

Poulter hangs on to take inaugural Nordic Open 2003

Ian Poulter fires a solid 66 to hold off the pack and win the Nordic Open 2003.

Simons Golf Club – England's Ian Poulter finished off a brilliant week and took the inaugural Nordic Open and the 266,660 euro that goes along with it.

The Brit managed to hold off a field that featured Colin Montgomerie, Søren Hansen and a host of others breathing down his neck to win the tournament by just one shot.

Playing in the second to last group, Poulter took the lead for good on the 8th hole managing to keep one shot ahead of the pack the rest of the way. Making birdies when he needed them, Poulter birdied 11, 12 and 15 with no bogeys for the entire round.

Poulter came close to facing Colin Montgomerie in a play-off as he couldn't close the deal over the last three holes and extend his lead. Holes' 16, 17, and 18 played easy all week and Sunday was no exception. Montgomerie birdied 17, while Hansen birdied 16-18, in fact everyone within striking distance of Poulter managed to birdie at least one of the last three, with the 18th playing statistically as the easiest on the course all week. That fact however, didn't help Poulter. He had to settle for par on all three. Having to scramble on 17 and, after flubbing a chip on 18, taking to two putts but keeping his one shot lead on Montgomerie, who looked on from the fairway as Poulter finished.

Montgomerie then hit a three-wood, leaving it some 20 metres short of the green in the rough. Chipping up, Montgomerie left it short, leaving himself a 5 metre putt for birdie to go 22 under and force a playoff with Poulter. After lining it up, Montgomerie sent the putt wide right and with Poulter cupping his ears and listening to the crowd from the scorer's tent, heard the crowd's groan and let out a smile of relief.

Asked about the round, Poulter said: "it was really another perfect day. I got off to a nice start. What can I say? Just kept splitting fairways and hitting it to 15 feet and I knew that 22 or 23 under was going to be a very good total. I thought 66 could be good and thankfully for me Colin missed the putt on the last. I had a chance for birdie but all in all it was a good day."

After collecting his trophy Poulter hopped in a car and raced to the airport to make a plane to the states. Poulter will be playing in the PGA Championships next weekend and has high expectations for the year's fourth major. "I am very, very confident about the way I played this week. I hit some fantastic shots. Didn't hit many off line," said Poulter.

For Poulter, the victory is his fifth in just 109 starts. It also moves him up in the Volvo Order of Merit to fifth place and increases his earnings to 1,010,012.53 euro for the year.

For further information

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Danish Golf Company - Promoters of the Nordic Open 2003