



Press Information

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BMW International Open: A success story goes on tour.

Germany's only professional tournament set to alternate between Munich and Cologne in the future.

Munich. The BMW International Open has been synonymous with first-rate international golf, excellent organisation, and a special atmosphere for 22 years. The only professional tournament in Germany is a permanent fixture on the European Tour calendar and is one of the most popular events among the players.

From next year, golf fans in the Rhineland area of Germany will also be able to experience the thrills and spills at close hand. The BMW International Open is going on tour. In the future, it will alternate between Munich and Cologne. The tournament will debut in its new surroundings in 2012, when the stars tee off on the established tournament course at Gut Lärchenhof in Pulheim.

"Over the decades we have consistently and enthusiastically expanded the BMW International Open and are obviously delighted that this step allows us to establish the tournament in a new environment in the future," said Tournament President Karsten Engel, Head of Sales BMW Group Germany. "As the organiser of Germany's only professional tournament, we feel a special responsibility towards golf in our country. Cologne has a large catchment area, which even stretches beyond national boundaries. Switching the venue to the Rhineland allows us to take the BMW International Open experience to a huge number of golf fans."

George O'Grady, Chief Executive of The European Tour, said: "We are delighted with the news that the BMW International Open will be played in alternate years between the traditional venue of Golfclub München Eichenried and Golf Club Gut Lärchenhof from next season. Gut Lärchenhof will host the 2012 edition of the event, which returns to Munich for the 25th anniversary of one of our longest running events in 2013, and will then alternate between the two superb venues, which between them have staged over 30 European Tour events between them."

Up to now, the tournament has always been held near the company headquarters in Munich and the Bavarian capital will remain the home of the BMW International Open. The 25th anniversary of the tournament will be held at its traditional venue of Golfclub



München Eichenried in 2013. Between 23rd and 26th June this year, Munich will once again host a plethora of international stars, including world number three Martin Kaymer (Germany), number nine Paul Casey (England), and number 13 and BMW Championship winner Dustin Johnson (USA).

In 2014 the BMW International Open will then switch to the course in Pulheim, which was designed by golfing icon Jack Nicklaus. The course is regarded as one of the best in Germany and hosted the German Masters from 1998 to 2005 and the Mercedes-Benz Championship between 2007 and 2009. It was opened in 1997, is 6356 metres long and par is 72. The course is ideally located between the regional capital Düsseldorf and Cologne.

BMW brand ambassador Martin Kaymer, who is a fan of football team FC Cologne, welcomes the new concept. "As someone from the Rhineland area, I am delighted that the fans in my home will now also have the BMW International Open on their doorstep." Kaymer, who comes from Mettmann – 50 kilometres away from Pulheim – added: "It goes without saying that my goal is now to win the BMW International Open at its second home as soon as possible."

The reigning US PGA Champion, and first German Major winner since Bernhard Langer, became the only German to win the BMW International Open when he triumphed at the event's 20th anniversary in 2008. Kaymer joined an illustrious list of winners, including current world number one Lee Westwood (England), two-time Major winner John Daly (USA), and successful Ryder Cup captains Colin Montgomerie (Scotland) and Paul Azinger (USA). The reigning champion is England's David Horsey.

The story of BMW in professional golf also began with the first BMW International Open back in 1989. With tournaments like the BMW PGA Championship in Wentworth (England), the BMW Championship in Chicago (USA) and the BMW Italian Open in Turin (Italy), as well as 20 Official Car partnerships and its commitment to the Ryder Cup, BMW is now the most important global player on the international golf scene.

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If you have any queries, please contact:

BMW Sports Communication

Nicole Stempinsky

Tel: +49 151-174 177 25

E-Mail: Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de

Internet: www.bmw-golfsport.com

The BMW Group.

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 24 production facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

The BMW Group achieved a global sales volume of approximately 1.29 million automobiles and over 87,000 motorcycles for the 2009 financial year. Revenues totalled euro 50.68 billion. At 31 December 2009, the company employed a global workforce of approximately 96,000 associates.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last six years.