



Portugal's Jose Filipe Lima goes into the final round of the 14th Mauritius Golf Open at Belle Mare Plage with a slender one-stroke advantage over his nearest challengers. The 26-year-old Lima, who finished runner-up to Miles Tunncliff two years ago, shot six birdies and two bogeys in an excellent round of 68.

This took him to the top of the leaderboard following his opening round 69. "I am pleased with the way I performed today," said Lima. "I played well for 13 holes but then began to tire.

"The wind made it difficult but I was pleased that the greens were soft. If they had been hard, it would have been a problem."

Outstanding among a number of splendid performances in the blustery wind on The Legend course was that of Welshman Jamie Donaldson, whose seven-birdie round of five-under-par 67 moved him into contention in second place alongside Peter Baker. The 32-year-old Donaldson would have done even better had he not found water hazards twice when playing the par-five fourth and finishing the hole with a double-bogey.

Four birdies before the turn got Donaldson back on track and three more birdies on the back nine took him to within one stroke of the leader.

Donaldson, who is back on the main European Tour after an fine season on the Challenge Tour, is hopeful that his good form will stand up to the test ahead: "I'm playing really well. I am hitting the ball straight, which is essential around this course, and I'm getting close to the pin.

"I've had two bad holes out of 36 and both cost me a double-bogey. I shall be disappointed if I'm not there or thereabouts at the finish."

Baker, who is also returning to the main Tour this season, followed up his opening round 67 with a one-under 71 and admitted that his putting had let him down: "I made a few more mistakes than yesterday and I didn't putt well," he said. "I put one in the trees at the 13th and I missed a putt from just 10 inches."

Last year's runner-up, Welshman Phil Price, is also a contender, despite a disappointing level-par 72 which put him two strokes off the lead.

Price started poorly, with a double-bogey six on the first where he drove left into the hazard. But he recovered to pick up three shots before the turn only to three-putt the 17th for a bogey.



Defending champion Van Phillips came back from a disastrous 77 in the first round to shoot 68 but although he made up an eight-stroke deficit in the final round 12 months ago, a similar task this year is unlikely, particularly with the leading group in such good form.

Jean Francois Lucquin and England's Simon Wakefield and Phil Golding will be quietly hopeful of making up ground on the leader but Lima is in no mood to concede his place at the head of the field without a fight.

There are joint leaders among the Seniors Tour players, with Gery Watine, of France, and Scotland's Martin Gray level on 144.

Neither player was able to produce their form of the previous day, Watine carding a 75 and Gray a 74.

But that is enough to give the pair a three-stroke advantage over their nearest rivals, Bill Longmuir and Kevin Spurgeon.

Off the pace but not totally out of the reckoning are Italian Guiseppe Cali and Irishman Denis O'Sullivan, who have five strokes to make up on the leaders.

Leading scores (GB & Ire unless stated): 137 J-F Lima (Port) 69 68; 138 P Baker 67 71, J Donaldson 71 67; 139 P Price 67 72; 140 S Wakefield 69 71, J-F Lucquin (Fr) 71 69; 141 P Golding 69 72; 143 J Theunis 71 72 (Bel); 144 G Watine (Fr) 69 75, G Evans 70 74, M Gray 70 74, F Schoettel (Fr) 71 73, S Webster 73 71; 145 R Chapman 74 71, V Phillips 77 68.

Seniors' Tour: 144 G Watine (Fr) 69 75, M Gray 70 74; 147 W Longmuir 70 77, K Spurgeon 77 70; 149 G Cali (It) 74 75, D O'Sullivan 77 72; 151 J Rhodes 76 75, M Miller 79 72; 153 J-P Sallat (Fr) 77 76.