

Staysure Tour season to kick-off in Sharjah

Former European Senior Tour comes back to the UAE



Chris Williams of South African receives the trophy from Marwan Bin Jassim Al Sarkal, CEO of Shurooq in March.

The 2018 Staysure Tour season will begin in the UAE as the Sharjah Senior Golf Masters presented by Shurooq returns to the schedule from March 8-10.

Formerly known as the European Senior Tour, United Kingdom-based insurance company Staysure have become the first title sponsor of the over-50s circuit in a landmark partnership for the European Tour, and the first event of the new era will be staged in Sharjah.

South Africa's Chris Williams won the first edition of the event in 2017, securing a first prize of more than \$70,000 after defeating England's Gary Marks in a play-off. Williams would then go on to finish second on the Order of Merit that season.

Held once again at Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club, the Sharjah Senior Golf Masters is the only event in European Tour history to have been played over a nine-hole golf course.

David MacLaren, the head of the Staysure Tour, said: "We were privileged to be a part of the first ever professional golf tournament held in Sharjah, and we were delighted to return to the UAE, a region synonymous with world-class golf.

"Last year's tournament was a landmark event for both the Tour and for Sharjah, as the first professional event held in the Emirate and the first ever European Tour event played on a nine-hole course.

"This year's edition will be of equal importance as we mark the start of our relationship with Staysure as the new title sponsors of the Tour, and begin our 2018 schedule."

Martin Duff, the director of golf at Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club, said: “Everyone at Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club is both delighted and excited to be hosting the Staysure Tour as we look to build on a hugely successful inaugural event. The theme last year was very much about ‘firsts’ and to a degree this seems set to continue as we proudly host the first ever event on the Staysure Tour.

“Our golf course, designed by Peter Harradine received rave reviews from all involved last year and, with some further developments carried out over the summer, we are certain the 7337 yard layout will once again attract significant praise. Whether we can top last year’s thrilling finish and stellar field remains to be seen but one thing is for certain the professionals will offer a personable and close up experience rarely witnessed by fans in top level professional golf.”

Ten former Ryder Cup players and two Senior Major Champions teed it up at last year’s tournament, and the field this year promises to be just as strong as Staysure Tour members bid for a fast start to the season.

“Our members have played golf in the UAE throughout their professional careers, and we had a lot of positive feedback after last year’s event.” said MacLaren. “We are very excited to return to Sharjah in 2018 and continuing our relationship with our hosts at Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club and tournament sponsors Shurooq.”