

QATAR MASTERS ATTRACTS THE WORLD'S **TOP STARS**

Pick of the day

The Commercialbank Qatar Masters.

www.qatar-masters.com

Tel: +974 44960712/5

By Staff Reporter

Four of the top seven players in the world will be in action as the 14th Commercialbank Qatar Masters gets underway at the Doha Golf Club tomorrow.

The \$2.5m (Dh 9.18m) tournament presented by Dolphin Energy is the third leg of the Desert Swing and features the world's top two in Lee Westwood and Martin Kaymer along with world No6 Paul Casey, who will be in buoyant mood having won the inaugural Volvo Golf Champions tournament in Bahrain at the weekend.

The field also include's world No10 Ian Poulter, 2007 champion Retief Goosen and eight other former winners who have all succeeded in taming the notorious 7,388-yard desert course over the years, including big hitting Alvaro Quiros.

The Spaniard won in style in 2009 and followed that up with a second place finish last year as he was edged out by Sweden's Robert Karlsson.

Third on that occasion was Westwood, who is keen to make amends for that disappointment when he makes his sixth consecutive appearance as he battles for his first ever title in Qatar.

Going into the final round 12 months ago, Westwood was just one shot off the lead but after cracking the face of his driver he found it hard to find the fairways



Having a ball: Ian Poulter will be competing in Qatar.



On the up: Martin Kaymer has already made it to world No2.

using a new club on a course the 36-year-old firmly believes to be suited to his style of play.

"It's a golf course that suits me down to the ground really," he said. "When you get rough like Doha, you would say it's a good driver's golf course so I would expect it to

suit me.

"It's almost like a major championship setup - a US Open - with firm greens and thick rough.

"With its firm greens, you can get close to the flags - but you need to be mentally strong as it is a thinking man's golf course."

"The event continues to go from strength to strength"

- Hassan Al Nuaimi

Obviously proud to be world number one and with no doubts as to his mental fortitude, Westwood will once again go into 2011 intent on landing his first Major having watched fellow European Tour stars Kaymer, Louis Oosthuizen and Graeme McDowell lift three of golf's big four titles in 2010.

Staged by the Qatar Golf Association (QGA) in collaboration with the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and Commercialbank, the tournament enjoys a close relationship with more than 20 key sponsors.

"We work closely with all of them to make sure the tournament maintains its reputation as one of the best events on The European Tour," said QGA President Hassan Al Nuaimi.

"Having an existing sponsor sign up once again is a positive indication that the event continues to go from strength to strength."

Ever since 1998, the Club has hosted the prestigious Qatar Masters tournament and is held in January as part of the European and Asian PGA tours schedule. The course is designed by Peter Harradine who is one of the world's leading golf course architects.

"It is always a pleasure to welcome back our former champions," said Andrew Stevens, Group CEO of Commercialbank, title sponsor and organiser of the event in collaboration with the QGA and the QOC. Entry to the event is free.



Getty/Gallo Images

Getty/Gallo Images