the PGA TOUR, the BMW Championship is one of the most important golf events in the USA and makes up the third leg of the four FedExCup Playoff tournaments. With the organisation of these professional tournaments, numerous “Official Car” partnerships and the global amateur tournament series, the BMW Golf Cup International, BMW is the most important global player in the world of golf. The relationship with the PGA European Tour, which BMW also supports as “Official Car” at the Ryder Cup, is particularly close.

The BMW Group.

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