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## Grand designs for UAE golf course star Harradine

Gulf News speaks to legendary golf course designer Peter Harradine



*Peter Harradine and his son Michael*

Gulf News recently met up with UAE-based 76-year-old golf course designer Peter Harradine.

### **Peter, tell us about how you got into the golf design business?**

I was born in Switzerland and golf course design was the family business. I joined my father in golf course design and Harradine Golf is proud to have designed and supervised the construction of over 200 golf courses around the world. Orient is the sister company of Harradine Golf which is also UAE based and deals with irrigation, landscaping, agriculture and sales of specialised machinery, and where and when appropriate, supports the design business. One of my sons Michael, 38, has joined me in the business. Michael was born in Dubai, played golf at a high level as an amateur including winning a lot of tournaments on the UAE golf scene, representing Switzerland, and has recently passed his Design Qualifications at the European Institute of Golf Course Architects with distinction.

### **What are some of the golf courses you are most proud to have designed?**

I have designed the following golf courses in the UAE and this region: Abu Dhabi Golf Club, both the National and Garden Courses, Doha Golf Club in Qatar, JA The Resort, Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club, The Track, Meydan, Sahara Golf Club in Kuwait and Al Hamra Golf Club, Ras Al Khaimah. I am probably best known for the courses that have hosted Tour events including Abu Dhabi Golf Club and Doha Golf Club which has showcased my work globally and it is always interesting to get genuine feedback from the top players, whether professionals and amateurs, men or women, as well as others, of course. Although, I am very proud of all the unsung and sustainable eco-friendly courses that the media never talk about. I am looking forward to Abu Dhabi Golf Club hosting next month's Women's Amateur Asia-Pacific Championship over the National Course. I will attend during the week, as I always try to do when my courses are hosting significant events, and it will be interesting to see how the R&A set-up the golf course, especially the length, for the best lady amateur golfers from Asia. My overseas golf designs include courses in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Pakistan, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine. Through Orient we rebuilt Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club with its redesign with Thomas Bjorn and European Golf Design, as well as the recent summer Tee renovation project ready for next month's Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship and Arabian Ranches Golf Club Green renovations, originally an Ian Baker-Finch / Nicklaus Design.

### **What is your Harradine 'design philosophy'?**

It has always been to create easy golf courses that are fun to play, yet still be a challenge to score. I believe there are too many too long and too difficult golf courses being designed these days. I always appreciate the vision of every golf course and the owners, whether it is for real estate or the community, commercial or otherwise, but, at the end of the day it is all about the playability of the golf course. I have always worked with the existing nature of the site as well as being mindful of water conservation and an eco-friendly culture. I have never liked the phrase Championship Course, what does it really mean? When I am given some licence on the design, I always like to deliver a tournament golf course that can host golf championships. In that order and in those words.

### **How is business today for Harradine Golf?**

After more than 90 PCR tests, vaccinations, having COVID-19 and all that COVID has brought us all, it was an obvious challenge over the last couple of years. But today, I am travelling more than ever before and the demand for our services is impressive. We have two design projects we are working on in Russia and Islamabad in Pakistan, as well as enhancing five golf courses in Europe that were original Harradine Golf designs. In the last week we have had five design enquiries: two from Italy, one from Germany, one from India and one from Bagdad in Iraq. I am very bullish about the future of golf design and the future of the game of golf. These are exciting times for Harradine Golf.