

BMW International Open 2015



Press Information

16th April 2015

“Golf superheroes” at the BMW International Open.

Double major winner Kaymer, “Ice Man” Stenson, “Spiderman” Villegas, and “Iron Man” Cejka join BMW champions Siem and Casey in Munich.

Munich. For almost three decades, the stars of the golf scene have assembled in Germany for a showdown at the BMW International Open. This tradition is set to continue at the 27th staging of the prestigious tournament (23rd to 28th June 2015, Golfclub München Eichenried). Fans can already look forward to an attractive field.

Martin Kaymer remains the only German to have won the BMW International Open. That victory came back in 2008, at the 20th anniversary of the tournament at Golfclub München Eichenried. Since then, Kaymer has established himself as one of the very best in the world, successfully overcoming a bit of a slump in the process. The former world number one impressed the golfing world last season with his second major victory after the 2010 US PGA Championship. The man from Düsseldorf won the U.S. Open with a sensational score of nine under par and an eight-shot lead over the opposition. In Autumn, Kaymer celebrated his third Ryder Cup triumph with the European team. His many fans in Germany can look forward to another appearance at the BMW International Open from the top German golfer at this time. Kaymer finished tied in fourth place on his last outing in Munich in 2013 – just four shots off what would have been a second German victory.

Henrik Stenson is currently ranked number three in the world and the Swede, who enjoys a huge fan base all over the world, will be out to put on a good show for his many fans in Germany. On the course, the “Ice Man” hides his simmering determination behind a cool, focussed front. Away from the greens and fairways, Stenson is a charming, approachable and amicable sportsman, whose dry sense of humour is on a par with his extraordinary golfing skills. Since September 2013, the winner of the 2006 BMW International Open has spent just one week outside the top five in the world rankings. An extraordinary 2013 season, when Stenson became the only player ever to win both the FedExCup and the Race to Dubai in the same season, was followed last year by fourth place at the U.S. Open, third at the PGA Championship, a successful title defence at the Dubai World

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Championship, and an outstanding effort for the victorious European Ryder Cup team. The father of three narrowly missed out on victory at the BMW International Open in 2014: Stenson lost out to Paraguay's Fabrizio Zanotti on the fifth play-off hole.

To catch a glimpse of the next golf star in action, you would usually need to cross the Atlantic: **Camilo Villegas**. The Columbian plays almost exclusively on the PGA TOUR and is set to make his debut at the BMW International Open. However, this does not mean that Villegas does not know what it takes to win BMW tournaments: he won the BMW Championship in Chicago in 2008, and followed up that win with victory at the Tour Championship – another Playoff tournament in the FedExCup. Further PGA TOUR wins followed in 2010 and 2014. Villegas' special method of reading the greens has earned him the nickname "Spiderman". He struck the very same pose naked for the "Body Issue" of the ESPN magazine, proving emphatically that golf is not a sport for old men and demands a high degree of athleticism. The big-hitter is now set to thrill fans in Munich at the BMW International Open in June.

Victor Dubuisson enjoyed a stellar rise last year. The Frenchman was a surprise finalist at the WGC Match Play Championship in Arizona, and produced an array of magical golf shots in that final – including two escapes from extremely poor lies in the cacti during the play-off. Many of those watching were reminded of a young Seve Ballesteros. Others see the quiet, imperturbable Frenchman as a long-term rival for Rory McIlroy. Anyone who saw Dubuisson's Ryder Cup debut in Gleneagles would be hard-pushed to disagree: his record of 2.5 points from three matches speaks for itself. Dubuisson is already highly regarded for his extraordinary ability to get up and down, which in itself is a good enough reason to check him out. The 2015 BMW International Open offers the perfect opportunity to do so.

Another member of the European team that left the USA with no chance at last autumn's Ryder Cup is European Tour stalwart **Thomas Bjorn**. "Major Tom" is a two-time winner of the BMW International Open (2000, 2002), something only the Dane and American Paul Azinger have achieved to date. It had been a while since the golfing world had seen Bjorn play as well as he did last season. Having contributed to the "Miracle of Medinah" in 2012 as a vice captain, the Dane qualified superbly to play at the inter-continental showdown in Gleneagles. Bjorn has a score to settle with the BMW International Open since the last time it was staged at Golfclub München Eichenried: in 2013 he narrowly missed out to Ernie

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Els. Bjorn will do his utmost again this year to become the first player to win the BMW International Open three times.

A dream came true for **Marcel Siem** last autumn: he won his first BMW title at the BMW Masters in Shanghai – a tournament that forms part of the prestigious Final Series. No wonder the emotional Siem described it as the most important victory of his career. And yet, it is not hard to imagine that victory at the BMW International Open at Golfclub München Eichenried would mean just as much to the man from the Rhineland region of Germany. After all, this is where he grew up: his parents looked after the club catering during the initial years. It is always worth keeping an eye on this world-class golfer: Siem, now a father of two, wears his heart on his sleeve and enjoys the interaction with the crowds and his fans, for whom he has a lot of time. He now has four European Tour wins to his name. Title number five in Eichenried – that would be right up Marcel Siem's street.

Victory at the BMW International Open would also be particularly sweet for **Alex Cejka**. The man born in the Czech Republic fled with his parents to Munich at the end of the 1970s, where he lived for many years. He was later drawn to the PGA TOUR and his new home in Las Vegas. Cejka has narrowly missed out on winning the BMW International Open on several occasions: he finished runner-up in 2003, third in 2004 and 2010, and missed out on the play-off by just three shots last year, ending the tournament as the best-placed German. However, you can be certain that Cejka will have his sights set on launching another assault: the 44-year-old is known as "Iron Man", having overcome many obstacles over the course of his career and never given up. This March, Cejka won his first title on the PGA TOUR at the 287th attempt. The opposition at the 2015 BMW International Open would be well advised to keep Alex Cejka on their radar.

Paul Casey has missed just one BMW International Open in the last 14 years. Very few players have shown the tournament such loyalty over this period, a fact that always makes the likeable Englishman a very welcome guest. He has also enjoyed some success at the tournament, finishing third on three occasions – 2003, 2004 and 2008. One of Casey's biggest moments came at the 2009 BMW PGA Championship, when he won the "Players' Flagship" – one of the most prestigious titles on the European Tour. Casey then suffered a dip in form as a result of a complicated shoulder injury, but returned to winning ways in 2013 and 2014. This season he has already claimed four top-ten finishes from ten outings on

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the PGA TOUR, where he now plays almost all his golf. Casey is a force to be reckoned with again, as he proved emphatically with sixth place at the Masters.

Although you have to go back to the 2009 Transitions Championship for **Retief Goosen's** last victory, the two-time Major winner (U.S. Open 2001 and 2004) is always there or thereabouts on the final day – particularly at Golfclub München Eichenried. The South African proved with second place at the 2006 BMW International Open and third in 2009 and 2011 that he is still capable of finishing well up the leaderboard, even later on in his career. You'd be mistaken to write him off this year?

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