



PRESS RELEASE

HOLMAN HOLDS TWO-SHOT ADVANTAGE AT MAYBANK CHAMPIONSHIP MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur, February 19 - An irrepressible Nathan Holman of Australia produced a solid six-under-par 65 for a two-shot halfway lead at the inaugural US\$3 million Maybank Championship Malaysia on Friday.

Thanks to a hot putter, the 24-year-old Holman rolled in seven birdies to double up his overnight lead with a 13-under-par 129 aggregate ahead of Richard Bland of England, who also shot a 65, at Royal Selangor Golf Club.

Filipino rising star Miguel Tabuena, Korean youngster Soomin Lee, Spaniard Jorge Campillo and world number 13 Danny Willett of England are equal third on 134, five shots back.

Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand and Australian Marcus Fraser were a further shot back after shooting identical 69s in the prestigious event sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour.

Holman, the reigning Australian PGA Championship winner, birdied all the par fives at Royal Selangor for the second consecutive day to stay in the hunt for a second victory since his European Tour breakthrough on home soil last December.

“After winning at home, my next aim was to win a tournament overseas, so it’s great to have the chance to tick that one off the list so soon. Then looking further ahead, getting into the top 100 in the World Ranking is a realistic aim,” said Holman.

The Australian conceded nerves started to creep in after he made the turn but kept his cool to fire four birdies over his closing six holes. His only bogey of the day came on the 14th hole.

“When I saw I was three or a few shots clear after the turn there were a few nerves but I handled myself really well and managed to pick up a couple of birdies coming in. I’ve been working on my alignment for the past couple of weeks and it definitely seems to be paying off,” said Holman, who has played on the Asian Tour in the last two seasons.

Without a bogey on the card through 36 holes, Bland, a one-time European Challenge Tour winner, said his impressive run was due largely to a new driver in the bag. "To go around here without dropping a shot in two days takes some doing. I picked up a new driver in Dubai, and I drove it really well that week, and that's the case again here," he said.

Willett, the highest ranked player in the elite field, struggled with the humidity but did enough to stay within striking distance of winning a second title in three weeks.

"I'm struggling a bit with my body. My energy levels collapsed on the back nine, and I started making a few silly mistakes. But the flags were also quite tricky and the wind's picking up a bit, so I can't see the scoring being too ridiculous. And I would have taken eight under after two rounds," said the Englishman, winner in Dubai recently.

Slightly-built Tabuena remained on the leaderboard despite still suffering from the effects of food poisoning. He shot three birdies against no bogeys to give himself a chance of winning a second title since his career breakthrough win at the Philippine Open in December.

"It works for the better sometimes as you don't think about the golf. Sometimes when you play golf, in the pre-consciousness, you tend to do great things. I'm happy with my performance so far, so I hope to keep it up.

"I'm really happy with my form so far considering I'm not 100%. Just told myself to shoot anything under par and get back to the hotel as fast as you can and try to get ready for tomorrow. I'm happy I managed to get a few under par. I don't want to play against the other players. I just want to compete against the golf course," said the 21-year-old Tabuena.

After finishing tied seventh in his last two appearances on the Asian Tour, the unassuming Lee continued his fine form as he chases a first victory on a course which he said suits his eye.

"I feel comfortable heading into the weekend because I like the course. I think I have a chance. This course really suits my game. I just focussed on my shots and I didn't pay attention to the leaderboard," said the 22-year-old Lee.

The cut was set at one-under-par 141 with a total of 70 players qualifying for the weekend rounds. Chinese amateur Jin Cheng, winner of the 2015 Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship and four Malaysians will also feature in the final two rounds.

Scores after round 2 of the Maybank Championship Malaysia being played at the par 71, 7079 Yards Royal Selangor GCC course (am - denotes amateur):

129 - Nathan HOLMAN (AUS) 64-65.

131 - Richard BLAND (ENG) 66-65.

134 - Danny WILLETT (ENG) 65-69, Miguel TABUENA (PHI) 66-68, Soomin LEE (KOR) 66-68, Jorge CAMPILLO (ESP) 65-69.

135 - Thongchai JAIDEE (THA) 66-69, Marcus FRASER (AUS) 66-69.

136 - Thaworn WIRATCHANT (THA) 69-67, Masahiro KAWAMURA (JPN) 66-70, Andrew DODT (AUS) 69-67.

137 - Chawalit PLAPHOL (THA) 69-68, Louis OOSTHUIZEN (RSA) 67-70, Graeme STORM (ENG) 69-68, K.T. KIM (KOR) 66-71, Lucas BJERREGAARD (DEN) 70-67, Gregory HAVRET (FRA) 70-67.

138 - Romain WATTEL (FRA) 68-70, David LIPSKY (USA) 68-70, Alexander LEVY (FRA) 65-73, Casey O'TOOLE (USA) 71-67, Robert ROCK (ENG) 68-70, Prom MEESAWAT (THA) 66-72, Rafa CABRERA-BELLO (ESP) 69-69, Younghan SONG (KOR) 71-67, Stephen GALLACHER (SCO) 68-70, Gaganjeet BHULLAR (IND) 67-71.

Ends.

About Maybank – Humanising Financial Services

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About GlobalOne

GlobalOne (Emerald Evolution Holdings Sdn Bhd) is an executive lifestyle sports promoter and we create sports event ownerships. We specialise in providing the full spectrum in sponsorship event management and have an excellent track record in planning and delivering on PGA European Tour golf events for Malaysia (Maybank Malaysian Open), Singapore (Singapore Masters) and Indonesia (Indonesia Open) since 1999. We have strong relations with sports governing bodies, the media and commercial sponsors and technical partners to deliver on the bottom line. We assist all our clients to create strategic, high-return, best practice sponsorship to provide a strong, unified vision, across departments and stakeholders, of the broad range of marketing and business objectives that can be achieved through this sponsorship. We also form and maintain strong relationship with players' managers to source the best players. GlobalOne has staged a highly successful and prestigious tournament in Asia – the Maybank Malaysian Open, (2006 – 2015) which is co-sanctioned by the European Tour and the Asian Tour providing the event with Official World Ranking status.

About the Asian Tour

As the official sanctioning body for professional golf in Asia, the Asian Tour leads the development of golf across the region, enhancing the careers of its members while maintaining a commitment to the integrity of the game. The Asian Tour, through its membership of the International Federation of PGA Tours, is the only recognised pan-Asian professional golf tour in Asia. This unique feature positions the Asian Tour at the pinnacle of professional golf in Asia; providing its events with Official World Ranking status. Tour Partners include ECCO (Official Footwear Supplier), FENIX Golf (Official Apparel Supplier), Fuji Xerox (Official Office Solutions Partner), Hilton

Worldwide (Official Hotel Partner), Titleist (Official Web Partner) and Rolex (Official Timekeeper). Sentosa, Singapore is the Home of the Asian Tour which also has an office in Kuala Lumpur. Also, visit us at www.asiantour.com , www.facebook.com/asiantourgolf , www.twitter.com/asiantourgolf , www.youtube.com/theasiantour and www.weibo.com/asiantourgolf.

The European Tour

The European Tour is committed to celebrating the game of golf from the origins of the professional game, building a proud history of achievement, sportsmanship and integrity as well as showcasing our diverse global talent and rich landscapes. The European Tour's innovative approach enables us to embrace the world, combining championships of tradition with new tournaments in the cities and countries of the future. The European Tour International Schedule, which from 2009 has incorporated The Race to Dubai, is a thriving global brand which, in 2016, will span 45 tournaments in 26 countries across five continents ; the European Challenge Tour focuses on the up and coming players of the future; while the European Senior Tour provides a new start for champions celebrating their 50th birthday. The European Tour's corporate identity features the iconic silhouette image of six-time Open Champion Harry Vardon who gives his name to The Harry Vardon Trophy, presented to the player who is crowned European Tour Number One and winner of The Race to Dubai at the end of the season.