

BY GODFREY ROBERT

SMBC SINGAPORE OPEN WINS TOP AWARD

IT IS THE BEST TOURNAMENT FOR 2017, WHILE SENTOSA'S SERAPONG CLAIMS BEST COURSE HONOURS

he SMBC Singapore Open beat 27 other Asian Tour events to be voted the Best

Tournament of the Year 2017. The Singapore event came out tops in a voting exercise by more than 300 golfers who play in Asia, Europe, Africa and Australia.

Although the prize-money for the event had dropped from a high of US\$7 million to US\$1 million, the Singapore Open, inaugurated in 1961, is a very popular tournament even among the world's best players.

Previous winners of the award include Ho Tram Championship in Vietnam and the Thailand Golf Championship in Thailand.

Golfers such as Jordan Spieth, Phil Mickelson, Adam Scott, Angel Cabrera and Sergio Garcia have graced the Singapore Open which has made Sentosa Golf Club's world-acclaimed Serapong course its home since 2005.

So it came as no surprise that at the Asian Tour's annual awards gala night at the Royal Jakarta Golf Club on Dec 17, the Serapong layout was named the Best Course of the Year for 2017.

Promoters Lagardere Sports' vice president (Golf Asia) Patrick Feizal Joyce said: "Winning the tournament of the year on the Asian Tour is a terrific accolade and one we are extremely proud of. The acknowledgement from the players that our event is the one that sets the bar and an event they truly look forward to is tremendous validation of what we do."

"The whole team are constantly striving to make the event better each year in order to enhance the players, spectators and sponsor experience. We certainly aren't going to ease up in our efforts to ensure the SMBC Singapore Open continues to hold pride of place among the top tournaments in Asia."

On the Serapong award, Andy Johnston, Sentosa Golf Club's general manager and director of agronomy, said: "To be recognised by such an esteemed group is testament to the passion of all involved at Sentosa Golf Club. We take great pride in the being a host venue on the Asian Tour and have benefited over the years from hosting the world's best players and the impact of the global broadcast."

"The commitment from our ownership group allows for us to continually deliver the highest standards, which have led to this evening's success and is an achievement we take a great deal of pride in."

The year 2018 is set to be a landmark year for Sentosa GC which, after staging the SMBC Singapore Open at Serapong from Jan 18 to 21, will host the inaugural Women's Amateur Asia-Pacific Golf Championship in February, the HSBC Women's World Championship in March and the Asia Pacific Men's Amateur Championship in October, all at the new Tanjong course.

US Masters champion Garcia, former British Open champion Louis Oosthuizen and USPGA Tour winner Pat Perez have confirmed their entries for the Singapore Open.

To engage the fans for the SMBC Singapore Open at Sentosa's Serapong course from Jan 18 to 21, the organisers have lined up two key events before and during event.



DISCOVER GOLF CARNIVAL:

The Discover Golf Carnival on Jan 14 (from 2pm to 6pm) at Sentosa Golf Club will feature various fun activities where participants can hone their golfing skills and bond with their friends and family.

● Open to friends and families; inexperienced and experienced golfers, the carnival has something for everyone with goodie bags and lucky draw prizes up for grabs too. The activities include:

● For kids and novices: Operated by Totts Golf – FootGolf, Kiddy's Golf Safari, SNAG Golf, Golf Croquet, Golf Ball Tattoo station.

● For skilled golfers:

Skills Challenge (pre-registration required at: <http://smbcsingaporeopen.com/discover-golf-carnival/>).

BEAT THE PRO CONTEST:

The second event is Beat The Pro, set for Jan 18 and 19.

● Amateurs of different ages and ability will be able to challenge themselves against the star players in the "Beat the Pro" contest during the opening two rounds of the SMBC Singapore Open.

● The challenge will see 10 pre-selected amateurs attempt to hit their ball closer to the hole than the pros at the par-three, hole 2 while the tournament is being played and shown live on television.

● Those who manage to beat the pro get to win prizes from partners and official tournament merchandise.

● The amateurs will be selected from a social media contest, currently ongoing. To stand a chance to enter the contest, interested participants will have to post a video of their swing on the SMBC Singapore Open's Facebook page or on their own Instagram, tag the page and hashtag #SingOpen.

Patrick Feizal Joyce, Vice President, Golf – Asia, Lagardère Sports, receives the award from Cho Minn Thant (above, right), COO, Asian Tour.

TICKET DETAILS

STANDARD

(General Course Pass – Adult)*†

- Thurs: \$20, Fri: \$20, Sat: \$30, Sun: \$30
- Season: \$60

(General Course Pass – Child)

- Thurs: \$5, Fri: \$5, Sat: \$10, Sun: \$10
- Season: \$15

(VIP Passes)

- Thurs: \$400, Fri: \$400, Sat: \$600, Sun: \$600
- Season: \$1,800

*Senior Citizen/ Student/ NSF – 25% Savings off General Course Pass (Adult)

†Group Discount – 10% off General Course Pass (minimum group booking of 10 passes)

● Tickets can be purchased by visiting: www.smbcsingaporeopen.com
All proceeds from the sale of passes in the children's category (children aged between 5 and 12 years old) will be donated to the ARC Children's Centre – the event's official charity.

photo by Asian Tour