



BMW Golf Cup International: World Final triumph for local heroes from Team South Africa at the sensational Fancourt Golf Resort

Golf legend Gary Player and BMW AG Board Member Ian Robertson present the awards. German team finishes as runner-up. 137 entrants from 47 countries declare their enthusiasm for the World Final

Munich – March 11, 2013... Standing ovations for Gary Player, jubilation for the victorious team from South Africa and huge joy among the Germans for an outstanding second place — the official gala evening to mark the end of the BMW Golf Cup International World Final, held at one of the country's vineyards, proved a glittering highlight and fitting climax to a fantastic week of golf at South Africa's Fancourt Golf Resort. Following the participation of around 100,000 players from all over the world in the qualifying rounds of the competition, BMW invited 137 players and their entourages from 47 countries to take part in the final of the world's largest amateur golf series. Here in South Africa, however, all participants could consider themselves winners — just to have been part of the event was a reward in itself.

“This week and the entire BMW Golf Cup International have been a great success and an unforgettable experience for all involved,” said Eckhard Wannieck, Head of International Sponsoring, Cooperations and Product Placement at BMW. “The participants came from four different continents and from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. At times communication between them was difficult, but the one thing that united them was a passion for the game of golf and for the BMW brand. That's a wonderful thing.”

Hosts make most of home advantage

From Wednesday to Friday the three handicap classes, Men A (up to handicap 12), Men B (handicap 13 to 28) and Ladies (up to handicap 28), played 54 holes of Stableford competition. And the outcome remained extremely tense until the final round, when the winners of the individual competitions were finally declared: South African Ockert Douglas (net score 103), George Offenhauser (USA/115) and Ekaterina Boldyreva (Russia/115). "That is without question the highpoint of my golfing career," said a delighted Ockert Douglas: "To say I'm happy would be an understatement. It's amazing how BMW has looked after us. You have to experience it to believe it."

In addition to Ockert Douglas (HCP 5), the winning South Africa team included Kevan Hunter (HCP 15) and Lynn Butler (HCP 28).

German team has best result for years

The German participants were also delighted with their experience and performance. Stefanie Köhler (Golf Resort Semlin am See/HCP 19.5) scored 108 Stableford points to achieve a superb second place in the individual rankings, Marcel Zilles (GCG Großensee/0.4) finished 20th and Quan Anh Nguyen (GC Franzensbad/19.6) took a share of third place. "Team Germany performed great. My objective was to finish in the top ten; to have finished runner-up in both the team and individual events is unbelievable," said Stefanie Köhler, summing up the best result for Germany's golfers at the BMW International Cup for years: "It was tremendous fun to be a part of the various experiences and events both on and off the golf course."

Marcel Zilles, whose handicap of 0.4 makes him virtually of golf profession standard, added: "It was an incredible week on one of the world's most beautiful golf courses. Given my handicap I had hoped to do a bit more personally, but runner-up in the team classification is a great result." For Zilles, too, the communal experience was perhaps the most memorable aspect, "We met so many great people from such different backgrounds. A big thank-you has to go to those responsible at BMW for making it all possible."

Honeymoon trip to the BMW Golf Cup International

The only slight downer was the rain that set in on Friday afternoon, which turned the golf clinic given by nine-times major winner Gary Player into a rather damp affair.

Nevertheless, the 77-year-old was given warm reception by the amateurs and demonstrated his shots with panache and an impressive level of fitness. “I was very happy to accept the invitation from BMW to come to this event,” said Player, who designed all three of the courses at the Fancourt Resort. “BMW and the Golf Cup International do a great job to boost the popularity of the sport of golf.”

Tournament director Marco Kaussler was also delighted with the tournament, the fifth edition of the event to have been held at the Fancourt Golf Resort near George in the Cape region. “This was the 20th World Final I have been involved in and each time it is something very special. This year the tournament itself was a particular highlight. The conditions were fantastic and for the most part the weather was superb. It’s going to be hard to improve on this year’s event.” The task of hosting next year’s BMW Golf Cup International World Final returns to Asia.

A remarkable degree of commitment was shown by Indian golfer Jaskeerat Matharoo, who arrived at the Fancourt Resort at virtually the last minute on Tuesday, having got married only the previous weekend. She and her new husband spent their honeymoon at the five-star resort. Clearly inspired by her personal happiness, the newlywed played well enough to finish fourth in the individual classification. And while she made her way around the greens and fairways, her husband was able to enjoy the wide-ranging support program provided for players’ partners.

Ostrich rides and the BMW xDrive Experience

Thanks to the pleasant weather throughout the week, all evening events — including the official opening ceremony and “Olympic” parade presenting the flags of the 47 participating nations, an African barbecue and folklore evening — were held as planned under the South African skies. At party night on Thursday a local band provided a lively beat in the greenskeepers’ converted equipment store. And an organized safari gave participants a chance to observe lions and elephants, while a few brave souls tried their hand at ostrich riding — a rather less predictable mode of transport than the BMW models on offer. The BMW xDrive Experience offered guests an opportunity to take one of the BMW convertibles on a trip into the nearby mountains or to the beach and to try for themselves the exceptional handling characteristics of the BMW models.

At the end of the week there were only happy, smiling faces. “The finalists made for a wonderful atmosphere and played with great joy and sportsmanship,” said Ian Robertson. “As far as we’re concerned they’re all winners — first for qualifying as national champions in their own countries, but also for having made the BMW Golf Cup International once again such a unique experience.”

The Fancourt Golf Resort is one of the country’s oldest golf clubs. Dr. Hasso Plattner, co-founder of SAP, acquired the complex in 1996. The resort now enjoys five-star status and boasts around 200 luxurious rooms. Fancourt is a member of “The Leading Hotels of the World” and was also awarded “Leading Spas of the World” status. In 2003 the resort staged the President’s Cup, a competition between the best non-European golfers and the United States. The other sponsors of the BMW Golf Cup International World Final were Hugo Boss, South African Airways and Titleist.

The BMW Group

With its brands BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is among the world's most successful premium manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles. As an international company it operates 25 production and assembly plants in 14 countries, as well as a global sales network with branches in over 140 countries. In the fiscal year 2012, the BMW Group achieved worldwide sales of some 1.85 million automobiles and over 117,000 motorcycles.

Pre-tax income in 2011 amounted to 7.38 billion euros, with turnover at 68.82 billion euros. As of December 2011 the company employed a workforce of some 100,000 staff worldwide.

A long-term perspective and a responsible approach have long formed the basis of the BMW Group’s economic success. As an integral part of its strategy, the company is geared toward ecological and social responsibility along the entire supply chain, extensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to saving resources. As a result, the BMW Group has now been the sector leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for a period of eight years.

