

Media Information
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BMW International Open: Emotional Haotong Li takes victory on the first play-off hole.

+++ Li defeats Pieters in the play-off +++ First victory by a Chinese player at the BMW International Open +++ Von Dellingshausen the best German in fifth +++ 51,500 visitors watched the tournament unfold +++ Course record and an albatross on day one +++

Munich. A high-class BMW International Open concluded with a worthy finale. In a dramatic play-off, Haotong Li from China sank a 12-metre putt to defeat Belgium's Thomas Pieters. The 26-year-old winner had previously shot rounds of 62, 67, 67, and 70 for a final score of 22 under (266 shots). Li laid the foundation for his third title on the DP World Tour on day one, when he broke the course record with a round of 10 under par. That earned the Chinese a lead that he never surrendered.

"Congratulations to Haotong Li on his title at the 33rd BMW International Open, and on becoming the first Chinese golfer to win this tournament," said Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG. "It has been a magnificent tournament week with a course record, an albatross and a captivating final day, all topped off with a play-off. We are delighted that so many spectators have again been able to enjoy what the BMW International Open has stood for since 1989: world-class golf, a feel-good atmosphere, and a special event experience."

Li headed into the final round alongside Pieters, and with a three-shot lead over the Belgian. 15 holes later, the Ryder Cup player had closed the gap. As such, the two leaders found themselves in a match play situation. It was Li who gained the initial advantage thanks to a brilliant birdie on the 17th. However, Pieters hit back with a birdie of his own on the 18th. On the first play-off hole, the 18th, Pieters hit the better approach onto the green, but it was Li who showed nerves of steel to sink a 12-metre putt for birdie. As the fans showed their appreciation, the weeping winner sank to the floor with relief.

"It's incredible. There are no words to describe this feeling," said Li. "Ten months ago I wanted to stop playing golf. I told my friend and now caddy Zhi Yang. He has always been with me through the dark times. I cannot thank him enough. I hardly slept last night, but I dreamed of lifting this trophy – and now that dream has come true. It is unbelievable."

Third place went to Ryan Fox from New Zealand (-20), ahead of Finland's Sami Välimäki (-18). Fifth place was shared by two-time winner Pablo Larrazábal (ESP), Romain Langasque (FRA) and Nicolai von Dellingshausen (GER, all -17), who was the best of the 17 Germans who started the tournament. "I am very, very happy," said von Dellingshausen. "With the score and the result, of course, but also with the way the week has gone, my game, and my mental approach."

Marcel Schneider (-13, T15), Max Kieffer (-11, T26), Yannik Paul (-10, T32), Martin Kaymer, Hurly Long, Timo Vahlenkamp (all -9, T36) and Marcel Siem (-7, T53) were the other seven German pros to make the cut. Kaymer: "Generally speaking, I was happy with my game – particularly given the little training I managed to get in beforehand. However, I am not so happy with the result. On the whole, however, I will take positive memories from this week."

Kieffer, who celebrated his 32nd birthday on Saturday, hit an albatross on day one, when he holed his second shot on the 11th hole (par 5), a four-iron from a good 192 metres. This was only the fourth albatross in the long history of the tournament. Only José María Olazábal (ESP, 2001, hole 11, par 5), Rafa Echenique (ARG, 2009, hole 18, par 5) and Vincent Norrman (SWE, 2021, hole 16, par 4) had achieved this feat before Kieffer.

Billy Horschel (USA, -11, T26) was unable to realise his dream of a third BMW title to add to the BMW Championship he won in 2014 and the 2021 BMW PGA Championship. However, he was impressed by his

first professional golf event in Germany. "It has been an awesome week, I had a lot of fun. It was nice to see friends on the DP World Tour again," said the American. "My golf was good at times, but not good enough to win."

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