

Mon 16 Jun, 2025, By Richard Humphreys

## Pakistan's Capital Hills on track to open first nine holes in 2026



Photo by: Matee-Ur-Rehman

***Nine holes of a new golf course by Harradine Golf are growing in at Capital Hills Golf and Country Club near Islamabad, Pakistan, and are expected to open for play in April 2026.***

The project is part of the Capital Smart City development, an initiative of Future Development Holdings. The new 18-hole course is close to the M2 Lahore-Islamabad motorway near New Islamabad Airport, on the eastern route of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.



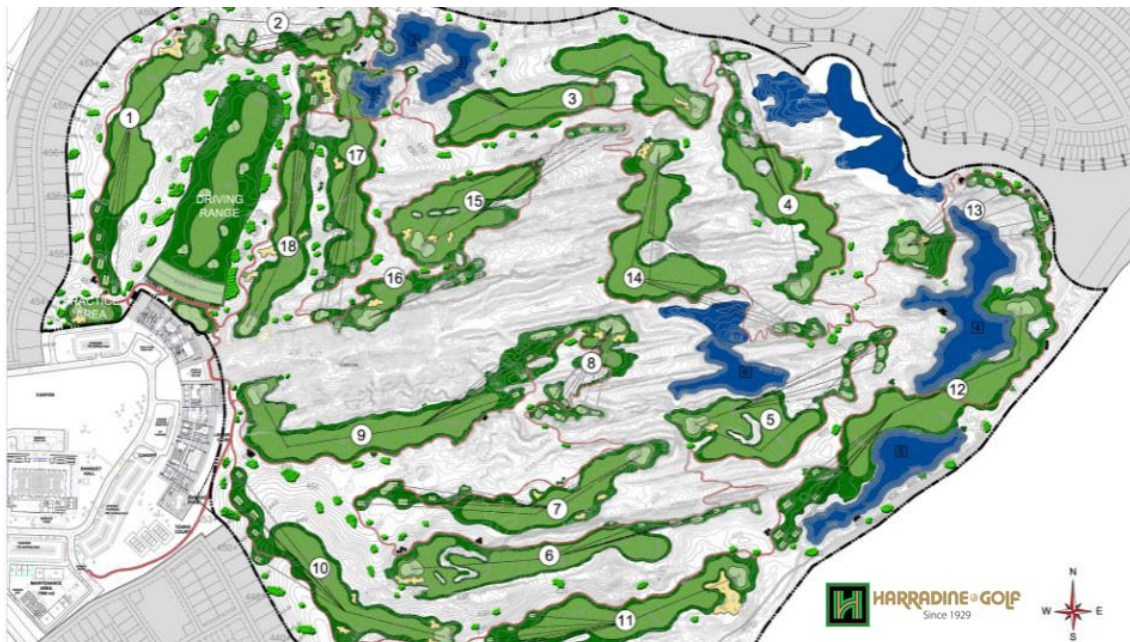
Photo by: Cracknell Landscape Architecture

"Our forefathers were lucky to have great sites to work on, while we are lucky if we are allowed to work on completely arid desert, rubbish dumps or flat agricultural land! These days in most of Europe, if and when we are allowed to build, we are laden with boring pieces of land that need a lot of creativity and earthmoving to produce a half decent course. Anyway, what a site!"



The Capital Hills property has small valleys, rugged terrain and up to 30 metres of elevation change.

“There are incredible lines of natural rock running parallel that resemble manmade walls, with those natural slopes naturally preserved and integrated into the golf course routing,” said Harradine. “We are creating a unique course that will remind this new city, which will house 150,000 inhabitants, what their site used to look like. In fact, the course will become an environmental treasure with birds and fauna expected to make the multiple lakes their home – many species of wild animals have already been attracted to those lakes.”



The lakes will also serve as reservoirs for irrigation during months of dry weather. “That particular fact is quite a paradox because the very heavy downpours during the monsoon season erode many slopes and newly created landforms on the golf course,” said Harradine. “To avoid erosion, all steep slopes have been planted with natural local vegetation or grass. We have also provided an elaborate, intricate and substantial drainage system that feeds into the many lakes.”



Harradine notes that while site’s elevation change and natural features guided the design, they also tested him as an architect. “The final decisions on the levels of the surrounding real estate, clubhouse and landforms within the golf course required some clever calculations,” he said. “Locating the clubhouse was a big decision. We finally placed it at the end of a deep valley, which was left as it is and gives golfers and guests a good idea of the original site.”

The tees for the first hole and the eighteenth green are located on one side of the valley, while the ninth green and tenth tees are on the other side, all close to the central clubhouse.

“The course will be challenging although we have designed many bailout areas and multiple tees,” said Harradine. “It will be one of those courses where the players will rise to the challenge and return many times to master it. Numerous elevated tees will produce a daunting and surprising effect, although the holes are more intimidating than they seem. I can safely say that the course will be playable for all abilities.”



The fairways feature Pure Dynasty paspalum, and the greens are Platinum TE paspalum, both supplied by Atlas Turf International and Pure Seed.

“The city and course will cater to the ‘well-to-do’ Pakistani diaspora although the many golfers playing and living in Pakistan will definitely want to try this incredible track,” said Harradine. “Thanks to the British Army and civil service, golf is actually quite popular in Pakistan and our layout will only enhance this incredible sport. I’m not being facetious when I declare that this course, when complete, should be classified within the top 100 in the world.

“Working in Pakistan has been an incredibly interesting and challenging experience. The management and on-site team have been very friendly, eager, willing and committed to do the best job possible.”

The full eighteen and clubhouse are expected to open by April 2028.