

# Capital ready to roll out red carpet again for HSBC Golf Championship

Like they have done every year since the inception of the Middle East Golf Awards, the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship was a winner yet again, this time for the Best Live Experience at a Professional Event.



It's not just the public who love to throng to Abu Dhabi National Golf Club designed by [Peter Harradine](#) during the tournament in large numbers. Critics and industry personnel also both agree that the opening event of the Desert Swing does do things in style.

A quality field is just the starting point, but the Abu Dhabi Sports Council-owned tournament ensures all the stakeholders – including players, fans, corporate invitees and media – are well taken care of.

As tournament organisers IMG collected their award on the MEGAs night, we caught up with Greg Sproule, managing director, IMG Middle East, and asked him how incredible it was to sweep the award for professional tournament for the fourth time.

“Honestly, it is humbling,” said Sproule. “I mean each tournament in the region is known for its quality. They are all very classy. To go up against them and to be named winner is humbling indeed.”

“There are so many people that are involved in making the tournament such a success – Abu Dhabi Sports Council, who own the tournament; HSBC, who set the standard of golf sponsorship globally, and Abu Dhabi as an emirate, I think we have excellent decision-making and organisations who are ambitious and are not satisfied easily.

“That aside, I think we have a great team working at the tournament. It’s a global team, one that is committed to making it as good as they can. They listen very closely to what is going on not just here but in markets all around the world and not accepting that what happened last year is acceptable.

“Our mandate that we have been given is to raise the bar every year. I admit we don’t get it right every time. We do make mistakes, but we never make the same mistake twice.”

Sproule said fans can expect several new changes when the event returns to the National course from January 19-22 next year.

“We always have to make things better than last year and I think 2017 is going to be a good example of it,” said the man who has been in-charge of the tournament since its inaugural year.



“There are a lot of things. There are a few things in the Village that will surprise people. Golf is the reason people are out there, but it is about what else is there to make it a wonderful day out for the families.

“I think the hospitality on the 18th green will be that much more impressive. We have redesigned that whole experience in terms of the structure itself. The pro-am will have some new twists to it.”

Meanwhile, an action-packed programme of events, activities, fashion and competitions was unveiled by the organisers.

Making a return will be the popular HSBC Golf Zone, with a dedicated Future Falcons area that will teach golf in a fun, safe way. Meanwhile, golfers of all abilities can brush up on their skills on a digital driving range or in the HSBC Hour daily, free one-hour clinic.

Golf isn't the only game to be enjoyed, as tennis and rugby will also have their own dedicated zones too.

At the HSBC Chill Zone, fans can pick their favourite tracks to kick back to on the juke box, and also get the opportunity to create their own music in the booth. The music theme continues – for the first time ever – as tunes will be played on the driving range. Visitors will enjoy a plethora of food and drinks options.

Ladies Day returns on Friday, January 20, with its highly contested annual Best Dressed Competition, as does the 'Wear Red Day' on Saturday, which entitles fans to free entry and win fantastic prizes.