

Harradine to embrace the Challenge at RAK

Son of course designer will hit opening tee shot in the inaugural event

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MENA Golf Tour in Kuwait so that I can practice and get my game back in shape.

“The RAK Open win was good, but we are playing the Challenge Tour event from the back tees and the golf course is a different animal from there. I am hitting a lot of long irons into the greens, so my long game has to be on song for me to do well.”

Asked if his preparation included detailed study of his father’s blue-prints of the golf course, Harradine said: “I have an advantage over others because I do know the golf course. But it is not a very tricky course, the layout is quite straightforward. It’s not an over-complicated golf course that you need to play several times to get a hang of.”

The early morning tee time today is not ideal for Harradine, but he is looking at the bright side.

“I am not exactly a morning person, but I will have to look at the advantages. The wind will probably be down and the greens will be in their best conditions without any spike marks. As long as I can get up that early and find my way to the first tee, I should be okay,” he said.

Meanwhile, former UAE resident, Sweden’s Johan Edfors, is hoping to take advantage of familiar conditions and improve his position in the Road to Oman Rankings.

Going into the penultimate event of the season, following which the top-46 players qualify for next week’s NBO Golf Classic Grand Final, Edfors is ranked 41st. Only the top-15 after the Oman tournament get their European Tour



The insider: Michael Harradine.



tournament, drawn to hit the first tee shot at 6:30am as history is made when the northern Emirate hosts its first-ever European Challenge Tour event.

Harradine qualified for the tournament by winning the Emirates Amateur Open in March, and is excited about his second Challenge Tour start after the first did not go too well for him. He also won the RAK Open on the golf course last week with scores of 73 and 69.

“That was about four years ago in Switzerland when I was part of the national team. I played a Challenge Tour event there, but I wasn’t prepared for it at all. It was two rounds of probably the worst golf I ever played,” said Harradine.

“This time, I knew I was playing this event in March, so there was a lot more time to prepare. But I spend the summer away playing golf in Europe and I did not have anybody there checking my swing.

“Honestly, I have been struggling for some time now, but I have put in a lot of hard work with Stuart Fee at Jebel Ali these last three weeks. I missed the

Golf Challenge at Al Hamra Golf Course today.

The 33-year-old Swiss, son of golf course designer Peter Harradine, will be the designated ‘dewsweeper’ at the



High tee: Joel Sjöholm (l), Jurrian Van der Vaart (c) and Sandro Piaget tee off from Jebel Jais mountains in a RAK Tourism promotional event yesterday.

Three-time UAE No1 amateur Michael Harradine insists the fact that his father designed the golf course will not give him any extra advantage when he tees up at the Ras Al Khaimah 2016

card.

Speaking to europeantour.com, the 41-year-old said: “I need at least one really good finish in these last two tournaments so that’s the aim. It would be a good place to start right here this week.

“It was a few years ago but this was definitely home for four or five years. You never know how it will go, but hopefully that gives me a bit of an advantage, with the conditions.

“I haven’t been here to Ras Al Khaimah before so that’s going to be nice – I’ve heard some good things about it so I’m looking forward to that, it should be a good week.”

Action begins today at 6:30am, with Challenge Tour No1 Alexandre Knappe