



LAHIRI TRIUMPHS OVER HEND IN VENETIAN MACAU OPEN SLUGFEST

Macau, October 26: Indian star Anirban Lahiri claimed a sensational one-stroke victory at the US\$900,000 Venetian Macau Open after frontrunner Scott Hend of Australia agonisingly bogeyed the last hole on Sunday.

Lahiri started the final round two shots behind overnight leader Hend and trailed by four at one stage at the Macau Golf and Country Club before rallying on the home stretch to pip Hend and Thailand's Prom Meesawat.

The 27-year-old Indian signed for a final round of five-under-par 66, which included six birdies, and a winning aggregate of 17-under-par 267. The winner's cheque of US\$162,000 raised his season's tally to US\$504,689 as he consolidated his second place on the Asian Tour's Order of Merit and narrowed the gap on leader David Lipsky of the United States.

Hend, the defending champion who arrived in Macau in top form after winning the Hong Kong Open last week, lipped out a par putt from four feet on the 72nd hole as the roles reversed from last year's edition where Lahiri was the runner-up. Hend settled for a 69 while Prom charged up the leaderboard with a 66.

"It's really special. Hendy was playing great golf and it was sad to see him missing that putt on the last," said Lahiri, who secured his second win of the season and fifth Asian Tour victory.

"I knew he was playing some good golf and I told myself that I was going to keep coming back, keep coming back and keep attacking. I wanted to make him think I was not going to go away. I think I played really well."

Hend took charge early on and doubled his overnight lead to four shots after nailing an eagle on two and a birdie on seven. However, a tenacious Lahiri fought back with birdies on eight and nine to make the turn only two back. The pivotal moment came on 14 when Lahiri hit a superb seven iron into the par three hole for an easy birdie while Hend bogeyed.

Lahiri, who had opened his campaign with a stunning 61 on Thursday, then led for the first time in the final round with a birdie on 15 but Hend leveled with a birdie at the next hole until his slip-up at the last.

"I hit a perfect golf shot on 14," said Lahiri. "I had just missed a putt at the previous hole and I knew I needed a birdie to catch Hendy and that was just magic the way it came down. I hit a seven iron as hard and high as I could and it came out perfect. One of the best shots of the week.

“I was chasing all day and on 14, that’s where the momentum switched a bit. It’s fantastic to win my second of the year. I missed the cut last week (in Hong Kong) after a long time so I had time to think about what I was doing wrong and how was I was not thinking positively on the course. I’m happy I managed to turn that around.”

Hend was disappointed he missed his par putt which would have forced a play-off and also the opportunity to join China’s Zhang Lian-wei as the only two-time Venetian Macau Open champion.

“I hit too many loose shots and then on the last hole, I had a lip out which I thought I put a good putt on it. Unfortunately it lipped out. I looked up to see it lipping out. I thought I had made the putt,” said Hend.

“To be honest, the tournament had slipped as the tee shot wasn’t in play. I had to hit the fairway which would have made it a lot easier but I missed the fairway which made my job a little bit harder.”

Prom came home strongly in 32 but fell one short shy of forcing a play-off. He rued a rollercoaster start where he went bogey, birdie, bogey, birdie in his opening four holes. “I had a good back nine but it was up and down in the first four holes. But to finish on five under for the round, I’m happy. My goal was to stay inside the top-three. It was not going to be easy to catch Hendy or Anirban,” said Prom.

Meanwhile, The Venetian Macao® has extended its title sponsorship of the Venetian Macau Open for a further two years until 2016 following its successful association with Macau’s premier golf championship this week. The Macau Sport Development Board (MSDB) and its partners, the Asian Tour, Macau Golf Association and IMG, jointly announced that next year’s edition will return to the Macau Golf and Country Club from October 15-18, 2015.

The Venetian Macau Open is jointly organised by Macau Sport Development Board of Macau SAR Government (MSDB) and Golf Association of Macau. It is sanctioned by both the Asian Tour and the Golf Association of Macau, and promoted by IMG. The Venetian Macao is the title sponsor of the event for a third successive year.

Sponsors joining The Venetian Macao in support of the tournament include Rolex, Air Macau, Blue Girl, Lamborghini and Hong Kong Descente, which carries both the Le Coq Sportif Golf Collection, Twinwoods Wine and Munsingwear.

For more details on the Venetian Macau Open, please visit www.thevenetianmacauopen.com.

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For further information, please contact:

Martini Ip, Fast Track Hong Kong

Tel: +852 2616 2718

Email: martini.ip@fasttrackagency.com

Rights-free Photo

Photo 1: Indian’s Anirban Lahiri, the champion of the 16th Venetian Macau Open.

Photo 2: Scott Hend, one of the tournament's favourites to win this year, settled for second place after losing to Anirban Lahiri by one stroke.

Photo 3: Prom Meesawat scored a round of 66, or 5-under-par, to claim tied-second place with Australia's Scott Hend.

About Macau Sport Development Board of the Macau Special Administrative Region Government

Macau Sport Development Board, under the capacity of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macau SAR Government, is a public organization of administration autonomy. The organization is responsible for the implementation of sport strategy and policy formulated by the Macau SAR Government. Its objective is to stimulate, encourage, and promote all kind of sports in Macau, also to create an essential condition for sport development.

For the development of competitive sports and 'Sport for all', the Macau Sport Development Board organizes various high level international sport competitions as well as recreational classes and thematic 'Sport for all' activities each year, in an endeavor to promote the international status of Macau, reinforce communication and co-operation with other countries and cities, enhance citizens' quality of life and arouse their interest in sport, so as to accelerate and facilitate the enhancement of the level of sport in Macau.

For more information, please visit www.sport.gov.mo.

About Golf Association of Macau

Founded in 2000, the Golf Association of Macau is a non-profit organization, with the mission to promote, support and ensure the quality, traditions and development of the game of golf in Macau.

With the mission to encourage and promote golf in Macau, it provides coaching, training and selection of the Macau teams for participation in international events at all levels, and promotes and runs appropriate international and domestic golfing events in Macau, which helps to represent Macau in the golfing world and be a member of appropriate regional and world governing bodies.

About The Venetian® Macao-Resort-Hotel

Opened in 2007, The Venetian® Macao-Resort-Hotel is Macao's first integrated resort featuring stunning replicas of the famous canals and architectural icons of Venice, Italy. The Venetian Macao features 3,000 suites, 1.2 million square feet (111,000 square metres) of convention and meeting facilities as well as a 15,000-seat Cotai Arena designed for world-class sports events and electrifying entertainment. The Venetian Macao is also home to the unique, 1,800-seat luxury Venetian Theatre, hosting the best in international and Chinese entertainment; more than 30 renowned restaurants; TAIVEXMALO Day Hospital & Spa; the incredibly fun QUBE indoor playground and more than 300 retailers at Shoppes at Venetian. Outdoor recreation areas include swimming pools and cabanas and a mini-golf course.

For more information, please visit www.venetianmacao.com.

About Cotai Strip Resorts Macao – Macao's Integrated Resort City

Sands China Ltd. is the leading developer, owner and operator of integrated resorts in Macao. The befittingly named Cotai Strip Resorts Macao, situated on reclaimed land between the islands of Coloane and Taipa, is the one destination that provides a stunning array of experiences at the heart of Cotai. Cotai Strip Resorts Macao has transformed a gaming-centric day-trip market into an integrated resort city and international hub for business and leisure travellers.

Pulsating with life, both night and day, Cotai Strip Resorts Macao features an expansive offering of affordable luxury available nowhere else in Macao, with approximately 9,000 hotel rooms and suites, international superstar live entertainment, duty-free shopping with 600 retailers offering an unparalleled array of name brands, 1.3 million square feet (120,000 square metres) of meeting and exhibition space for Asia's leading conferences and exhibitions, gaming excitement, transportation offerings and well over 100 dining options, including international restaurants, bars and lounges. Cotai Strip Resorts Macao is a must-see destination providing every guest with an unforgettable experience and unparalleled excitement.

Comprised of The Venetian® Macao-Resort-Hotel; The Plaza™ Macao, featuring the Four Seasons Hotel Macao; and Sands® Cotai Central, featuring the world's largest Conrad, Sheraton, and Holiday Inn hotels, Cotai Strip Resorts Macao is where Asia's ultimate destination is all within reach.

Cotai Strip Resorts Macao...Macao Starts Here. For more information, please visit <http://en.cotaistrip.com>.

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 Abacus (Official Apparel Partner), Inetol Headwear (Official Headwear Sponsor), Oakley (Official Eyewear and Footwear Sponsor), PRG (Official Accessories Supplier), Saxo Capital Markets (Official Statistics Partner), Singha Beer (Official Beer), Srixon (Official Ball), Titleist (Official Web Partner) and Rolex (Official Timekeeper). The Asian Tour has offices in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Also, visit us at www.asiantour.com, www.facebook.com/asiantourgolf, www.twitter.com/asiantourgolf, www.youtube.com/theasiantour and www.weibo.com/asiantourgolf.

About IMG

IMG is a global leader in sports, fashion and media operating in more than 30 countries around the world. IMG's businesses include Events & Media, College, Golf, Tennis, Performance and IMG Academy, Fashion, Models, Clients, Consulting, Licensing, Joint Ventures, and creative management agency Art + Commerce. In 2014, IMG was acquired by WME, the world's leading entertainment and media agency. Together, the companies offer an unparalleled client roster; world-class partnerships with sponsors, brands and broadcasters; and marquee assets across entertainment, events and fashion.