

Climbing the ladder: An improved performance helped Pranavi bounce back strongly. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chiara remains on top; Pranavi tied second

INDIAN OPEN GOLF

Uthra Ganesan
GURUGRAM

Chiara Tamburlini managed to hold on to her slender lead at the top even as Pranavi Urs stayed within striking distance and local favourite Vani Kapoor willed herself back into contention on day two of the Hero Women's Indian Open.

The tricky and challenging DLF Golf and Country Club stayed true to its reputation, testing the best and punishing every mistake as the overnight leaders struggled and the disciplined stroke-players survived on Friday. After a roller-coaster opening round, Chiara was more in control, starting the day with a birdie on the 10th hole. She followed it with an uneventful back nine, parring the remaining eight to make the turn on one-under 35. A bogey-birdie to finish off on the last two holes helped her end with 71 for a two-day total of 138, two shots adrift of Pranavi and Magdalena Simmermacher of Argentina at tied second.

Pranavi, who bogeyed the 10th to start with, had a better outing on the second day, sinking three birdies on the front nine to finish with a two-under 70 for the second day running even as Magdalena parred for the day. But the biggest cheer was for Vani on her home course.

The 32-year-old ensured she would maintain her record of never missing the cut here in her 14th outing, shooting a 69 for the day – the lowest score of round two and one of only two golfers to do so. That included an eagle on the par-4 14th.

Defending champion Shannon Tan, meanwhile, slipped to tied-15th after a horror run – five bogeys and a double bogey – on the front nine for a five-over 73 for the day.

Top scores (day two):
138: Chiara Tamburlini (Sui);
140: Pranavi Urs, Magdalena Simmermacher (Arg); **141:** Sara Kouskova (Cze), Dorthea Forbrigd (Nor), Camille Chevalier (Fra).