



Peter Harradine designed and co-designed over 160 golf courses

“Every golf course is a big garden”

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Some of the UAE’s most ambitious amateur golfers gathered at the Creek Golf Club this week for the Audi quattro Cup – the world’s most popular tournament series for amateur golfers. The venue is a place close to Peter Harradine’s heart. The Swiss is the Principal and Senior Architect of “Harradine Golf” which is a company with offices in the UAE that has designed, constructed, re-modeled and supervised the construction of over 200 golf courses in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

“Our landscaping company Orient Irrigation Services together with Al Naboodah was responsible for the construction of the up-grading of the

Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club course which was originally designed by Karl Litten”, he says. For Peter Harradine every golf course is a big garden. Harradine is an avid golfer himself, who has retired from playing due to a back injury. With a former handicap of 5 he has now moved on to being a spectator, but still encourages his sons and his design team to play. He considers most of the golf courses he designed around the world to be his second home and is proud of being the mastermind behind some great golf courses in the Arabian Gulf, including the Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa Golf Course, Doha Golf Club in Qatar, the National at the Abu Dhabi Golf Club, The Sharjah Golf and Shooting Club and the Al Hamra Golf Course in Ras Al Khaimah.



You designed some of the greatest golf courses in the Arabian Gulf. How would you characterize a perfect golf course?

For the majority of golfers in the UAE and the rest of the world a good golf course is not really about the site, layout or how challenging it is. They're judging the course by their own success. For them the course evaluation is simple: good score – good course, bad score – bad course. I try to design my courses so that they are

easy to play but difficult to score. And most golfers do not see the beauty around them; they concentrate on only the ball. Playing golf is like being in a rally – you focus on the track, you cannot unwind.

What is your favorite golf course?

I like the Emirates Golf Course in Dubai. It was the first course in the UAE and I have some fond memories playing there with my sons. The National in Abu Dhabi I favor because of the parkland character, that was

Interview



created out of a white salt flat, and the various options it offers for the players.

What is the biggest challenge in designing a golf course?

It is important for me and my team to rely on the natural preservation and integration of the existing topography and environment. We try to improve or enhance the particular features of each site in order to create a unique course for that particular location and not just a copy of one of the courses built elsewhere. We want to deliver courses that are a challenge to good players whilst avoiding unnecessary hazards and frustrations to the less experienced golfer.

Furthermore each course should reflect the region; it should be a local, distinct and unique experience.

What is so fascinating about this sport?

Golf is a very strategic game. You never get bored.

How do you rate the popularity of this sport in the UAE and the quality of the game?

The standard of golf in the Middle East is better than in Europe. Although most golfers are playing just for fun, they love to compete. If you play golf, you like to reduce your handicap and prove your abilities.