

Beat: Sports

PROUD PARK STANDS TALL AT MISSION HILLS

Park Sung-hyun won China Ladies Open

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USPA NEWS - Korean Park Sung-hyun underlined her reputation as one of golf's rising female stars with a memorable wire-to-wire victory in the 10th Hyundai China Ladies Open at Mission Hills. Park Sung-hyun won 10th Hyundai China Ladies Open and get US\$110,000 check.

13 December 2015] Haikou, China: Korean Park Sung-hyun underlined her reputation as one of golf's rising female stars with a memorable wire-to-wire victory in the 10th Hyundai China Ladies Open at Mission Hills.

Producing an irresistible late charge, the 22-year-old Seoul native snared birdies at five of the final six holes on the award-winning Blackstone Course in Haikou.

In so doing she not only repelled the challenges of her illustrious compatriots Kim Joo-hyo and Chun In-gee but also ensured Korea's domination of the US\$550,000 event continued.

Koreans have now won all 10 editions of the tournament that is sanctioned by the Korea Ladies Professional Golf Association [KLPGA], the China Ladies Professional Golf Association [CLPGA] and the China Golf Association.

Thanks to her blistering finish, Park signed off with a closing five-under-par 67 to go with earlier rounds of 64 and 68. She collected a cheque for US\$110,000.

Her 54-hole aggregate of 17-under-par 199 was two shots clear of Kim, a two-time winner of the event and the defending champion.

Jang Su-yeon posted a third successive 68 to claim third spot while world number nine Chun, the top ranked player in the field, settled for fourth place on 205.

The leading non-Korean was Chinese Taipei's Chen Meng-chu in a share of 10th place while Shi Yuting had the distinction of finishing as the leading Chinese in joint 13th on 211.

But it was Park who was the star of the show, displaying commendable cool to take first prize in the final event of the 2015 CLPGA season and the opening leg of the 2016 KLPGA Tour.

Park said: "The Blackstone Course is beautiful! The grass on the fairways is the type I like but the grass on the greens is different from Korea, which makes it more difficult.

"I played well for the back nine holes which was my initial strategy for this course.

"This is a good start for the new season. I am happy to get my first win outside of my home country. The KLPGA money title has definitely come into my mind now. I'll do my best next season to make it happen."

Two shots ahead of Kim at the start of the final round, Park, a three-time winner on the KLPGA in 2015 and 33rd in the world ranking at the start of the week, saw her overnight lead evaporate after just five holes.

By the turn, it was Kim who held a two-stroke advantage which she extended to three with her fifth birdie of the day at the 10th. But

Park clawed her way back to draw level after 14 holes.

It was to be the par-three 15th that proved pivotal. While Kim could only manage a bogey-four, Park rolled home a putt for a birdie-two.

Two shots in front again, Park then matched her playing partner blow-for-blow over the final three holes to secure one of the most important successes of her fledgling career.

Tenniel Chu, Mission Hills Group Vice Chairman, said: "We are honoured to have hosted the Hyundai China Ladies Open for the second year in succession. Congratulations to Park Sung-hyun on her wonderful victory. We're delighted that she enjoyed herself so much and played so well here at Mission Hills.

"Our award-winning Blackstone Course provided a fitting test for participants and made for spectacular viewing for spectators at the course and those who tuned in to watch the action on television.

"During the tournament, we were privileged to witness world-class golf "" not just from our Korean visitors, but also from a handful of young Chinese players.

"What a wonderful experience for them to be able to play alongside Major champions such as Chun In-gee and Kim Hyo-joo at this early stage in their careers.

"There is a famous saying that goes: A nation strengthens along with its young generation. As the world's largest golf club, we always strive to create different kinds opportunities for the young generation." [?]

Chu said Mission Hills will continue to place a strong emphasis on family and friendship and encourages greater participation by female and junior players.

Proving true to those words, one of the highlights of the Hyundai China Ladies Open week was the staging of a junior golfing clinic.

No fewer than 600 children participated in the clinic that followed Saturday's second round with Korean Ahn Shin-ae among the five professionals who handed out tips and advice to the excited youngsters.

Each year, Mission Hills hosts more than 40 junior tournaments, while many of golf's best-known figures, including Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, Greg Norman, Annika Sorenstam, Justin Rose and Ian Poulter, have taken time out to share their knowledge at clinics for kids during their visits to the club.

Furthermore, Mission Hills boasts a proud record of achievement in women's golf. As well as the Hyundai China Ladies Open, Mission Hills hosts the innovative World Ladies Championship, the Annika Invitational junior girls' tournament and the Ladies European Tour's Lalla Aicha Tour School 2016 "" Pre-Qualifier Asia, which was held in Haikou for the first time last month.

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