

WITH SGSC SPORT360° GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP, IT'S...

TEE TIME IN SHARJAH

Pick of the day

Chance for amateurs and pros to test their skills at the Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club
www.golfandshootingshj.com

By Kenny Laurie

Were you there to witness Rory McIlroy pull out a string of birdies to win the DP World Championship and Justin Rose's 100 foot putt that almost won it?

It's hard not to be inspired by some of the incredible golf that is exhibited on these shores and for those feeling motivated, there is the perfect amateur tournament.

Entries close midnight today for the fifth edition of the Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club Sport360° Men's Open Golf Championship.

The 36-hole strokeplay event is open to amateurs and professionals and will be held over the weekend of December 14 to 15, and is a qualifier for the EGF Men's Amateur Order of Merit. At present, 91 competitors have entered with the lowest 69 making the handicap ballot.

"From the current entry list, we are already guaranteed a very strong field," said SGSC director of golf, Martin Duff.

"I would expect a few more entries over the next couple of days and the expected handicap ballot to be at around 11 or 12.



Do you have it in you? Only players with a handicap under 20 can qualify.

"It's great to see such support from the golfing community and we are sure the competitors will enjoy both the condition of the course, the high profile coverage from event sponsors and the genuine tournament conditions the event is played under."

Two-time champion **Michael Harradine** (JAGRS) will start as pre-tournament favourite with the likes of Simon Dunn, Greg Holmes and local professionals Andy Andrews and Steve Chambers very

much in the hunt.

From the amateur ranks, the field boasts seven scratch handicappers with Miki Mirza (DCGYC), Vikram Judge (EGC), Paul King (DCGYC) and SGSC champion Nathan Fisher all boasting good track records on the course and have a genuine chance to do well.

Defending champion **Harradine's father Peter** designed the course in Sharjah – as well as many others across the region – and Duff thinks Harradine junior is still

the man to beat. "He has to be the favourite," said Duff.

"He's played three men's opens this year and won all three. Nobody would argue that he isn't head and shoulders above all the other amateurs.

"There are a few professionals like Simon Dunn, who is a serious contender, but I think most people would back Harradine."

Duff has been involved with golf in the UAE since the late 1990s and he believes tournaments like the SGSC Sport360° championship have helped breed a generation of golfers.

"I've been here since 1999 and I was very actively involved in the development of [grass roots] golf," said Duff.

"To be honest, considering the number of golfers we have in the country, we have created a lot of very good golfers; a few have turned professionals. There is an excellent competitive amateur golfing scene out here."

Players can only enter if they have a handicap under 20.

What: Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club Sport360° Men's Open Golf Championship

When: December 14-15

Where: Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club

Contact & information: To enter, contact SGSC Golf Reservations before midnight today, on 06 5487777 or send an email to golfres@golfandshootingshj.com