

A full-page photograph of a female golfer in the middle of a golf swing. She is wearing a light blue short-sleeved polo shirt with a 'PrivatAir' logo on the lower right, and dark navy blue shorts with a silver-toned belt buckle. Her blonde hair is tied back in a ponytail with a black headband. She is holding a golf club, and the background is a blurred green field.

Flo's on her toes...



Florence Lüscher is one of only three professional women golfers in Switzerland. She is among the many girls aiming to make it through the Ladies European Tour Qualifying School at the end of November. **Mark Roach** asked her what life is really like for a young woman trying to make a living as professional golfer.

What did you think of Dubai?

It was fantastic, not only the golf but the whole experience. Dubai is impressive and the people were friendly.

How do you feel about making it as a professional golfer?

Fantastic. It meant I could turn my hobby into my job! It's always great if you can do that. But there is a lot of discipline needed. I have to plan my day very carefully and practice hard if I want to play well. If I don't, bad scores and no money in the account in the end of the year are the results!

You have Q School coming up at the end of the month. How are you feeling about that?

I'm confident. It's the same course as last year when I qualified and my game isn't too bad at the moment. Making the cut in Dubai was very important for me and my self confidence. I am looking forward to it and will do my best.

How significant a difference would it be to you if you don't get your LET card?

I would still play next year but I wouldn't play in as many tournaments on the European Tour. I'd find another way to keep up the tournament routine. Maybe I would play on the Telia Tour in Sweden.

It would be good to play on the European Tour again though. I gained a lot of experience this year and would definitely do things different in my second year. Not being on the European Tour would also make it more difficult to find sponsors who you need to finance a full season.

What is it like being on tour all the time?**Do you sometimes wish you didn't have to travel so much?**

It was only my first year on the tour this year and I had to get used to that. In the beginning it wasn't easy. You are always away from home, always travelling, and you get tired. But I really like it. I like travelling and I like being in the hotels and that's how it has to be.

You have your friends back home and you

don't see them a lot. That is the negative part. But it's part of the job. It's not just about playing golf, there are lots of different factors that go with it.

Who is the best golfer in the world at the moment?

Annika Sorenstam and Tiger Woods. I would like to have their level of confidence in my ability!

What is the golf scene like in Switzerland?

It's quite big, for a small country. It's still growing and it has been growing for the last few years. It's less posh now! They are trying to bring it down a bit in that way to get more young people to play.

What do you like to do when you are not playing golf?

When I am back home I like to see my friends, relax and reload my batteries. In the winter I love snowboarding, I was a snowboarding teacher in Switzerland for five years.

»You are always away from home, always travelling, and you get tired. But I really like it.«

Women's golf is becoming very glamorous now, what do you think about that?

There are some girls who do it well and maybe it helps with sponsors, but it depends how far they go. If they are doing nice pictures it's fine, but they can also go too far.

How significant do you think the tournament in Dubai was for women's golf?

For me it was the best event on the European Tour this year. The organisation was great and very professional in every respect – and the course was in fantastic shape.

For the sponsors and the European Tour it was great to have good players like Annika and Karrie Webb playing in the tournament.

Most of the professional women players are not earning lots of money on the tour. What is the reality of being a pro like, is it a struggle financially sometimes?

It all depends on how much money you get from sponsors. If you are lucky and have your season financed that's good, so that you don't have to pay expenses.

But if you don't play well, you don't get any money and then you start playing bad because you know you have to make some money. That is the hard part of the game. But I have had a good year, I can't complain.

What are your aims for the next year and the future?

I hope to play on the full European Tour again and get established on the tour next year.

You can still play golf until you are 40 but for me the aim is the next five years and then we'll see. I'm not planning too far ahead. So I haven't thought about what I will be doing in 10 years.

Have you thought about what you might do if you don't get your LET card?

I would definitely continue playing. It's always the same in golf, there are always ups and downs and you have to get on with it.

How big do you think women's golf is now – and what is the potential?

It is growing and is big in the States and in Asia, but I don't think it will ever be as big as the men's tour, even with good players and good money. We are not going to get to the same level.

But do you think there are similarities with women's tennis and women's golf?

I think so. Years ago tennis was not as popular for the women and now they are quite close to the men, but tennis is still more popular than golf.

Do you think you will be coming back to Dubai next year?

Definitely, I'd love to! That's one of the reasons I hope to get my LET card – otherwise it would be much appreciated if On Course can get me an invite! ■