



Press information

April 2011

## **BMW Golfsport – Joy loves to drive.**

BMW is the global golf player.

**Munich.** BMW is the force behind the only top-level tournament on German soil – the BMW International Open. The successful history of the event began in 1989 and for many years now it has been one of the most important and popular dates on the European Tour.

1989 marked the arrival of BMW on the professional golf scene. And the Munich-based company has since extended its association with the sport on an ongoing basis. Indeed, BMW has now established itself firmly as a strong and highly regarded partner, and is the only brand to be represented on all the major tours. With a portfolio including four professional tournaments, 20 Official Car partnerships and the global BMW Golf Cup International series of amateur tournaments, BMW is golf's most important global player. The company's closest links, however, are with the PGA European Tour, which BMW also supports through the Ryder Cup and as its Official Car partner.

BMW is very highly regarded among professionals around the world as a partner in the sport of golf. Indeed, the current world number one and major winner Martin Kaymer represents the company as a BMW Golfsport Ambassador.

### **BMW International Open (European Tour).**

The BMW International Open has been held since 1989 at its traditional venue near the company's headquarters in Munich. The event enjoys an excellent reputation among professionals, who particularly appreciate the exceptional environment created by BMW as tournament organiser. By this they are referring to a course that is always beautifully prepared, flawless organisation, popular evening events and exemplary player support, including the BMW Shuttle Service and a large pool of test cars available to players.

The title in the two-million-euro event is therefore one of the most coveted on the European Tour. Over the course of its 22-year history the tournament has regularly seen world stars such as Severiano Ballesteros, José María Olazábal (both Spain),

Company  
Bayerische  
Motoren Werke  
Aktiengesellschaft

Postal address  
BMW AG  
80788 München

Office address  
Petuelring 130

Office address  
Forschungs- und  
Innovationszentrum (FIZ)  
Knorrstraße 147

Telephone  
Switchboard  
+49 89 382-0

Fax  
+49 89 382-25858

Internet  
[www.bmw.com](http://www.bmw.com)

Bank details  
BMW Bank GmbH  
Account No.  
5 100 940 940  
Bank Code  
702 203 00

IBAN DE02 7022 0300  
5100 9409 40

SWIFT(BIC)  
BMWDEM1

Chairman of  
Supervisory Board  
Joachim Milberg

Board of Management  
Norbert Reithofer  
Chairman of the Board  
Frank-Peter Arndt  
Herbert Diess  
Klaus Draeger  
Friedrich Eichiner  
Harald Krüger  
Ian Robertson

Registered in Germany  
München HRB 42243



Nick Faldo, Lee Westwood (both England), Greg Norman (Australia), Fred Couples (USA), Vijay Singh (Fiji), Ernie Els, Retief Goosen (both South Africa), and Bernhard Langer and Martin Kaymer (both Germany) do battle for the BMW International Open crown.

In 2010, Englishman David Horsey left the course outside Munich with the winner's trophy, his debut victory on the European Tour giving his fellow countrymen something to celebrate on what would otherwise have been a forgettable day of sport for England. Shortly after Horsey's victory, the players and spectators came together to watch Germany's 4-1 win against England in the last 16 of the football World Cup on a big screen erected by the 18th green. Horsey's bogey-free final round allowed him to reel in Welshman Bradley Dredge, who had led the tournament from the first day, and beat Ryder Cup player Ross Fisher (England) into second place. Alex Cejka kept himself in with a chance of victory until the latter stages, ending the tournament as the leading German in a tie for third place. 2008 winner Kaymer finished last year's edition of his home event in a share of 21st.

## **BMW PGA Championship (European Tour).**

BMW has been a partner and title sponsor of the European Tour's flagship event – held at Tour headquarters in Wentworth outside London, England – since 2005. The 4.5-million-euro PGA Championship is the most important tournament on the European Tour and will take place on the West Course on 26 – 29 May 2011.

Ahead of last year's event the famous old course was completely redesigned by world class South African player Ernie Els. The first tournament to be held at the modernised course proceeded to throw up a surprise winner in Simon Khan. The Englishman had needed an invitation to secure his place in the field, but a brilliant closing round of 66 saw him pull off the greatest comeback in the tournament's history; Khan had gone into the final round seven shots off the lead.

Robert Karlsson had an even more extraordinary tale to tell. With the second round completed, the Swede set off back to Monte Carlo, assuming he had missed the cut. However, no sooner had he arrived home when he was informed that he had qualified for the weekend after all. Karlsson performed an abrupt about-turn and, after an epic trans-European journey through the night, arrived back at the course in time for his Saturday morning tee-off time. If that wasn't enough of an achievement, he went on to shoot a scarcely believable course-record 62.



25,117 golf fans lined the course for the final round alone last year. Indeed, the total of 88,623 visitors for the 2010 tournament represented a new record for the 55-year-old event.

## **BMW Championship (US PGA TOUR).**

First held in 2007, the BMW Championship is one of the most important tournaments on the US PGA Tour. The eight-million-dollar event near Chicago is the third of four playoff events, which means the winner puts himself in a strong position in the lucrative FedExCup (the rankings list for the US PGA Tour). Indeed, 2007 and 2009 BMW Championship winner Tiger Woods also went on to claim the FedExCup in both those years.

Last year, it was the turn of Woods' compatriot Dustin Johnson, one of the rising stars of the PGA Tour, to celebrate the title win at the Cog Hill Golf & Country Club. Johnson finished one shot ahead of England's Paul Casey. For Johnson this represented the best win of his career so far – and redemption after his unfortunate experience at the US PGA Championship, when a rule infringement cost him a possible victory in the fourth major of the year.

The BMW Championship will run from 15 – 18 September in 2011, with the best 70 players on the US PGA Tour qualifying to play. The top 30 players in the annual rankings following the BMW Championship also earn a place in the season-ending Tour Championship.

## **BMW Italian Open (European Tour).**

Since 2009 BMW has supported the time-honoured BMW Italian Open as title sponsor. The tournament was held for the first time in 1925 and has been a constant fixture on the calendar since the European Tour was founded in 1972. The winner's list contains names such as Billy Casper (USA), Sir Henry Cotton, Tony Jacklin (both England), Bernhard Langer (Germany), Sandy Lyle (Scotland) and Greg Norman (Australia).

Last year Sweden's Fredrik Andersson Hed stepped up to join this illustrious company. A sparkling round of 63 on the Saturday laid the foundations for his first win on the European Tour. The tournament will also be remembered for the debut as a professional of 17-year-old Italian Matteo Manassero, who followed on from an



impressive amateur career with a 29th-place finish in his first event as pro. A few months later Manassero celebrated victory in the Castelló Masters in Valencia, making him the youngest tournament winner of all time on one of the major professional tours.

All of which has heightened the anticipation among his fellow countrymen ahead of this year's BMW Italian Open. The tournament takes place from 9 – 12 June 2011.

## **Ryder Cup.**

Held every two years, the Ryder Cup is the most important event in golf. The most recent collision between the 12 best players from Europe and the USA took place last year at Celtic Manor in Wales. And BMW was involved as a partner and Official Car supplier to the Ryder Cup.

A memorable contest ended with the Europeans reclaiming the trophy lost to the American team in 2008. After four days – frequent rain interruptions caused the tournament to be extended into Monday for the first time in its history – the contest went down to the wire. In the end Northern Irishman Graeme McDowell outlasted his American opponent Hunter Mahan in the battle of nerves to win the 24th and final match on the penultimate hole and secure Europe the tightest possible victory by 14.5 points to 13.5.

The next Ryder Cup will take place at Medinah, in the US state of Illinois, in 2012. BMW will be supporting Europe's defence of the title as a partner of the team.

You can find the latest press releases, press kits and rights-free images (for editorial purposes) for the BMW Group's sports activities at:

[www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com)

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

BMW Sports Communications

Nicole Stempinsky

Tel.: +49 89 382 51584

Email: [Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de](mailto:Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de)

Internet: [www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com](http://www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com)