



Media Information
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Gros refuses to be blown off course at 30th BMW International Open.

- **Frenchman makes light work of tough conditions.**
- **Only 22 players break par at Golf Club Gut Lärchenhof.**
- **Trio of major champions poised to mount a challenge.**
- **Jetlag and fatigue catch up with Tommy Fleetwood.**

Cologne. With high winds putting the whole of the 156-man field to the test, Sébastien Gros emerged as a worthy leader after the first round of the 30th BMW International Open at Golf Club Gut Lärchenhof today.

The 28-year-old Frenchman had a four-under-par round of 68 for a lead of one stroke over four others - Scott Jamieson (SCO), Aaron Rai (ENG), Henric Sturehed (SWE) and Jorge Campillo (ESP).

Gros made light of difficult conditions to reach the turn in 32, with four birdies and five pars, and came home in 36, with his only dropped shot coming at the par-three 16th. In total, only 22 players broke par for the round. "That was a great round," Gros said. "It was brutal with the wind and tough to keep the ball on the fairway. I'll try to take confidence from this and keep it going for the rest of the week."

Further down the leaderboard, but certain to mount a strong challenge as the week progresses, are three of four major champions in the field – Ernie Els (RSA), Martin Kaymer (GER) and Sergio Garcia (ESP).

Els finished on one under par, after a hard-fought 71, and lies one stroke ahead of Kaymer and two ahead of Garcia. With 54 holes still to play, those ahead of the trio will be looking anxiously over their shoulders.

"It was always going to be a tough day," Garcia said. "It's very windy, the course is playing a lot firmer than in the past, and the rough is quite thick. It's a lot more challenging because you have to be so precise with your shots."



“It wasn’t an easy day, but I felt like I played better than one over par. Unfortunately, I couldn’t get anything going. Overall, there were positives to take from the round and hopefully I’ll have a better round tomorrow and can then look forward to a good weekend.”

Kaymer, who finished the day as the third-best placed German in the field – behind Nicolai von Dellingshausen (70) and Max Kieffer (71) – was relatively satisfied with a hard day’s work. “Anything around par was acceptable today,” he said. “It was a bit of an up-and-down round, with plenty of bogeys and lots of birdies. In the end, par is okay. It is never easy when the wind gets up. There were a few holes where the pins were in tricky positions on the side of the green from which the wind was blowing.”

One player looking for an upturn in fortunes is Tommy Fleetwood, who produced the performance of his career when finishing runner-up at the U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills on Sunday after a championship record-equalling final round of 63.

Jetlag and fatigue finally seemed to catch up with the reigning European No.1, but the Englishman is by no means out of the running after a roller coaster round of 74 that was made up of four birdies, one double bogey, four bogeys and nine pars. There is still plenty to play for.

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