

# LAWRIE TO DEFEND TITLE AT COMMERCIAL BANK QATAR MASTERS

Monday, 17 December 2012

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Ryder Cup star Paul Lawrie has confirmed he will attempt to win a record third Commercial Bank Qatar Masters title next month to add to his victories in 1999 and February 2012.

The 43-year-old is the event's second two-time champion, following Australian Adam Scott, who won in 2002 and 2008.

The 16th Commercial Bank Qatar Masters will, for the first time, be played from Wednesday to Saturday, January 23-26, at Doha Golf Club, positioning the US\$2.5 million event at the heart of The European Tour's three-week Middle East swing.

Now enjoying a 'second wind' in his career, Lawrie won two European Tour titles in 2012, finished tenth in The Race To Dubai with more than €1.9 million, reached a career-high World Ranking and beat Brandt Snedeker in the Singles to help Europe retain The Ryder Cup.

Although hot off what he describes as the most consistent season of his career, the 1999 Open Champion has tempered expectations of another victory in Doha.

"It's a tournament I enjoy, where I've not only won twice but had a lot of good finishes," said Lawrie. "It'll be my third event of 2013 so I should be game sharp, more than I would be if it was my first event."

"I know the course well, as we've played there many times. I look forward to going back, but there are very few people who go to tournaments and successfully defend. Obviously you go there with good feelings, but sometimes that holds you back a wee bit, makes it harder to win again."

Although strong winds on the Friday reduced this year's Commercial Bank Qatar Masters to 54 holes, Lawrie was in his element on the 7,374-yard Championship Course. Adept at keeping the ball low and nicknamed 'Chippy' for his short-game prowess, the Scot chipped in twice during a closing 65 which gave him a 15 under par total of 201 for a four-stroke win.

Aberdeen born and bred, Lawrie relishes the winter conditions in Qatar as they combine with **Peter Harradine's** all-grass design at Doha Golf Club to resemble the golf he is used to playing in Scotland.