



Bar set high for second installment of the Sharjah Senior Golf Masters presented by Shurooq

February 25th, 2018 - Sharjah, UAE: MARTIN DUFF has been Director of Golf at Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club since 2006. In that time the **Peter Harradine**-designed nine-hole course has become one of the most popular in the UAE.



Home to the Conares Golf Society League, Sharjah G&SC hosted the inaugural Sharjah Senior Golf Masters presented by Shurooq last year and created history by becoming the first ever professional tour event to be played on a nine-hole course when it staged the Staysure Tour (formerly the European Senior Tour) tournament.

This year the tournament again marks the start of the Staysure Tour schedule and Duff is confident a few little tweaks – both on and off course - can lead to an even better event when it gets underway from March 8-10.

Sheffield-born Duff explains: “We were all delighted at the success of last year’s inaugural tournament and I think we set the bar at a high level in terms of the condition of the course and the organisation of the event.

“Having proved that a professional Tour event over a nine-hole layout is as popular among the players as it is with the spectators we are anticipating good galleries this year. We had reasonable numbers through the gate on the Saturday afternoon last year and the spectators certainly enjoyed the experience, interacting with the senior players, many of whom were winners on the European Tour and Ryder Cup players. Spectators commented that friendly atmosphere of the entire event was much more fun and entertaining than they expected.

“We’ve moved the date of the event forward a week earlier so there would be no clash with St. Patricks Day. The course is in excellent condition and we have made a couple of changes both on the course and off it. There will be a

'Kids' Zone' on the Driving Range, which will be an ideal area for the youngsters and families to play together and we've moved the tented village to the terrace, which will bring it all closer together.

"In terms of course set-up, in consultation with Staysure Tour officials and the feedback from the players we'll be using a greater variety of tees with multiple pin placements on the greens on the final day. There's a few other subtle changes which will contribute to the event's ongoing success and progress.

"Last year, many people who attended the tournament didn't know quite what to expect. They were unsure about the presentation of the event but from their comments last year they thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The club has got a history of exceeding expectations and last year mirrored that and we were delighted. Testament to that is that almost everyone who played last year has entered again this year. The players were full of praise for the course design, the set-up, the condition of the fairways and greens, which was good to hear.

"At the end of the day, we were pleased to make history with the tournament, as the first time a professional event had been played on a nine-hole course anywhere in the world. It certainly surpassed all expectations from all angles. It looked great on television, the spectators enjoyed it and the players did, too. It was a great week for all involved.

"This is the first event of the Staysure Tour season and it presents the ideal opportunity for the players, who have traveled from all around the world to Sharjah, to get their campaign off to a successful start."

Entry to see the former Ryder Cup legends in action at the Sharjah Senior Golf Masters presented by Shurooq, is free of charge.