



Hague in action during yesterday's final round

TDT | Manama

All the days of self-doubting are over for England's David Hague as he put together a brilliant back nine on another very windy day yesterday to secure his maiden professional win at the \$75,000 Royal Golf Club Bahrain Open, in only his fourth start in the paid ranks. The 24-year-old from Malton and Norton Golf Club, who rose

to number 76 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking and turned pro earlier this year only after securing his card through the MENA Tour Qualifying School, knuckled down on the back nine and shot a one-under par 71 to tally nine-under par 207 for the three days.

In the end, that proved to be one better than former European Tour star Victor Riu (70) of France.

The Scottish pair of Ryan

Lumsden (71) and Callum Fyfe (70) were tied third at seven-under par 209 alongside England's Ben Hutchinson (67) and Sweden's Henric Sturehed (68) – the two best cards on a day when players had to battle through occasional drizzle and steady high wind at the Colin Montgomerie-designed Royal Golf Club.

Saud Al Sharif, a member of the Saudi national team and of The Royal Golf Club, could not replicate the stunning performance from the second round and slipped down the leaderboard with an 81 in his first experience of playing in the leader group of a professional event. However, his two-over par total was still good enough to win him the Low Amateur of the Tournament prize.

Hague, who recently finished runner-up at the NEWGIZA Open in Cairo, started the final round as leader by one shot, but was trailing at the turn after making a double bogey on the seventh hole and Lumsden surging ahead with an eagle on the par-5 ninth hole. At that stage, Hague was seven-under.

But the champion made three birdies on the back nine as against a solitary bogey on the 12th hole, including a crucial one on the par-4 15th hole, which was playing very tough into the headwind. It was a two-shot swing against both Lums-

Hague secures maiden pro title

Englishman wins US\$75,000 Royal Golf Club Bahrain Open



Hague, left, and Al Sharif, right, with Royal Golf Club General Manager Chris Garrity

den and Riu, his closest rivals, who dropped shots on the same hole.

"This is amazing and very satisfying. I have been thinking of turning professional for more than a year now and always had my doubts about it. I felt I was on a good run when I played the MENA Tour Qualifying School, and thought it was a good time to make the decision. This win definitely validates it," said Hague, a member of the Great Britain and Ireland Walker Cup

team.

"I drove consistently well this whole week and that really was the key to my winning. I struggled with my putter from inside six feet and made several three-putts – something I need to work on.

"When I was trailing at the turn, I knew I needed to be patient because the back nine of this golf course has been pretty good to me. And yes, that birdie on the 15th was a key moment for me."

Al Sharif was disappointed with his round, but not disheartened with his effort.

"It was a tough day on the golf course, but I wanted to do better than what I did. However, this is my first time in a situation like this and I am sure I have learned a lot on how to handle things in the future. This experience will make me a better player," said the 19-year-old.

The MENA Tour travels to Aqaba, Jordan, for the \$75,000 Journey to Jordan next week.

Former champ Luan Miao takes on Issa Isakov in Brazil

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The former BRAVE CF Lightweight world champion Luan "Miao" Santiago is scheduled to make his comeback at home in March, when the promotion returns to Brazil for a record-tying fifth time. Santiago will face tough competition in his homecoming bout, as he takes on the Belgium's prospect Issa Isakov.

One of the most active athletes in the entire BRAVE CF roster, Luan Miao is going for his eighth bout under the Middle East premier promotion's banner. Coming of a win over Gadzhimusa Gaziev last November in Bahrain, Santiago boasts a professional record of 15 wins and only 4 losses.

Coincidentally, Issa Isakov made his professional debut just a couple of months before Miao's last bout but that doesn't mean the Belgian striking artist didn't manage to keep up, with a 5-1 record against high-level competition, including an impressive submission win over Rami Hamed in his BRAVE CF debut.

In addition, Isakov was one of the most accomplished amateur athletes in recent IMMAF history, with several medals won in continental and World Championships, alongside an impres-



sive 15-4 amateur record.

Luan Santiago vs Issa Isakov will take place at BRAVE CF 35, on March 28th, 2020 in Balneário Camboriú, an event marking 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, the first promoted by the Bahrain-based promotion outside of Curitiba and Belo Horizonte in Brazil, is headlined by Cleiton "Predator" making the first defense of his Lightweight title against Sweden's Guram Kutateladze.

Fernando and Mendis power Sri Lanka to 345-8 against West Indies

AFP | Hambantota, Sri Lanka

Avishka Fernando and Kusal Mendis both hit centuries to take Sri Lanka to an imposing 345 for eight in the second one-day international against West Indies on Wednesday.

Fernando, who blasted 127, and Mendis, who made 119, put on 239 runs in Sri Lanka's highest third-wicket stand

West Indies won the toss and elected to bowl in their bid to square the three-match series, and paceman Sheldon Cottrell did not disappoint with twin strikes on successive balls in the fourth over.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne went for one and Kusal Perera fell for nought in his 100th ODI before Mendis denied Cottrell a hat-trick and combined with Fernando to thwart the opposition bowling.

Mendis got one reprieve on



Sri Lanka's Kusal Mendis (L) and Avishka Fernando run between the wickets

two when West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard dropped a simple chance at first slip off Jason Holder. He went on to score his second one-day hundred.

Mendis and Fernando, who hit his career-best ODI score

in 123 balls, smashed 22 fours between them.

Fast bowler Alzarri Joseph finally claimed the centuries in the space of 14 deliveries, and then bowled former captain Angelo Mathews for one.

Lampard concerned by 'sobering' night for Chelsea

AFP | London

Chelsea manager Frank Lampard admitted a 3-0 thrashing at home to Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie was a reality check for how far

behind the European elite the Blues now find themselves.

Lampard captained the Chelsea side that beat Bayern on home soil in the 2012 final, but the gulf between the teams that has emerged in recent years was in full evidence at Stamford

Bridge. Serge Gnabry's quickfire double early in the second half was just reward for Bayern's dominance of the first 45 minutes when only some poor finishing and Chelsea goalkeeper Willy Caballero kept the hosts in the game.