



BY
GODFREY ROBERT

LING GEARS HIMSELF FOR BRITISH OPEN ASSIGNMENT

‘SO SURREAL’ WAS HOW HE REACTED TO NEWS ABOUT HIS SELECTION AS REFEREE FOR GOLF MAJOR

ragged into confusion over truth and fake news, as most people are these days of active social media, when K P Ling received news of his selection as golf referee for the next month’s British Open, he first thought it was a prank.

“I received a notification from the R and A in Scotland late one night recently, and I was surprised. It was like being so surreal, and I thought it was a joke.

“The next day, I checked with the world golf ruling authority, and discovered it was true. I was so humbled, yet honoured. I was truly happy and excited,” said Ling, often known as KP.

It is understandable that Ling, 54, a referee for about a decade, was over the moon for it was his first invitation to a major golf event.

The 2019 Open Championship will be the 148th Open championship, scheduled for July 18 to 21 at Royal Portrush Golf Club in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

The tournament referee in golf ensures that the players competing follow the rules of golf and that the game is played in the correct manner. They are also on hand to make decision if players are unsure of what the rules or how to implement them in certain situations.

Ling understands that fully for after retiring from his job as project manager in the construction industry, he has devoted hours studying and upgrading his knowledge of the rules of golf and their interpretation.

No doubt, much of his knowledge was also accrued through “real life” situations, having been active on the local calendar of tournaments and corporate events, and in international tournaments such as the Bonnalack

Trophy in Qatar recently.

The amiable Ling is not one to wallow in controversies, and his approach to the game is very professional. And for that, he says, one must be well versed with the rules.

On his experiences, Ling said: “I have not encountered any major incidents. Our usual challenge is to maintain the pace of play. Especially these days where events follow strict adherence to television times.

“Usually, in major tournaments, when golfers are slow they know it, for they are true professionals. We have to understand the reasons for their slow play, like seeing their ball in hazards or time taken to look for the ball.

“We follow a set of guidelines, and try to establish the reasons for slow play. We approach the players politely and tell them about it in between shots. And they have been very cooperative.”

Ling will take with him these experiences to the British Open and also learn from observances. He is also aware that the weather can be a problem and will take with him the right attire.

A late starter to golf, Ling is a 12.6 handicap index player who plays the game socially two or three times a week, mainly at Kepel Club and the National Service Resort and Country Club.

The former Rafflesian, who has developed such a deep passion for the game, believes

that golf is not just fun but also “a leveller of sorts”, uniting a people whatever their backgrounds.

When asked about his favourite golfer, Ling was quick to mention Tiger Woods “for having changed the whole fabric of golfing with his superhuman talent”.

With days ticking towards the Royal Portrush date, Ling is brushing up his knowledge through reading and watching television. And he hopes to bring back not just personal memories of the British Open but also to garner knowledge that he can share with his counterparts in Singapore.

KP Ling (left) is a late starter to the game who is rated highly as a referee.



LOW HITS A HIGH IN SARAWAK

Singapore’s Low Wee Jin played above himself to finish runner-up in last week’s Malaysian Open Amateur Championships at the Sarawak Golf Club in Kuching.

Low (above, inset) finished just one shot shy of winner Lawry Flynn (70-75-65-69) of Australia who clinched the title with a four-round total of nine-under 279.

Low was level par with Lawry going into the final round, but an unfortunate double-bogey on the par-four 11th ruined the Singaporean’s chance for top glory. He shot 73-68-69-70.

Indonesia’s Narajie Ramadhan finished third on 284 (77-69-68-70).

Low partnered Lucius Toh to claim the team title for Singapore.

Low will lead Singapore’s team for the Putra Cup at the Heron Lake Golf Club in Hanoi, Vietnam, from July 24 to 27. The other members of the team are Nicklaus Chiam, Donovan Lee and Justin Kuk.

Singapore will also compete in the Lion City Cup at the same time represented by Hiroshi Tai and Brandon Han.

Also competing are Linette Chua, Linnah Loh and Yoko Tai for the Santi Cup, and Angel Lim and Shayne Lim for the Kartini Cup.

— Godfrey Robert