

BMW International Open 2014



Press Information

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BMW International Open: Fabrizio Zanotti holds his nerve.

Paraguayan claims his first European Tour title in dramatic fashion in four-man playoff at Golf Club Gut Lärchenhof – Henrik Stenson narrowly missed out on his second BMW International Open title.

Cologne. In front of 14,000 enthralled spectators, Fabrizio Zanotti, of Paraguay, emerged triumphant at the fifth extra hole of a sudden-death play-off to win the BMW International Open at Gut Lärchenhof. Four players – Henrik Stenson (SWE), Rafael Cabrera-Bello (ESP), Gregory Havret (FRA) and Zanotti – made it through to the playoff after finishing on 19 under par in regulation play, but it was Zanotti who outlasted them all to claim his maiden victory on the European Tour and a first prize of €330,330.

“Congratulations Fabrizio Zanotti on this fantastic victory at the 26th BMW International Open,” said Dr. Friedrich Eichiner, Member of the Board of Management BMW AG, Finance. “It was a nerve-racking finale. Never before have so many players still been in contention on the Sunday. Zanotti had the strongest nerves, the necessary luck, and produced an outstanding performance. James Heath’s hole-in-one today, which won him the BMW i8, was another of the day’s real highlights. Over the course of the week, 64,000 spectators have been treated to some high-class golf. And it is precisely this enthusiasm that lies at the heart of our global commitment to golf.”

Roland Krüger, Head of Sales and Marketing Germany for the BMW Group and Tournament President of the BMW International Open, added: “First and foremost I would like to thank the volunteers, without whose devotion it would not be possible to stage the BMW International Open. The European Tour and the 156 professionals from around the world have once again been made to feel at home here. Just as it did two years ago, Golf Club Gut Lärchenhof has provided an excellent stage on which to host the only European Tour event in Germany. Congratulations to Fabrizio Zanotti, and to James Heath on winning the BMW i8 Hole-in-One Award. Everything came together nicely again at this year’s BMW International Open.”

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Havret, at the second extra hole, and Cabrera-Bello, at the fourth, were the first to fall by the wayside in the playoff, with Zanotti and Stenson moving on to the par-four 17th for the second time. When Stenson attempted to drive the green and found water instead, his race had effectively been run, especially with his opponent finding the putting surface off the tee. After a penalty drop and a couple of poor chip shots, Stenson, the world No2, bowed to the inevitable and conceded the match and the title. Twice the Swede had putts for victory, but it was not to be.

“I feel very happy,” Zanotti said. “This is a moment I’ve been waiting for a long time. It’s huge to think I’m the first player from Paraguay to win on the European Tour.”

Pablo Larrazabal (ESP) held a three-stroke lead at the start of a day of exceptionally low scoring, but was unable to build momentum and fell out of the running in what turned into a sprint for the line. The Spaniard had a 72, for a 17-under-par total of 271. Zanotti set the clubhouse target with a round of 65, while Havret had a 66 to Stenson and Cabrera-Bello’s rounds of 67.

Germany’s Maximilian Röhrlig, the only amateur to make the cut, put the finishing touches to a highly respectable performance with a round of 70 that moved him alongside Marcel Siem, his countryman, on seven under par, and brought him the award for lowest amateur.

One player who could not believe his luck was Heath, the winner of the BMW i8: “I am blown away, virtually speechless,” the Englishman said. “The prize more than triples the highest cheque I’ve ever made. This is my fifteenth hole in one – the second in professional tournament play – but the others pale into insignificance by comparison. My last one was in Colombia three years ago and I didn’t even get a pat on the back.”

This day, however, belonged to a man from Paraguay by the name of Fabrizio Zanotti.

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