



Media Information

BMW PGA Championship

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BMW PGA Championship: Star line-up, revamped golf course and prize money record.

- **Olympic champion Rose, Open winner Stenson, multiple major champion Kaymer other stars get the Rolex Series underway at the BMW PGA Championship (23rd to 28th May).**
- **Title defender Chris Wood sings the praises of the Wentworth Club's revamped West Course.**
- **The prestigious tournament has a prize fund of 7 million US dollars.**
- **BMW i8 is the special prize in the BMW Albatross Challenge.**

Munich/London. This week, the golfing elite gather for the first highlight of the season in Europe. The European Tour stars meet at the BMW PGA Championship (23rd – 28th May 2017, Wentworth Club, London) for the first tournament in the new Rolex Series. The iconic West Course, which underwent extensive changes last year, on the greens in particular, will host the tournament

The BMW PGA Championship on the European Tour is the most significant European golf event after the Open Championship, and has a prize fund of 7 million US dollars as of this season. The world-class field is led by Open champion Henrik Stenson (SWE), Olympic gold medallist Justin Rose (ENG), "Mr. Ryder Cup" Ian Poulter (ENG) and Major champions Martin Kaymer (GER) and Danny Willett (ENG).

Defending champion is Englishman Chris Wood, who is full of praise for the redesigned West Course. The 29-year-old is impressed by the quality of the 18 greens in particular, which have been stripped of their old turf, reseeded and partially redesigned.

"My first impression was walking on to the first green, looking down and thinking, 'Am I on the right golf course?'," said Wood. "It's night and day compared to last



year. The greens are fantastic. Every putt you hit is so true. Anyone who is a good putter will enjoy playing.”

For his part, Wood is focusing on a successful defence of the title. “It’s the premier event for us, a massive event on the European Tour,” he said. “I think for a European, outside of the major championships, it’s the one to win. A few weeks after I won Justin Rose said to me, ‘That’s one off the bucket list’. For a Major winner like Justin it’s a tournament that’s high up on his priorities.”

Among the other changes to the course, 29 bunkers were removed, and the others were redesigned. “Many were deep and severe, but are much less penal now,” Wood explained. “This will allow players to be more aggressive as we’ll be able to reach some greens from fairway bunkers. This should make the competition even more exciting. If I was a spectator, I’d want to see birdies and eagles. I think this year is going to be fun.”

BMW has created an added incentive for spectacular shots on the 18th hole (par 5) this year: If a player makes an albatross (holing on the second shot), he will be rewarded with a BMW i8. Furthermore, the first ace on the 14th fairway (par 3) will be rewarded with a BMW M4.

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