



Press Information
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BMW PGA Championship: Eyeing the Players' Flagship triple. An interview with 2011 and 2012 champion Luke Donald.

London. Luke Donald has won the European Tour's flagship event on more than one occasion. His victory in 2011 saw the Englishman move to the top of the world rankings. One year later, Donald became only the third pro, after compatriot Sir Nick Faldo (1980, 1981) and Scotland's Colin Montgomerie (1998, 1999, 2000) to successfully defend his title. Speaking in an interview, Donald discusses his victories, the secret to success on the West Course, and the importance of BMW as a global golf partner.

Luke, what are your thoughts on the BMW PGA Championship in general?

Luke Donald: "I think it's a really special event. It's our flagship event. And what is more, BMW runs amazing events. Whether here in Wentworth, at the BMW International Open in Munich, the BMW Masters in Shanghai or the BMW Championship on the PGA TOUR: BMW puts on a great show. Well done to BMW on reaching its tenth year of sponsorship of the BMW PGA Championship. The continuous support year after year across the globe epitomises its dedication to our sport, and for that we must all be extremely grateful. Having competed in so many BMW events, I know what a slick and professional job BMW does in running some of the biggest tournaments in golf. Congratulations again BMW. I look forward to many more of your events in the future. Here in Wentworth, the crowds they get make it fantastic even when the weather has been bad. The tournament has a great feel to it. There are some amazing names on that trophy – Monty, Faldo, all the European greats have won around there. The course also has lots of history, having hosted the match play as well."

Which was the more satisfying of your two wins at the BMW PGA Championship?

Donald: "I suppose it was the first one because there was more on the line. I knew that if one of us were to win (Donald and Lee Westwood), we would go to Number One in the world. I'd had a couple of opportunities a few weeks before that and came up just short. So to beat Lee in a play-off and to win that tournament for starters was



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something special. The rewards that came with it were amazing. I was in the Number One spot for quite some time – 55/56 weeks in total – and I really enjoyed it. I relished the challenge of being there and knowing what got me there. I think that spurred me on to keep working hard.”

Speaking of the course: How did you tame the West Course when others struggled?

Donald: “The course has changed over the years. Everybody has different opinions about the design of the course. For me it particularly suited my game. There is a lot of emphasis on the short game because of the ‘sectioned off’ greens. That, plus the fact that there are some tougher pin positions makes you think a lot more into and around the greens. The surfaces of the greens were changed and from that moment my improvement level went up and I was able to gain a few shots. It played to one of my strengths, which is putting. Before, you could miss short putts without actually hitting a bad putt. I hope they can maintain them to a good level.”

Which are the three keys holes from your point of view?

Donald: “I’ve always thought the first three holes were the key holes. You need to get off to a good start and 1 and 3 are two of the toughest par fours that we play. I’ve always thought that if I was level par after three holes, I could have a good round.”

What about the 18th?

Donald: “They have gone through a lot of tweaking at that hole and I think they have now got it right. You can challenge the hole with a driver now, whereas a few years back the fairway sloped off and with bunkers fairly tight it was not really worth the risk. Even if you did hit a great drive, you’d invariably be on a downslope going into a green that was elevated and over water (very, very difficult). Now they have flattened out the fairway and made the green a little more accessible. It’s an exciting hole now. We saw that last year with Matteo, hitting a great shot in the play-off for a birdie against Simon Khan. The 18th is pure drama. I think par five ending holes are fun anyway.”





Your earliest memories of Wentworth?

Donald: "I used to go down there as a kid. My first memory ... I remember walking down to the 13th green and it's a blind second shot. Seeing this ball come in to about three feet. And I'm thinking 'Wow, these guys are great'. It was Chip Beck and he ended up missing the putt. So I thought, 'Oh well, maybe there's still a chance for me'. Also, I remember running around the course, watching Ernie, Faldo, all those guys. That was fun for me and gave me the appetite to be in that position. That's where it all started."

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