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Press Release

For Immediate Publication

Dodt is Avantha Masters Champion, Gangjee Best Indian

Gurgaon, India, February 13: Australia's Andrew Dodt savoured the winning feeling for the first time by lifting the inaugural Avantha Masters trophy after carding a final round four-under-par 68 on Sunday.

Dodt's winning total of 14-under-par 274 was enough for him to win his maiden Asian Tour title by a single shot ahead of England's Richard Finch who closed with a 66 to take second place on 275.

"This has been my third week in a roll and I was just hoping for a good week this week. I stayed patient today and did what I had to do and I'm really happy that I won," said a delighted Dodt who took home the winner's prize purse of €250,000.

With as many as seven players starting the final round tied for the lead, the contest at the €1.5 million (approximately US\$2.1 million) tri-sanctioned event between the Asian Tour, European Tour and Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) was always going to be a keenly fought one.

From an Indian point of view Rahil Gangjee, who was tied for lead overnight, shot a 74 and ended at nine-under 279 in tied 14th place.

Gangjee seemed in control with steady pars over the first five holes before landing his first birdie on sixth. Three more pars saw him turn in one-under and a fine birdie on 10th made it 13-under and put him into shared lead again.

The bogey on the 14th seemed to be the beginning of unraveling as he first dropped a shot on the par-5 and then nerves got the better of him and he bogeyed the last three in a row to fall from overnight tied first to tied 14th at finish.

Gangjee was so upset that he was lost for words. "I don't know what happened. I will just need to look into it properly," he said as he quickly left the course.

Jyoti Randhawa shot a 70 and finished tied 18th. Arjun Atwal (73) and Digvijay Singh (70) were tied for 38th and Ashok Kumar (71) was tied 52nd.

Japan's Tetsuji Hiratsuka posted a 71 to take a share of fourth place alongside Scotland's David Drysdale and England's Barry Lane and Richard Bland on matching 276s at the DLF Golf and Country Club.

However, it was the 24-year Australian who eventually prevailed by breaking out of the crowd pack with a closing birdie on the par-five-18th for his career breakthrough on the Asian Tour.

"To win a professional golf tournament is absolutely huge. I've come close a few times and to actually pull it off is a dream come true," said Dodt.

Following his two top-10s on the Asian Tour last season, Dodt continued his brilliant early season form with a runner-up finish in New Zealand last month and a top-10 in Australia last week.



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Starting the day in tied-eighth, Dodt birdied holes two, six and eight to reach the halfway turn in 33.

He bogeyed the 11th hole but went back to take a share of the lead after firing another birdie on the par-three 16th.

However, it was the all-important birdie on the 18th that gave Dodt the outright lead which he held on until the end.

“It was a huge relief when I birdied the 18th. I had a pretty good lie in the rough and I was deciding between which clubs to use. I decided to be more aggressive and hit a pretty good shot but it just didn’t turn,” said Dodt of his second shot which fell into the bunker.

“The bunker was fine as it was kind of a standard bunker shot and I managed to hit a good one,” added Dodt whose bunker shot fell within two feet of the pin which he tapped in for birdie and the win.

Finch posted his week’s best round score of 66 but it was still not good enough to force a play-off with Dodt. However despite his best efforts, the Englishman was content to play the bridesmaid role this week.

“It was good to put a last round together because I started four shots off the lead and there were a lot of people between me and the guys at the top so it was always going to take something special to win,” said Finch.

Crowd favourite Gangjee was clearly the centre of attention of the huge galleries who had come to the DLF Golf and Country Club to cheer him on. However they were left disappointed after three successive bogeys from the 16th hole derailed his chances of ending his six-year title drought.

“It was a disappointing round and I look forward to a better week,” said a disappointed Gangjee who had started his round tied for the lead.

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