



Press Information
15th March 2014

BMW Golf Cup International – World Final: Successful title defence for team South Africa. German youngster Voß shoots first albatross in tournament history.

Major winner Nick Faldo and double Olympic luge champion Natalie Geisenberger thrilled by the event.

Phuket. The team from South Africa claimed the title in the national category of the world's largest series of tournaments for amateur golfers for the second year in succession. With 50 countries represented at the World Final of the BMW Golf Cup International, it was the trio of Lynette Smith (Ladies), Barry van der Vyver (Men's A) and Johan Barnard (Men's B) who achieved the highest net score. With 181 points to their name, the South Africans finished ahead of the teams from New Zealand and Australia (both 179) in second and third place respectively.

Hosts Thailand also had cause to celebrate a home win at Phuket's Blue Canyon Country Club: Boonma Chaya dominated on his way to victory in the Men's A class. He ended the tournament with 111 points and a clear lead over Lucas Murtagh (Australia, 98) and Chulho Kim (South Korea, 97).

This year's World Final was a thrilling affair, with two of the three categories going to a play-off. The play-off in the Ladies class featured three players who all finished with 89 points to their name after 54 holes. Fortune eventually favoured Dieye Ep Seck Oumou Kalsome from Senegal, who overcame the challenge of Kelly Marutani (INA) and Asako Matsuki (JAP) after two extra holes of the Canyon Course. Barnard took just one extra hole to add the Men's B title to the one he won in the national competition, defeating Florian Farnleitner (AUT, both 104) in their play-off.

The German team – Martina Döring (HCP -15.4 – Ladies), Hendrik Stoffel (HCP, -1.0 – Men's A) and Niklas Voß – finished 10th. Voß had led going into the final round, following a historic second-round albatross, and came within a whisker of clinching victory in the Men's B class. However, he ultimately missed out on the play-off by just one shot and had to settle for third. Stoffel and Döring both finished 36th in their respective class.



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After the drama of the final rounds, another highlight was in store for the participants: Sir Nick Faldo demonstrated the skills that made him one of the best golfers in the world during a special golf clinic on the Canyon Course. The six-time Major winner showed glimpses of his renowned British sense of humour, as he mimicked the mistakes made by typical amateur golfers and then provided tips on how to avoid these pitfalls. Among those to benefit from this master class was double Olympic luge champion and ambitious amateur golfer Natalie Geisenberger, who picked up plenty of tips from Faldo on how to improve her short game.

“It was fun meeting Natalie. She has a good golf swing and plenty of power,” said an impressed Faldo. “Equally important is that she is focussed and determined, as you would expect from a world-class athlete and double Olympic champion. It is clear to see why she is so successful in her discipline.”

“Nick is a cool guy and knows how to play to the public. It was impressive to see how playfully he demonstrated his golfing ability and used his charm to get his audience in the mood,” said Geisenberger.

Once the golf lesson was over, the pair headed to the BMW Lounge, where they made the acquaintance of Thailand’s national animal. Baby elephant “Lucky” put on a great show and was allowed to play with Faldo’s “Claret Jug” and Geisenberger’s gold medal as a reward.

The icing on the cake at the end of an unforgettable week was the gala evening, at which Faldo presented the winners with their trophies and was more than happy to pose for photos with the World Finalists. Geisenberger was also impressed by the red-carpet event and congratulated the German team on their fine performance at the World Final.

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Press contact:

BMW Sport Communications, Nicole Stempinsky, Tel: +49159 04017905, E-Mail: Nicole.Stempinsky@bmw.de

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