

## Golf: Exciting action on the cards as Europe take on Asia-Pacific at DGC



The Bonallack Trophy has historically been a spring board for some of the talented amateur men players to hog the spotlight and take a big step into the highly demanding professional circuit.

Come March 8, Europe's 12 best amateur men and women players will square off to the best of players from Asia-Pacific team in match-play format at the Doha Golf Club in a three -day event.

The European Golf Association (EGA) feels that many a potential pro champion are waiting in the wings and the Qatar event will be a perfect stage for the promising players to dazzle the golf fans.

"It is great fun to come together and play this matches every two years. We have 24 players who are eager to go (and play). We love the rivalry and we know we are coming with a stronger and stronger team from Asia-pacific. The challenge is getting more and more difficult for us. So, we are prepared for that," said Richard Heath, General Secretary of EGA while addressing a press conference here yesterday.

"We are proud of our sport and proud of our players. It is an exciting part for us to see this amazing talent and who is going to be the greatest golfer in the world," he added.

"We are bringing them along and we are helping them to be the stepping stone in their careers. To be selected as one of the 12 best players from Europe gives them the confidence," Heath said.

The Bonallack Trophy, started in 1998 in the name of Englishman Michael Bonallack, has seen the likes of Rory McLroy, Chris Wood, Jon Rahm and Hideki Matsuyama dazzling at the biannual event in the past editions.

The men will be vying for the Bonallack Trophy while the women will try to lay their hands on the Patsy Hankins silverware in the two events, to be held from March 8-10, at the **Peter Harradine** designed course.

The World Amateur Golf Ranking will be used as the main reference in addition to a number of captain's picks. According to the match conditions, no more than two players may be selected from the same country.

"The format is very similar to the Ryder Cup. The first two days, of the three days format, will comprise five foursomes matches each morning and five four-ball matches each afternoon. On the final day, all twelve team players will compete in singles match play. A win will count as one point, a half yields half a point and a lost match will return zero. In the event of a tie, the trophy shall be retained by the holders," Heath said. Asia Pacific Golf Confederation Chairman Keisuke Muratsu said EGA is a 'big brother' association.

"We are learning a lot from them. Not only for the players, but the administrators, leaders of the European golf, so we are following what they have following over the years. Asia Pacific is producing great players and the gap between the teams is getting narrower."

Fahad Nasser Al Naimi, Qatar Golf Association (QGA), General Secretary said all the logistics for hosting the event are in place.

"We are looking forward to an exciting event. It will help promote golf among our youth and make it more popular." Mohammed Faisal Al Naimi, Executive Director, QGA was also present for the press conference.