

BMW Masters 2013

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Press Information
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BMW Masters: Defending champion Hanson and golf superstar McIlroy lock horns again in Shanghai this October. Rival pair aims to re-create 2012's classic battle at Lake Malaren Golf Course.

Munich/Shanghai. Defending champion Peter Hanson (Sweden) and world number three Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland will again battle for the 2013 BMW Masters title from 24th to 27th October at Lake Malaren Golf Course in Shanghai, after the pair finished winner and runner-up respectively, last year.

One year ago, BMW completed a stunning return to the world of Asian golf with the launch of the BMW Masters. In addition, the European Tour announced that, as of 2013, the BMW Masters would become the first stop in 'The Finals Series' of final four events in the Race to Dubai. This means, any European Tour Member hoping to qualify for the DP World Tour Championship – and therefore earn a chance to compete for The Race to Dubai \$3.75 million Bonus Pool – will have to participate in two of the three events preceding the season finale. This regulation only applies to those pros who are eligible for all three at the close of entries.

This development undoubtedly signifies the BMW Masters' elevation to the very top echelon of global golf competition, and is a hugely significant milestone in BMW's long-term contribution to the sport. "When we made the decision to return to the pinnacle of Asian golf by holding this flagship professional golf tournament in Shanghai, BMW had one unswerving aim: To create a large world class golfing spectacle to give players, spectators, the media and our commercial partners the chance to experience golf at the highest standard possible, allowing everyone to enjoy the pleasure of golf through BMW," said Eckhard Wannick, Head of BMW International Sponsoring, Cooperations and Product Placement. He added: "Last year's inaugural BMW Masters tournament exceeded even our own expectations, and now in 2013 we are fully committed to creating an even bigger and better event."

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In 2012, a thrilling duel saw Hanson win the BMW Masters title before promptly declaring it was the most important victory of his career. "Overcoming Rory McIlroy, one of the best golfers in the world, gave me an enormous confidence boost," said Hanson. "I know Rory is coming back this year and as last year, he will be the crowd favourite. Rory as well as several other top players know the course at Lake Malaren and it will be a great challenge to win again. But I am going back with confidence as the defending champion. I have held back Rory last year, if I play like I did in 2012, I believe I can do it again."

As 2011 Shanghai Masters winner, and the world's number one at that time, high hopes were placed on McIlroy at last year's tournament, but, much to his regret, he missed out by one stroke. "Two years ago I was the winner at Lake Malaren, last year I came short to force a playoff with Peter by one stroke. I look forward to come back this October and if I play at my best, I might have the chance to take back the title," said McIlroy.

It can't be denied that since teeing off at the start of this year, the 2011 US Open and 2012 PGA Championship winner hasn't been at his best. But what can't be ignored is that last year he also went through a similar dip in form, before grabbing a stunning eight-stroke victory at Kiawah Island to win his second major. He then went on to win the Deutsche Bank Championship, the BMW Championship and the DP World Tour Championship, becoming the second ever player to win both the PGA Tour and European Tour money titles in the same year.

Clearly, McIlroy's results in early 2013 will be a huge motivation for him to win in the latter part of this year, particularly at the BMW Masters since the event is now part of "The Finals Series" for the Race to Dubai. "I would love to win every time I tee it up, there is no doubt about that, and with the BMW Masters being one of the biggest tournaments on the European Tour, I'm going to go all out for victory to take back my Shanghai crown," said McIlroy.

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BMW and golf – the “Global Golf Player”.

BMW first became involved in professional golf when the BMW International Open was held for the first time in 1989. In the meantime, BMW has become a strong, highly respected, integral partner of the golfing world and 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 featured one of the biggest prize funds on the European Tour and a world-class field. On the PGA TOUR, the BMW Championship is one of the most important golfing 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 is particularly close. BMW is “Official Car” of the European Tour and the Ryder Cup. Professionals around the world regard BMW very highly as a golf partner. For example, Major winner Martin Kaymer represents the company as BMW Brand Ambassador.

The BMW Group.

The BMW Group is the leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 28 production and assembly facilities in 13 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries. In 2012, the BMW Group sold about 1.85 million cars and more than 117,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2012 was euro 7.82 billion on revenues amounting to euro 76.85 billion. At 31st December 2012, the BMW Group had a workforce of 105,876 employees. 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 eight years.