



# EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT... ABU DHABI GOLF CLUB



**T**HE Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship has attracted some of the game's biggest stars over the 10 years of its existence and last month's tournament was no different as World No.1 Jordan Spieth succumbed to the lure of Abu Dhabi Golf Club for the first time and was joined by World No.3 Rory McIlroy along with eventual champion and new World No.4 Rickie Fowler. While prize fund and appearance money undoubtedly play their

part, the fabulous golf course has a lot to do with the allure of the Desert Swing's opening event. As the action unfolded in Abu Dhabi last month, Worldwide Golf spoke to some of the professionals to find out which holes make the biggest impression on them and why. The pros also offered some tips to help us mere mortals during a round at the famous course.

## Thomas Bjørn



**Favourite Hole:** My favourite hole on this golf course has got to be Hole 9.

**Why?** It's a tough driving hole that leaves you with a demanding second shot. Everybody else thinks it's tough so every time I play this hole it's a challenge that I enjoy.

**Tip for Hole 9:** Hit the fairway or you're in trouble!

## Lee Slattery



**Favourite Hole:** It has to be the final hole – Hole 18.

**Why?** It's a great amphitheater that can suit all types of players. The shorter hitters can still have a go at the green on their second shot so it's a very fair par five. It's a tight drive and then a 'risk and reward' second shot. It's a brilliant hole to conclude a round here in the UAE capital.

**Tips for playing this course:** You've really got to have a great touch with the putter to score well. The greens run around 13 on the stimp meter, which is incredibly fast. The amateurs usually love fast greens because you have more chance of your putts rolling in.

## David Horsey



**Favourite Hole:** They have made quite a few changes at the Abu Dhabi Golf Club this year and I think a lot of them are very good. My favourite hole has now become the 7th.

**Why?** They have made the green much wider which brings the right flag in and the water into play so it's a far more intriguing hole. It

**Tips for Hole 7:** If you're going for the green over the water, make sure you stick to the left so you avoid getting wet.

## Eddie Pepperell



**Favourite Hole:** It's a fantastic golf course but if I had to pick one hole it would be the 18th.

**Why?** It's such a fun hole with a narrow drive and an eagle opportunity on the long thin green if everything goes to plan. The grandstand to the left makes it so exciting when you are playing your second shot. The 18th is an amazing hole to finish on.

**Tip:** Hit the ball straight because you're not getting very far if you land in the rough.

## Mike Weir



**Most Challenging Hole:** Hole 14 has got to be one of the most difficult holes on the golf course.

**Why?** It's a very demanding tee shot and is massive for a par 4. The hole involves a dogleg to the left and if you don't hit the fairway from the tee, you're not reaching the green in two shots because the rough is very penal here at Abu Dhabi Golf Club. You are lucky to hit the balls 60 or 70 yards from this. After the tee shot, your second shot is about 220-240 yards away from the hole so you see a lot of over par scores on the 14th.

**Tip for Hole 14:** Play it almost like a par 5 if you're an amateur and stay to the right because it's close to 500 yards. The key to this golf course is to keep the ball in the fairway because the rough is so deep.



## Victor Dubuisson

**Favourite Hole:** Hole 18 is the one I enjoy the most at Abu Dhabi Golf Club.

**Why?** It's a beautiful par five that you can reach in two if you hit a good drive. I think it's one of the best finishes on The European Tour.

**Tip for Hole 18:** I'm going to make it sound easy. Hit a driver onto the fairway, fairway wood onto the green and then two putt. Wish it was as simple as that.

**Most Challenging Hole:** Hole 14.

**Why?** Because it's the longest par 4 on the course.



## Felipe Aguilar

**Favourite Hole:** I love Hole 15.

**Why?** Because you see quite a few hole-in-ones on this par three. Most of the holes are long and can be punishing so it's enjoyable to have an easier par three on the card.

**Tips for this course:** Take some power off your drives if there's a chance of them going wayward because you're in trouble if you land in the rough.





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# ABU DHABI GOLF CLUB RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Abu Dhabi Golf Club was honoured at the 2016 PGA Merchandise Show in Orange County, Florida with a prestigious Platinum Award from the Association of Golf Merchandisers in recognition of the exemplary standard of its Golf Shop.

"We're delighted to receive this esteemed award," said Abu Dhabi Golf Club General Manager Paul Booth. "We're very proud of our

Golf Shop which offers a huge range of well known brands as well as official merchandise from the Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship.

"We place a great deal of emphasis on guest service and our knowledgeable sales team do a fantastic job."

One of the highlights of Abu Dhabi Golf Club's Golf Shop is the one-to-one custom club fitting service which allows guests to

get their clubs set up exactly right for their individual swing characteristics using state of the art TrackMan technology.

"Having your clubs correctly fitted is hugely important," continued Booth, "and we're delighted to have that service available on site so guests can leave with their new clubs, knowing that they are set up properly for them."