



Photo by Rolex

BY BENNY TEO THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SMOKES

I want an Arnold Palmer please. And add a dash of vodka by the way. No? That's a John Daly? Oh well, let's have a Daly then.

That would likely constitute my conversation at the 19th-hole bar after a round of golf.

Thankfully for the golfing world, IMG's Mark McCormack is more astute in picking the right gentleman for the hefty job of elevating the sport of golf into global renown through a then burgeoning television age.

And so he picked Arnold Palmer as his first client back in 1960. Soon, Jack Nicklaus and that South African fitness buff Gary Player would follow, forming

a triumvirate that would go down in history as golf's first global superstars.

As the forefather of them all however, The King, as he is fondly termed, had led his army of fans, known as "Arnie's Army", from Augusta National, throughout the rest of America and across to the links of Open championships, each time winning more over with his brand of swashbuckling play and matinee idol looks.

In 1967, after securing seven Major titles, Rolex came calling and thus gave birth to a 50-year friendship that has seen the Swiss luxury timekeeper step into the world of The King and his fellow merry men (and later women too), growing the sport of golf and fortifying its timeless values of sportsmanship and honesty.

Today, both McCormack and Palmer have passed on but the Rolex train continues to roll, embracing more testimonees who, like their beloved former king, represents all that is good with the game.

Rolex has also invested millions into initiatives that harvest the potential of youth across America, Asia and Latin America and most recently, helped prop the European Tour with a multi-million dollar Rolex Series of events to rival the PGA Tour's popularity.

In Singapore, Rolex is a supporter of the SMBC Singapore Open that has just ended and the HSBC Women's World Championship that is to come. Their reach and love for golf growing as time continues to tick by, without which, the golfing world will surely suffer a loss.

But what if they had not chosen Arnie? What if, like me, they had gone for smokingly Long John? Rhetorical? Yes. But probably not, no offence to the former two-time Major champion. For longevity's sake, you can sip on Dalys once in a while but it's healthier to have Arnold Palmers to really quench the thirst.

BY JEREMY THESEIRA ANALYSE YOUR SWING AT THE SPH GOLF TRAVEL FAIR 2019

With just two months to go, the SPH Golf Travel Fair 2019 has already secured a remarkable mix of exhibitors that will be offering the very best deals on golf travel, equipment, apparel and much more.

Of the latest entrants to Singapore's unique golf travel fair are Batam's Radisson Golf & Convention Center, China tee time booking application, Gaotoo, and GOLFTREC, one of the industry's best golf instruction centres.

Opening their doors in Singapore in July 2017, GOLFTREC provides a fact-based analysis of the golf swing with instant video feedback and proprietary Motion Measurement Technology.

Along with their dedicated coaches, visitors to the fair will get to experience firsthand the high tech swing analysis with data accumulated from over 20 years of swing research at the GOLFTREC simulator throughout the duration of the event.

• The SPH Golf Travel Fair 2019 will take place on 21 - 24 March at Takashimaya Square, B2.

ALL-EXPENSES PAID TRIP TO THAILAND

Recent golf travellers to Thailand stand a chance to return, all-expenses paid, to catch the Honda LPGA Thailand 2019 from February 19 to 22.

Sponsored by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, two lucky golfers will have the opportunity to catch the 13th edition of the Honda LPGA Thailand 2019 that will feature 70 of the world's best professionals competing on the Old Course at Siam Country Club in Pattaya from February 21 to 24.

To qualify for this all-expenses paid trip, contestants must have travelled to Thailand recently to play at least two rounds of golf anytime between January 1 and February 9 this year.

Thereafter, the two winners will be selected on February 13 where they will receive return air tickets on Thai Airways, three nights accommodation with daily breakfast, a spot to play at the Pro-Am golf game on February 20 and opening day admission tickets to the Honda LPGA Thailand 2019.

• For more details and to enter the contest, head to www.sphgolf.com and click on the contest banner. Terms and conditions apply.

BY AMELIA YONG SOUTH CHINA GEMS



FOISON GOLF CLUB

Foison Golf Club (above) features an elegant modern-Asian clubhouse that overlooks two majestic golf courses from Cynthia Dye and Neil Haworth.

The Haworth 18 is a championship course that features lakes, hills and plains integrated into the existing terrain and vegetation. Comparatively different is Cynthia Dye's course, which is constructed higher above sea level and amidst the mountains.

There is an effort by the designer to blend man-made and nature, which results in a golf course that bared the natural beauty of the mountains with the enjoyment of challenging play.

DRAGON LAKE GOLF CLUB

Designed by Dick Davidson and managed under the IMG group, Dragon Lake Golf Club is part of a big-

ger property scheme surrounded by hotels and holiday villages and is home to the Asian Games 27-holes that has hosted several professional tournaments and events.

The three 9-hole loops with vastly different characteristics transport golfers to a different time and space all within a stone's throw away.

COUNTRY GARDEN HOLIDAY ISLANDS

Further up north is Holiday Islands, designed by Liang Guo-kun who used the surrounding forests and lakes as a natural advantage and built the course around these features. Similar to Dragon Lake, they offer golfers 27 holes over three courses to pick and choose from - The 'A', 'B', and 'C' Course - that play longer than the standard fare but fortunately, have generously wide fairways.

COUNTRY GARDEN JUN'AN GOLF CLUB



The fifth large scale Country Garden branded product that features a stunning 18-hole setup also designed by Liang Guo-kun. A woodland course as opposed to Holiday Islands, it plays to 7,018 yards from the tips and is constructed with some spectacular holes that will require good course management to conquer.

YALONG BAY GOLF CLUB



Designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr., Yalong Bay Golf Club is every golfer's must-play at Sanya on Hainan Island, or what the local authorities term, the "Hawaii of China".

The golf course boasts lush tropical vegetation and native grasses that line each hole, with glistening water features constructed within the playing grounds to give the course more character amidst its broad fairways and 98 well-placed bunkers.

RED GORGE GOLF CLUB

Also known as Sun Valley Sanya Golf Resort, it is similar to Yalong Bay in that there is a resort located nearby, making stay-and-play options an obvious choice.

Offering three 9-hole courses with fairly wide fairways and big greens that slopes and undulates, a caddy's superb skills may be needed to steer away from three putts.

OTHER COURSES IN HAINAN

Other notable courses at the southern end of China's Hainan Island is the Sanya Luhuitou Golf Club, a par-72 design by Neil Haworth with stunning sea-side views of the Dadong Sea, and Sanya Haitang Bay Peninsula Golf Club, home to a championship 18-hole seaside course surrounded by the inland sea and South China Sea.

And in Haikou, the northern city of Hainan Island, resides the world's largest golfing facility in the 13-course Mission Hills Golf Club.

A 30-minute drive from the city sits R&F Mangrove Bay Golf Club, designed with lakes and tropical plants which integrates with the mangrove trees and wildlife throughout the course.

West Coast Golf Club is yet another notable course within Haikou, located on the coast of the Qiongzhou Straits directly opposite Meishi MayFlower International Golf Club. The championship Par-72 18-hole golf course is the first Dye design by the Dye family in China and covers an area of 107.67 hectares.



Sanya Luhuitou Golf Club

WIN AN ALL-EXPENSES PAID TRIP TO THE HONDA LPGA THAILAND 2019

19 - 22 Feb 2019
SIAM COUNTRY CLUB

Since 2006, the Honda LPGA Thailand has been the first and only women's professional golf tournament in Thailand on the LPGA Tour.

The 13th edition will feature 70 female golfers, including 58 professionals from the 2019 LPGA Priority List, the winners from the Pure Silk-Bahamas LPGA Classic 2019 and 2019 ISPS Honda Women's Australian Open, as well as invited players and the winner from the Honda LPGA Thailand National Qualifiers.

Golf in Thailand and stand a chance to win an all expenses paid trip to catch all the action!

PRIZE INCLUDES:

- Return air tickets and land transfers
- Three nights accommodation, with daily breakfast
- Play at the Honda LPGA Thailand 2019 Pro-Am golf game at Siam Country Club on 20 Feb
- Opening day admission tickets to the Honda LPGA Thailand 2019 on 21 Feb

Contest ends 9 February 2019
Terms & Conditions apply.



To participate, scan the QR code or head to www.sphgolf.com

