



Above; Allison Lee (far left) and Jessica Korda jointly cut their birthday cake in the company of Austin Ernst.

BY GODFREY ROBERT

# PARAGON PARADE FOR SIX WORLD'S LEADING LADY GOLFERS

It was the usual busy Monday afternoon on Feb 27 at the Paragon Shopping Centre at Orchard Road. But it was unusual for two gleaming Jaguars to whiz through the congested Bideford Road traffic and screech to a halt at the driveway beside the main lobby.

"What's the fuss about?" shopper Billy Ong exclaimed. To whom I answered: "We have some special guests, women golfers for the HSBC Champions."

"Can get autographs," he whispered. "Sure, ask them once they have settled down," I replied.

So he trailed them, all through the 45 minutes when they were ushered into three major shops, namely Tod's, Jimmy Choo and Loewe (all within walking distance at level one), stuffed with high-end handbags, snazzy shoes and even stylish sunglasses.

Organised by the Singapore Press Holdings REIT, owners of the centre, the six world-class women golfers, namely Catriona Matthew, Jessica Korda, Charley Hull, Allison Lee and Austin Ernst (Feng Shanshan was to come later because her flight from Bangkok was arriving late) were specially invited to visit the shops.

SPH also gave them shopping vouchers, which they used subsequently to top up for some great bargains.

But not before their stop at the Greyhound Café where they were treated to some delectable finger food, champagne and other drinks. And later, a lovely Salted Caramel Macadamia Layer cake from Chalk Farm was brought up to celebrate two birthdays – that of Korda (24 that day) and Lee (22 the previous day).

In a brief interview at the cafe, I got some insights about the six elite golfers, namely their introduction into golf and their other



Above; Charley Hull and Catriona Matthew lead the way at Tod's.

Left; Catriona Matthew checking out Tod's shoe collections, while Allison Lee, Charley Hull and Jessica Korda look on.

interests outside the golf courses.

Lee and Ernst love shopping and baking, Korda and Hull like going to pubs and nightclubs and Matthew enjoys sightseeing. All of them also have a fancy for Asian food.

And, as though choreographed, they all were unanimous in pencilling in Singapore as one of their most attractive destinations because, as emphasised by Matthew, "the city is beautiful, the variety of food out of this world, the shopping is paradise and the security and safety are something seen in very few cities."

Feng, who arrived at the Greyhound Café after the quintet had left for shopping, also stressed that Singapore was one of her favourite venues.

Always smiling and deep in high spirits, Feng, who has



Above; Jessica Korda at Jimmy Choo and the golfers at Loewe (below).



been in Singapore for the event since it was held at Tanah Merah Country Club in 2012, added: "I love shopping, and Paragon is one of my 'must visit' centres. There are so many lovely shops here that offer a variety of items.

"Oh, and the food, it is simply superb. I always make it a point to enjoy chilli crab when I come here," she said as she licked her lips.

After she tucked into the pastries and delicacies, and washed them down with a glass of white wine, Feng said: "Where's my voucher, time for some shopping now. Hopefully, I make some good money at the championships starting on Thursday, and I'll be back here."

As she left the cafe, shopper Billy Ong approached her for an autograph, and the Chinese ace duly obliged. As she always does with a big smile.

photos courtesy of SPH Reit