

Pro Golf Tour – Press release Polish Open

27 June 2018



Record play-off at the Polish Open: Decottignies Lafon wins on the 10th extra hole

The Polish Open 2018 is going to go down in Pro Golf Tour history, in fact in golfing history: the Frenchman Mathieu Decottignies Lafon was only established as the winner of the tournament early on Wednesday evening on the tenth extra hole of the play-off when he finally had the title in the bag with a birdie on the 18th hole, a 150-metres par 3 over water, and relegated the Czech Ondrej Lieser to second place. There's only one sudden death play-off in the history of golf that lasted longer among the men: in 1949, Cary Middlecoff and Lloyd Mangrum agreed to share the victory of the PGA Tour tournament at Motor City Open in Detroit after eleven holes and a tie. The Pro Golf Tour now holds the European record and second place worldwide.

Brzezno/Poland – The Polish Open 2018 story began when the tournament was almost over. When all the players at the Gradi Golf Club in Brzezno, Poland, had completed the usual 54 stroke play holes and part 2 of probably the longest day of golf in their career began for the Frenchman Mathieu Decottignies Lafon and the Czech Ondrej Lieser. A day that lasted much longer for Ondrej Lieser than for his opponent: the Czech had only been able to play 14 holes of his second round on the morning of the third tournament day due to the weather. When he finally stepped up for the play-off, he had already played 32 holes that day. There were another ten to follow. Both players were tied in first place with 18 under par after three stroke play rounds. Ondrej Lieser had needed 66, 62 and 64 strokes, Decottignies Lafon completed the par 70 course with 69, 61 and 62 strokes – and loudly complained about the, in his eyes, far too easy course after his round of 69. As it happens, the 5,437-metre-long course at the Gradi Golf Club really is not an improbable victory. However, the varied fairways were so well prepared that the golfers played 1,018 birdies in three tournament rounds and putted an eagle 25 times. The cut was 2 under par, the best round was played by the Frenchman David Antonelli, who needed just 60 strokes for the second round; the course record is 59 strokes. Another side note: Hinrich Arkenau from Golf Club zur Vahr in Bremen secured third place with a final round of 63, making him the best German.

Course record: Mathieu Decottignies Lafon had his sights set on this magical 59 on the third tournament day: "At the start, I was rather annoyed that the course was actually far too easy. But then I thought about it and realised that you can really play a round of 59 here. And that's what I tried to do," says the Frenchman. "I adjusted my mental attitude and simply tried to play as well as possible and manage a round of 59. You don't often get the chance to do that during a tournament!"

The record round came to nothing in the end but the no less impressive final round of 62 put him in the play-off with Ondrej Lieser. Tournament director Sven Slopianka sends the two leaders to the 18th hole, a 150-metre-long par 3 over water onto a peninsula green. They shared the hole four times with par, then they both play a birdie, and four times par again afterwards. After just under two hours of play-off, the decision falls in favour of the Frenchman when Decottignies Lafon putts his ball from just under two metres for a birdie and Ondrej Lieser just plays par. What is remarkable: they both (!) throw their arms into the air cheering and celebrate the longest sudden death play-off in the history of the Pro Golf Tour and the second longest in the history of golf.



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Landsberger Straße 290
D-80687 Munich
Phone: +49-(0)89/179 588-48
Fax: +49-(0)89/179 588-49
Email: info@progolftour.de
Web: www.pro-golf-tour.com

Press contact:
Matthias Lettenbichler
Landsberger Straße 290
D-80687 Munich
Email: presse@progolftour.de
Phone: +49(0)89/1795 88-55
Mobile: +49(0)172/8134 700



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“I was of course ecstatic that I’d won but Ondrej was also just happy that it was over,” says the winner. “I’m really happy that I was able to adjust so well to this tournament and also maintain my concentration in this mammoth play-off.” The man from Bondues in France is celebrating his second victory of the season with his win of the Polish Open; he’d already won the Haugschlag NÖ Open in Austria at the end of April. With 15,487 points, the 25-year-old is now taking over first place in the Pro Golf Tour Order of Merit and is among the top favourites for promotion. The top 5 in the Pro Golf Tour ranking move up to the European Challenge Tour 2019 at the end of the season. 13 of the 20 season tournaments have currently been played.

However, the new play-off record holder doesn’t want to wait that long to jump up to the next league, if at all possible. Decottignies Lafon: “At the start of the season, I set myself the goal of winning three tournaments and instantly moving up to the European Challenge Tour as a result. I’m now one big step closer to this goal.”

There’s already going to a chance of winning a third tournament this year, which would result in the right to tee off on the European Challenge Tour straight away, next week: the Pro Golf Tour is celebrating its return to the Netherlands where it was last a guest in 2008 with the Broekpolder International Open 2018, which is on the programme from 5 to 7 July. The players will be battling for another EUR 30,000 prize money and just as many Order of Merit points at the Broekpolder Golf Club near Rotterdam. More information about the tour and all the results are listed at www.pro-golf-tour.com.

Polish Open 2018

Pro Golf Tour Order of Merit tournament, 25 to 27 June 2018, Gradi Golf Club, Brzezno, Poland

Pos.	Name	Country	+/-	R1	R2	R3	Total	Result
1	Mathieu Decottignies Lafon*	France	-18	69	61	62	192	5,000.00
2	Ondrej Lieser	Czech Republic	-18	66	62	64	192	3,000.00
3	Hinrich Arkenau	Germany	-14	67	66	63	196	2,000.00
4	Martin Keskari	Germany	-13	66	66	65	197	1,500.00
T5	Franck Daux	France	-12	62	70	66	198	1,280.00
T5	Ales Korinek	Czech Republic	-12	65	62	71	198	1,280.00

*European record: Mathieu Decottignies Lafon beats Ondrej Lieser on the 10th extra hole of the play-off with a birdie, celebrating his second win of the season and taking first place in the Pro Golf Tour Order of Merit. All the tournament results and the current Pro Golf Tour 2018 Order of Merit are listed at www.progolftour.de.

Record play-offs for the ladies and men

The longest sudden death play-offs in the history of golf*

Holes	Tournament	Country	Year	Tour	Players
14	Larvik Ladies Open	Norway	2015	LET Access Series	Johanna Gustavsson & Natalia Escuriola
11	Motor City Open	USA	1949	PGA Tour	Cary Middlecoff & Lloyd Mangrum
10	Polish Open	Poland	2018	Pro Golf Tour	Mathieu Decottignies Lafon & Ondrej Lieser
10	Corpus Christi Open	USA	1972	LPGA Tour	Jo Ann Prentice, Kathy Withworth & Sandra Palmers
9	KLM Dutch Open	Netherlands	1989	European Tour	José-Maria Olazabal, Roger Chapman & Ronan Rafferty
9	Open de Espana	Spain	2013	European Tour	Raphael Jacquelin, Felipe Aguilar & Maximilian Kieffer
9	Kingsmill Championship	USA	2012	LPGA Tour	Ji-Yai Shin & Paula Craemer

*No guarantee that all the information is correct or complete.

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Email: presse@progolftour.de
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Mobile: +49(0)172/8134 700

