

# Late Birdie Charge Sees Zhang Lead Volvo China Open

*The destiny of the 27th Volvo China Open will go to the wire in Shenzhen on Sunday with six shots separating seven players*

SHENZHEN, GUANGDONG, CHINA, December 18, 2021 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- Jin Zhang will take a narrow one-shot lead into the final day of the 27th Volvo China Open after a third round 66 took him to 7-under par at the Shenzhen Genzon Golf Club.

The 26-year-old leads by one from overnight leader Yue Liu (6-under) with Guxin Chen in third just one shot adrift on 5-under. Winner of the 2016 Volvo China Open Haotong Li is also well within range in fourth place on four-under par with the final round of China's National Open Golf Championship taking place on Sunday (December 19).

“

I know I have the skills, it's just a matter of mentality. I think I have a chance so I'll go out tomorrow with no pressure on myself - no expectations - and just be happy”

*Jin Zhang, Volvo China Open leader*

Starting the day four shots behind Liu, Zhang was one-under through ten holes before bursting into life on the closing stretch, rolling in five of his seven birdies on the last eight holes for a storming inward nine of 31.

"It's not an easy course to play when the wind is very strong so I feel that I played very well," said Zhang, who admits his aim was just to make the weekend at the Volvo China Open and whose season's best in 2021 is a tie for sixth place at last month's Hengdian Championship.

"I was in a bad shape not too long ago so I'm just enjoying playing and have no high expectations of myself. This course is very difficult and requires great accuracy so my aim was just to make the cut. I know I have the skills, it's just a matter of mentality. I think I have a chance so I'll go out



A birdie blitz sees Jin Zhang lead the Volvo China Open with one round remaining

tomorrow with no pressure on myself - again, no expectations - and just be happy."

Overnight leader Liu, who honed his game at the Genzon Golf Academy, again plotted his way around a 7,145-course he knows almost inside out. Two birdies on the front nine helped him stay at the top of the leaderboard until Zhang's birdie blitz saw him snatch the lead on a day when low scoring was at a premium.

"I was a little nervous but I just have to focus on my own ball," said Liu. "But I have had a strategy over the first three days and, after some more putting practice, I will go out tomorrow and follow that strategy again."

With two DP World Tour titles to his name, Haotong Li carries considerable weight in the field, and despite an erratic season his presence in the leading groups could well prove influential going into the final round.

Although his third round was again punctuated with moments he'd rather forget - in particular a triple bogey seven - Li bounced back with seven

birdies and an outstanding eagle two on the last to card a round of 67 (-5) and resurrect his hope of becoming the first Chinese player to win the Volvo China Open on two occasions.

"I haven't felt good about my game this week but golf is like that - even if you feel good it doesn't mean you are going to play well... everything has to work well," he said after a five-under par 67. "The 18th was down wind and I was hoping to use it to at least get a birdie but I managed to cut it close and make eagle. Maybe I found some inspiration after that triple bogey on the fourth!"

Elsewhere, popular 17-year-old amateur Wenyi Ding saw his title chances suffer a huge setback thanks to a quadruple bogey nine on the 17th that saw him finish on 73 (+1) and drop him from a share of second place to six shots behind the leader in joint sixth.



Yue Liu - from overnight leader to one shot behind in the Volvo China Open



Haotong Li on his way to an eagle two on the 18th hole during round three of the Volvo China Open in Shenzhen

In the battle for top spot on the China Tour Prize Money Ranking List, Hong Kong's Jason Hak Shun-yat returned a 73 (+1) for a share of sixth place on one under, while Ranking leader Zhang Huilin moved into a tie for 14th place on three-over thanks to a level par 72. The player who ends the season at the top of the 2020-2021 China Tour Prize Money Ranking List will automatically receive full playing rights for the 2022 DP World Tour.

The final round of the 27th Volvo China Open will get underway at 8.30am on Sunday (December 19).

Now in its 27th consecutive year, the Volvo China Open is the season finale of the 2021 China Tour and the longest-running professional golf tournament on the Chinese mainland. The Volvo China Open, hosted by the China Golf Association and Guangdong Provincial Sports Bureau, is promoted and operated by Teamfirst Management Ltd., and certified by the China Tour

Volvo China Open - leading scores after 54 holes

209 (-7) Jin Zhang  
210 (-6) Yue Liu  
211 (-5) Guxin Chen  
212 (-4) Haotong Li  
214 (-2) Yanwei Liu  
215 (-1) Jason Hak Shun-Yat (HK), Wenyi Ding\*

(All China nationality unless stated otherwise)

\* Denotes amateur player

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