

**Cracking start:** Chiara was rewarded for her positive intent.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# Chiara's aggressive play hands her the early lead

The Swiss goes all out at the start, earning shots on three of her first four holes; Shannon, the only golfer to go bogey-free in the first round, sits tied-second; Pranavi and Avani joint fifth

INDIAN OPEN GOLF

**Uthra Ganesan**
GURUGRAM

Shannon Tan preferred consistency over flamboyance, playing a bogey-free opening round in her title defence of the Hero Women's Indian Open here on Thursday for a share of the second spot, even as Chiara Tamburlini rocked the DLF Golf and Country Club with aggressive play to go top of the leaderboard.

Chiara delivered a five-under 67 on a tricky course that has tested the best over the years, racking up seven birdies and dropping shots on the seventh and 15th holes to finish one stroke ahead of Shannon and Argentine Magdalena Simmermacher (tied on 68).

Pranavi Urs and Avani Prashanth led the Indian charge and were part of a five-way tie at fifth spot with two-under 70.

Shannon, playing a cautious game, was the only player to not drop a shot on the day, her four birdies – two each on the front and back nines – helping her stay close to the top.

The Singaporean later said that going "bogey-free" on the sloping, softer greens was good enough for a start.

"I hit it pretty well off the tee and in regulation. I actually missed a few shots out there, like the putts that didn't drop. But overall, I'm bogey-free, and I will take that any day, especially on this course."

The approach was a contrast to Chiara's, the Swiss beginning with a bang to earn shots on three of the first four holes. She added two more on consecutive holes – ninth and 10th – but bogeyed twice. Pranavi, meanwhile, was content with a sedate round that had her struggling at times to keep the ball in play, a bad stomach not helping matters.

**Top scores: 67:** Chiara Tamburlini (Sui); **68:** Shannon Tan (Sin), Magdalena Simmermacher (Arg); **69:** Sara Kouskova (Cze); **70:** Pranavi Urs, Lois Lau (Fra), Avani Prashanth, Eleanor Givens (Eng).