



Press Release No. 8

Hickory Golf Masters SA

# Markus Brier's most stylish triumph came at the Hickory Masters 2026

Lugano, 21-05-2026

**Golfing history was made on Lake Como on 13–14 May 2026: after a dramatic final day, Markus Brier won the first major tournament in the history of hickory golf, the Hickory Masters 2026. Players and spectators at the 100-year-old Circolo Golf Villa d'Este witnessed the start of a tradition and the birth of a legend.**

The final putt of the Hickory Masters 2026 has been made, the scorecards signed, and the figures on the scoreboard carefully updated. The rows of names and scores have been rearranged, and the first major winner of the Hickory Masters is finally confirmed: Markus Brier. With an impressive final push over the last three holes – a chip-in for par on the 16<sup>th</sup>, followed by back-to-back birdies on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> – the Austrian overtook the leader at the halfway stage, Paolo Quirici of Switzerland, who scored 68 strokes on Day 1. Brier won on the Villa d'Este course with a total score of 141 strokes (three over par).

As his rivals – including three former Hickory world champions, as well as internationally successful tour professionals such as Thomas Gögele (Germany), Andrew Marshall (England), Per Nyman (Sweden), Emanuele Canonica (Italy), Jean-François Remésy (France), Iain Forrester (Scotland) and Gary Orr (Scotland) – offer their congratulations, a silversmith got to work in a quiet room. With a steady hand, he engraves the winner's name onto a small silver plate, which he then nails onto the trophy's wooden base. Markus Brier is the first to have his name immortalised on the 'Silver Rake Niblick'.

## **Authentic, stylish, unique**

The newly crowned Hickory Masters champion receives his trophy less than an hour later in the historic clubhouse of the 100-year-old Villa d'Este Golf Club. Having showered and changed into classic attire for the gala evening to follow, he expresses his delight at this very special tournament victory. "It's very special to be standing here today, seeing my name as the first on this trophy. Playing Hickory golf in its original form was a huge challenge, but also a



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very enriching experience. It was all the more special as, for the first time in a long while, my wife was my caddie at this tournament. She was a great support to me and understood the game very well, even with the hickory clubs, which were unfamiliar to me.”

It is worthy of a major that the name of the newly crowned winner is already engraved on the trophy at the awards ceremony. Furthermore, there are many other details that contribute to making the Hickory Masters 2026 the most stylish and authentic hickory tournament of our time. Perry Somers, the Australian 2010 Hickory World Champion, has high praise for the tournament: “It's unique and wonderful that this tournament is exactly as it was in the interwar period. There are only original clubs, no replicas. There are no rangefinders, no trolleys and no buggies – I love it! Everyone walks, even at 82 and even on this hilly course,” he says, glancing at Andrew Gauld, the oldest professional in the field.

### **A lot of feel in the hands and a smooth swing**

Thirty-seven gentleman golfers from sixteen nations – Australia, Austria, England, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong/China, Italy, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA – took to the Circolo Golf Villa d'Este on Lake Como on 13–14 May 2026 to make history at the first major tournament in hickory golf. Among them were experienced hickory golfers and ambitious tour professionals for whom the Hickory Masters offered not only fame, glory and a place in golfing history, but also a total of €30,000 in prize money. The latter first had to get used to the historic clubs. This was a process that most of them managed quite quickly, and it put a sparkle in everyone's eyes on the course.

Seven of the 14 professionals competing in the tournament, including Markus Brier, played with a set of clubs borrowed from the Hickory Golf Masters Museum in Lugano, Switzerland. At the start of the tournament week, the professionals selected their hickory clubs from the museum's collection of over 1,500 items. “The professionals played a practice round and two tournament rounds with the historic clubs, and not a single one broke. That proves that the restoration work carried out at the HGM Museum was successful” said Paolo Quirici, co-founder of Hickory Golf Masters SA, with delight.

“It's a different game” with hickory clubs, said the tour professionals in unison. Thomas Gögele, who moved up to second place with a round of 70 on the final day, explained: “With this equipment, it's all about rhythm and feel. The shafts are much softer than those of modern golf clubs. If I try too hard with the hickory driver and go full throttle, everything goes wrong. These small club heads need to be struck very precisely. Playing with these historic clubs is a great experience because it requires such a rhythmic swing.”

His French tour colleague Jean-François Remésy seemed utterly enchanted. “I love hickory golf. It's simply brilliant and a fantastic experience. It's great fun with these clubs and the soft



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ball. The short game around the green is completely different, but feels brilliant. I'm so happy to be here."

### **Here to stay**

This unique tournament lived up to its 'Masters' title in every respect, and the field of participants was small but select. There is no more stylish or authentic way to experience hickory golf in the third millennium. Nor is there a more international one. Wayne Xing, President of the Society of China Hickory Golfers, travelled from Hong Kong specially to watch the tournament as an enthusiastic spectator.

The first major Hickory golf tournament has now been played. It will not be the last. At the gala dinner, Sergey Sarkisants, one of the founders of Hickory Golf Masters SA, announced that the event would continue. "We'll see you in 2028 for the second edition." The date and venue will be announced in due course.



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## ABOUT HICKORY GOLF MASTERS SA

Hickory Golf Masters SA (HGM) is a Swiss company devoted to honouring golf's earliest traditions. From materials to etiquette, we uphold the authentic spirit of the game – without compromise. Through its four divisions (museum, tournaments, club, shop), HGM upholds hickory golf's rules of play, etiquette, materials, and cultural heritage, while building a global community that shares its devotion. We do not merely preserve history; we continue it.

HGM was co-founded by Paolo Quirici, Switzerland's most accomplished professional golfer and 2013 World Open Hickory Champion. His deep passion for hickory golf defines our vision. Alongside him stands Sergey Sarkisians, fellow enthusiast and strategic mind behind the company's development. Together, they embody our dual pursuits: heritage and excellence.

For further details and information, please visit the website of Hickory Golf Masters SA <https://hgm.golf/press> or contact:

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