

The Executive Treatment: Abu Dhabi National's "Garden Course" is getting a complete revamp by it's original designer



Firstly, it's now going to be called the "Executive Course", so I guess it used to be called the "Garden Course".

When there are 27 holes of golf, I always try to make one set of the nine holes, an easier nine. Just to make sure it's more suited for the "normal player".



When I first designed the 27 holes of Abu Dhabi Golf Club back in 2000, the third nine wasn't all that good to be called "championship".

Overtime, it lost its character, and the new owner Khalfan Al Kaabi has decided to put some real estate around it. And obviously, golf sells real estate, as we all know.

So currently, it's a completely flat site. There are no lakes anymore. There's nothing. A bulldozer has gone in there and flattened everything. There are a few trees left, fortunately. But it's a complete new redesign. New everything, new irrigation, literally new everything.



In a way it is a lot easier to design a golf course, where you have a completely flat area, but you have to be very creative because you have to put in hillocks and all that stuff to make it exciting.

And the great thing is, here in the Gulf, the conditions are ideal for grass and they're ideal for good maintenance. I think that that's what makes a difference really.



Plus, what works in our favour here, is the sand. Working with sand is great, and the weather is always good too.

We will start at a certain point and end at a certain point. So that's already a given. Then we try to do as many different pars as possible because it's not a very big site as it's tree-lined and the real estate is encroaching quite a bit. So we are going to just try to make it as interesting as possible and not too difficult.

As the plans go, we're going to do the BQ (bill of quantities) and the specs by the end of next week. And I think they want to start sometime in December to start the build.

With a bit of luck, and all depending on the weather, we should be able to play in autumn 2025!