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Day One Goes To The South African

THE CANADIAN PRESS 



Goosen Combined Accurate Approaches With Stellar Putting To Take Day One - All Image Credits Jeff Sutherland/insideGOLF

Dirk Meissner, The Canadian Press

It's called the TELUS **World** Skins Game for a reason. There are five competitors from five different countries playing in the winner take all affair. And on Day one, it was the South Africa that came out on top.

VICTORIA - South African golfer Retief Goosen's five birdies Monday helped him bag five skins and \$75,000, while Canadian Mike Weir was skunked on the first day of play at the 2010 Telus Skins Game.

Goosen, fresh from a frustrating performance at the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, said the birdies and perfect conditions at Bear Mountain Resort went a long way toward erasing unpleasant memories about Pebble Beach.

"I hit a lot of good shots and obviously putting is the big thing," he said at a post-play press conference. "The greens are perfect. If you start it on line, it goes in, unlike last week."

Goosen said he hopes his game stays with him Tuesday, "when all the big money is."



Mike Was Shut Out On Day One And Will Be Looking To Rebound On Day Two
The first hole Tuesday includes carry-over prize money from Monday, that makes it worth \$80,000.

Goosen said he recently returned to the golf tour after missing two months with a broken finger.

Englishman Ian Poulter captured one skin worth \$15,000.

Poulter said he appreciated participating in an easygoing skins event after being in the pressure-cooker that is the U.S. Open.

"This is a lot less stressful than last week," he said. "There's one guy that at the end of the week walks off real

happy. It's a very difficult test of golf (the U.S. Open). It's a year away, thank God."

Poulter cracked up laughing in mid-swing at Bear Mountain when a confused or mistaken fan yelled: "Bend it like Becker."

Poulter, wearing purple-framed sunglasses with psychedelic-tinted lenses, continued laughing, wondering if the fan really meant to say bend it like English soccer star David Beckham or retired German tennis player Boris Becker.

Camilo Villegas of Colombia and veteran Fred Couples of the United States, like Weir, also were shutout Monday.

The five golfers will play another nine holes Tuesday for a prize total of \$360,000.

Weir appeared to be carrying his struggles from the U.S. Open to Bear Mountain, where he challenged for at least two skins, but fought his drives and putts.



England's Ian Poulter Played Well And Earned One Skin Worth \$15,000

"The greens were perfect coming from where we just did," he said. "It's nice to see the ball really roll nice. It had a lot of fun holes to play."

Thousands of fans followed the golfers, with most cheering on Weir, but warming to Goosen whose strong drives and birdie touch quickly made him the favourite.

"Come on Retief, give them a chance," said one fan as the rangy Goosen was preparing to drive off the sixth hole.



Bear Mountain's Slopes Provided Some Great Views For The Huge Galleries

B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell attended the event, exclaiming: "These guys are good, eh."

search...

he low score on each hole wins the prize money for that hole. If there is a tie for the low score on any hole, the money is carried over to the next hole until there is a low-score winner.

National Menu

The skins money is set at: \$15,000 for holes one to six; \$20,000 for holes seven to 12 and \$25,000 for holes 13 to 18.

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Previous pros competing at past Canadian skins games were: Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, Greg Norman, John Daly, Vijay Singh, Sergio Garcia, Phil Mickelson and Tom Watson.

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Telus is donating proceeds from the event to Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children in support of Jeneece Place, a proposed home away from home for children and their families who travel to Victoria for specialized pediatric treatment.

The Bear Mountain Resort, boasting two 36-hole Jack Nicklaus-designed courses, first opened in 2003.

The Mountain is a par 72, 7,212-yard course that offers challenging terrain and mountain-top ocean views. The par 71, 6,807-yard Valley course is less challenging and is set just above sea level.

Couples is making his 11th appearance at a Canadian skins event.

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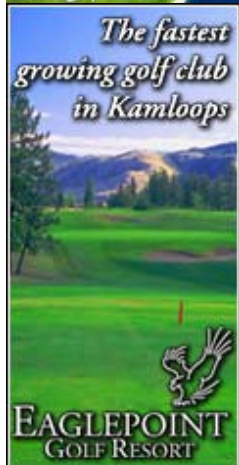
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