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JAMIE RUTHERFORD

# US\$75,000 Royal Golf Club Bahrain Open tees off today

TDT | Manama

The US\$75,000 Royal Golf Club (RGC) Bahrain Open tees off today at RGC.

The three-day tournament is the fourth round of the 2020 MENA Tour.

More than 90 players, including close to 80 professional golfers, are confirmed to have entered. They are coming from countries across the globe, including China, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Scotland, Spain, the USA and Wales, to name a few.

Among those competing is a confident Harry Ellis, who returns to the MENA Tour hoping to turn his consistent display over the past few months into a first career win as a professional at the Royal Golf Club Bahrain Open.

The 24-year-old from Southampton played five events in the 2019 season and was inside the top 12 in all of them, including back-to-back second-place finishes in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain.

He missed the first three tournaments of 2020 because he was playing the Challenge Tour events in South Africa, where he finished tied-fourth in the RAM Cape Town Open.

"It's pretty amazing what happens when you have a bit of confidence in the system," said Ellis, winner of the

2017 Amateur Championship and the 2012 England Amateur.

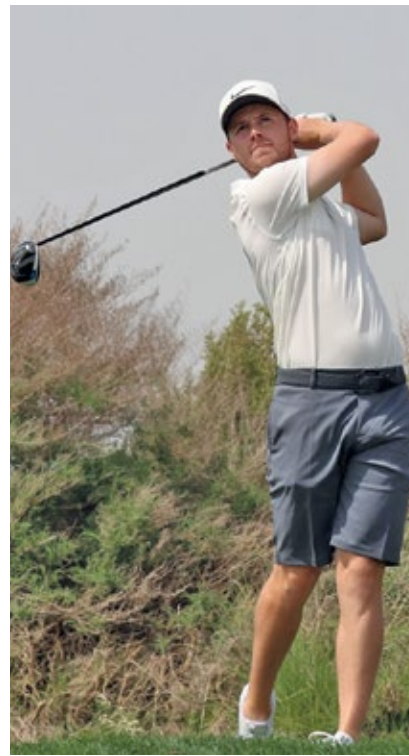
"I feel a lot calmer and I feel in pretty sound place mentally. I am able to hit the shots I want to on the golf course. My team and I have put in a lot of hard work and we know it will take some time, but we have built a solid foundation. I am in a good golf-playing mode, which is nice not having to work on too many things. It's a case of putting the rounds together and the results will come hopefully."

Ellis played the Royal Golf Club Bahrain Open last year and was tied-seventh. Interestingly, his 73 in the second round was the last time he was over-par on the MENA Tour and his last 10 rounds have all been in the 60s.

"It would be lovely to keep the streak going, but it is not something I am thinking too much about," said Ellis. "Obviously, it is always healthy for your position on the leaderboard, or your psychic, if you keep shooting in the 60s."

"This week, the course is set up so well that it is possible, but I am just trying to go out and be the best that I can be. We will see what happens, but I'd definitely like to be in contention."

Ellis will have plenty of competition, with the current Journey to Jordan leader David Langley in great form after



Ellis competing at RGC previous (File Photo)

winning in Jordan and finishing second last week in Ghala in Muscat.

Also returning to the MENA Tour this week is the former European Tour player Jamie Rutherford, who took a

two-week break after his scorching finish at Ayla Golf Club, where he finished runner-up to Langley.

"I went back home for a couple of weeks, did some work with my coach and practiced as much as I could because the weather is so bad in England right now," said Rutherford.

"It is great to come back to Royal Golf Club where I was fourth last year. I just love the challenge of this golf course. It is fairly generous off the tee, but you have got to really precise with your irons with how slopy the greens are and all the sections they can put the flag in. You've got to be in control of your distance and where you put your ball on the green. That, I feel, is a strength of mine."

England's Bailey Gill, the champion last week at the Ghala Open, and South Africa's MG Keyser, the reigning Journey to Jordan Professional champion, will miss the tournament but for very good reasons. Gill got into this week's Oman Open on the European Tour, courtesy his win at Ghala, while Keyser qualified for next week's Commercial Bank Qatar Masters, also on the European Tour, by winning the Qualifiers in Doha.

Reigning champion Robin Roussel has graduated to the European Tour and will also miss the event.

## Fernandes on the spot as Man Utd climb to fifth



Bruno Fernandes celebrates his first goal

AFP | London

Bruno Fernandes opened his goalscoring account at Manchester United yesterday as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side climbed to fifth place in the Premier League table with a 3-0 win against lowly Watford.

United have struggled for consistency all season but the victory at Old Trafford lifts them to 41 points, just three behind fourth-placed Chelsea.

Midfielder Fernandes, bought by Solskjaer last month to add creativity and drive to United's midfield, scored from the penalty spot shortly before half-time and Anthony Martial and Mason Greenwood also found the net.

"This is what I want to do and what I need to do," Fernandes told the BBC.

"Everyone knows we want to get into the Champions League places. I am here to help the team conquer this place and keep winning games."

Solskjaer said he wanted his side to "kick on" after two consecutive wins and clean sheets.

## Torres to face Nicolau in Flyweight tournament

Shorty Torres and Matheus Nicolau to meet at BRAVE CF 35 in Brazil

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The BRAVE CF Flyweight tournament, that will decide the first-ever world champion up to 57kg in the world's fastest-growing MMA promotion, is set to be one of the most closely fought, action-packed till date and the first bout announced denotes it. BRAVE CF officials confirmed that Jose "Shorty" Torres will face Matheus Nicolau in the quarter-finals.

The match between Torres and Nicolau, two UFC veterans with tons of international experience, will be held during the BRAVE CF's next trip to Brazil, thus giving Matheus Nicolau the home-field advantage. BRAVE CF 35 will take place on March 25th, in Balneário Camboriú, state of Santa Catarina.

With 10 professional fights



under his belt, Jose Torres has Torres beat Amir Albazi via nine wins and only one loss. In unanimous decision in Jordan. his last appearance, last April, The two-time IMMAF Amateur



Matheus Nicolau made his BRAVE debut last August, with a win against his fellow-countryman Felipe Efrain in a Bantamweight bout

World Champion was supposed to fight for the BRAVE title in Bahrain, six months later, but ended up withdrawing less than a week prior to the fight due to personal issues.

A veteran of the reality show

The Ultimate Fighter Brazil season 4, Matheus Nicolau boasts a professional record of 14 wins, two losses, and one draw. The Brazilian made his BRAVE debut last August, with a win against his fellow-countryman Felipe Efrain in a Bantamweight bout. Nicolau now moves down to his original division, up to 57kg, aiming to capture BRAVE's inaugural world title.

BRAVE CF 35 will take place on March 25th, 2020 and marks the fifth time the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world hosts an event in Brazil. The country will become the number one home of BRAVE Combat Federation alongside the Kingdom of Bahrain. The show is headlined by Cleiton "Predator" making the first defense of his Lightweight title against Guram Kutateladze.

## Bahrain Club beat Ettihad to win 3x3 basketball title

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Bahrain Club were crowned champions of the Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) 3x3 Championship.

They secured their title following a 21-11 victory over Al Ettihad in the tournament final, played at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam.

After the championship game, the top three teams were awarded their respective medals by BBA vice-president Nasser Al Qaseer and a number of other officials.

Al Hala took the bronze medals after defeating Manama 21-11 in the game for third place.



Bahrain Club team members with officials at the awarding

A total of 20 teams took part in the championship, with 10 of Bahrain's top basketball clubs fielding two squads apiece

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They were divided into four groups for the first round, with the top two in each division moving on to the knockout quarter-finals.