

Asian Golf Explorer

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AUGUST 2007 / 2nd ISSUE

FEATURE
GOLF IN JAPAN
DANGER
PRD HAZARDS

FAST BOAT TO CHINA

3 GREAT GOLF TRIPS BY FERRY

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The fourth at Nansha Golf Club, Valley Course



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Hellish Hazards



As this issue goes to print, the British Open is in full swing over at Carnoustie. The Championship has yet to be decided (I'm liking Sergio and his new-found prowess on the greens – bang go his chances by saying that, I'm sure) but the course itself has already proved to be a winner. Memories of 'Carnasty' and poor old Jean Van de Velde going for paddle at the eighteenth in 1999 might not have completely left us, but you can't argue with the way the fabled links has been set up this time around – *c'est magnifique*, as the Frenchman himself might say. What makes Carnoustie such a fabulous test, it has been argued by commentators on networks the world over, is its hazards. With the Barry Burn snaking its way mischievously through the course and those menacingly deep pot bunkers causing strife for all those unlucky enough to find themselves in them, this great links is defined by its horrifying hazards.

But Carnoustie is not alone. OK, so southern China doesn't boast too many courses of the calibre of Carnoustie, but it does have its fair share of memorable and, at times, breathtaking hazards, which you can read about in our "Card-wreckers" story on page 20. Elsewhere in this issue we chug up the Pearl River to check out three great courses best-accessed by ferry, visit Japan to play a handful of some of the most memorable courses on the planet and get an inside look into the life of a professional golf course photographer.

Although we at *Asian Golf Explorer* tend not to cover much in the way of tournament golf, we have to make special mention to the brilliant performance of the Hong Kong Golf Association's representatives at last month's Callaway Junior World Championship in California. Congratulations to Sihao Yan who finished third in the boys 7-8 age division, his brother Sibon who placed fifth in the boys 9-10 age division and Steven Lam who impressed all week and finished in a share of sixteenth in the fiercely competitive boys 13-14 age group. Well done, lads. You've done us proud.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Jenkins". The signature is stylized with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Alex Jenkins
Editor

Golf Show at Central Golf

"Experts in Golf Instruction"

Date: Sunday, 26th August 2007
Venue: Central Golf, Shop G3, Bank of America Tower, 12 Harcourt Road, Central, H.K.
Time: 10.00 - 1.30 pm
Target: Golfers
Participants: 40
Cost: \$250 per head (snacks & drinks provided)
RSVP: Golf 007 Tel: **2187 3146** (Judy)

PROGRAM RUNDOWN

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 10.00 - 10.30am | Registration (sign up for activities) |
| 10.30 - 11.15am | Golf Seminar by Malaysian PGA Pro Sean Lim
Conducted in English (topic: Tournament Preparation)
Q & A time |
| 11.15 - 1.15pm | Free to participate in the any of the activities below:
Putting Area: 10-min Putting Analysis with PGA Pro
Studio 3: 10-min Swing Analysis with PGA Pro
Studio 2: Longest Drive Competition
Studio 1: 30-min Workshop clinic with Club fitter
Bay 1: 15-min Static Fitting with qualified fitters
Bay 2: 5-min Static Fitting with qualified fitters |
| 1.15 - 1.30pm | Lucky draw & prize giving |



British PGA Pro James Brown



Malaysian PGA Pro Sean Lim

SIGN up on the above activities on the day!

*Other than the competition & workshop clinic, each guest can enroll in 1 other activity listed above.



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FAST BOAT TO CHINA

Great golf trips by ferry...

Translated by Vincent Chow

Fed up with hauling your clubs across the border on the dreaded yellow bus and getting stuck in the monstrously long immigration queue? If so, now might be the time to explore your ferry options. Some of the region's premier courses are best accessed by boat, so put down your bag, unfurl that newspaper and cruise in comfort to these Pearl River gems.

Nansha Golf Club.....page 8
Chung Shan Hot Spring Golf Club.....page 12
Gaoming Silver Ocean Golf Club.....page 18





Bridges and birdies: the fourth hole at Nansha's Valley Course.

DESTINATION: **NANSHA**

One of the most popular clubs in Guangdong, Nansha, just over an hour's ferry ride from Hong Kong, offers two courses of contrasting character and difficulty.

According to those in the real estate business, it's all about location. The same could almost be said of playing golf across the border. Sure, there are some brilliant tracks tucked away in the depths of the Guangdong countryside but not everyone has the time, let alone the inclination, to spend hours getting there.

It's no wonder, then, why Nansha is so popular with Hong Kong-based golfers. Hop on the ferry at either Sheung Wan or Tsim Sha Tsui and in ninety minutes you'll be slipping into your spikes and heading to the first tee at either of this daily fee club's two courses. This is as about as hassle-free as travelling to China's courses gets, so if you're on a

tight schedule then this place merits serious consideration.

Nansha's two 18-hole layouts offer contrasting challenges to the recreational golfer. The Valley Course is the shorter of the pair and should be the choice for those easing themselves back into the game after a lengthy layoff. It's not a walk in the park (although you can at least

This is as about as hassle-free as travelling to China's courses gets, so if you're on a tight schedule then this place merits serious consideration.

walk; unlike 90% of the region's courses carts aren't mandatory – at least for the time being), but it is fairly generous off the tee, and while water is much in evidence – it makes an appearance on the majority of holes – most of it is used to add visual splendour rather than to give you a really hard time.

The Mountain Course, on the other hand, is most certainly not a walk in the park. Not only is it much longer than the Valley (over 6,500 yards from the blue tees), but it's also much tighter. Decent hitting is most definitely required; seven of the par-fours here measure in excess of 400-yards, which spells disaster for those looking to keep their GIR stats intact.

Rambling up and down across rugged terrain, the Mountain Course features little in the way of water, but then again it doesn't really need to; the jungle that flanks the fairways does more than enough damage. It might sound like a bit of a monster, which for most of us it certainly is, but those who take up the challenge are rewarded with some splendid views of the Pearl River and the little cargo barges that ply their way between Hong Kong and Guangzhou.

For those who are able to produce Fred Funk-like accuracy off the tee, though, then there are a few birdie opportunities out there: the par-fives are short enough to encourage many to 'go for it' and there are a couple of generous par-fours on the back-nine that will doubtless succumb to low scoring. But trouble lurks around every corner for the wayward and first-timers will do very well to play within a handful of strokes of their allotted handicap allowance. Unlike the Valley Course, golf carts are mandatory on the Mountain Course, which is probably just as well given the terrain.

In the middle of 2005 Nansha made the bold (and somewhat surprising)

Easy life (clockwise from above): a caddie giving some extra assistance; the first at the Valley Course requires a heft hit over water.

decision to change all the greens on both courses to bent-grass. Re-turfing putting surfaces isn't exactly cheap, so the club deserves praise; they realized they had a serious problem with their old bermuda greens and took action. Bent-grass, especially in the cooler winter months, provides a silky-smooth surface but it costs a fortune to maintain in tropical climates. So far so good, however, and following the Valley Course's recent conversion, Nansha is the only club in the region to use this superior strain on all thirty-six holes (As far as we know, the Palmer Course at Chung Shan Hot

Spring is the only other course which uses bent-grass).

Because of its handy location and generally excellent playing surfaces, getting a game at Nansha on the weekend can be tricky, so book well in advance to avoid disappointment.



ACCOMMODATION + NIGHTLIFE

Clean and decent rooms are available in the club's accommodation annex. If you're planning on staying the night another option is the Nansha Grand Hotel (10mins; RMB20). Nansha isn't exactly a hive of activity after hours, and this five-star offering, with its choice of Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, late night bar and massage centre is pretty much the only diversion. For those willing to go a bit further then the 3-star Clifford Hotel (30mins; RMB60) near Panyu offers similar amenities but at cheaper prices.

NEED TO KNOW

NANSHA GOLF CLUB

Valley District, Guangzhou Nansha
Economic Technology Development
Zone, Guangzhou, Guangdong
Tel: +86 20 8468 1688
Fax: +86 20 8468 0728

Valley Course

Par: 72. Yardage: 6,611 / 6,181 / 5,843 / 5,344
Course/Slope Rating:

71.4/126 / 69.4/123 / 67.9/119 / 70.3/118

Mountain Course

Par: 72. Yardage: 6,996 / 6,512 / 6,059 / 5,612
Course/Slope Rating:

73.5/130 / 71.2/126 / 69.2/122 / 72.0/123

Designed by John Jacobs

Daily fee club; no membership.
Caddies mandatory; carts mandatory
on the Mountain Course only.

GETTING THERE

China Ferry Terminal (T.S.T) <>

Nansha Ferry Terminal:

Outbound: 08:00, 09:00, 13:00, 14:00,
and 15:30;
Inbound: 09:30, 11:00, 12:00, 16:00,
and 17:30.

HK-Macau Ferry Terminal (Sheung Wan) <> Nansha Ferry Terminal:

Outbound: 08:20
Inbound: 15:00

Sailing Time: Approx 1hr 10mins.

Nansha Ferry Terminal <> Club: Club
shuttle bus; 5mins.

COSTS

1 Day Package

Weekday: \$790 Weekend: \$1,150
Note: includes 1 x Green Fee, 1 x Caddie
Fee, Locker, Lunch, HK<>Nansha Ferry
Ticket, Pier<>Club Transfer.

2 Day Package

Weekday: \$1,360 Weekday/Weekend:
\$1,600 Weekend: \$1,820
Note: includes 2 x Green Fee, 2 x Caddie
Fee, Locker Fee, HK <> Nansha Ferry
Ticket, Pier <> Club Transfer, Club
Resort (Twin Share).

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在地產項目上，地理位置佔上很大的重要性；然而，這道理亦適用於球場上。為數不少的漂亮球場都坐落在較偏遠的廣東地區，部份球友未必能擠出太多時間，放下工作或家庭，長途跋涉地去打一場球。

所以，香港球友們對南沙情有獨鍾，從尖沙嘴搭船往南沙港只需 90 分鐘航程，抵達後，乘五分鐘車便抵達球會，可以馬上換上球鞋、拿起球桿，準備在這兩個 18 洞的球場上揮出第一桿。交通極為方便亦省卻過境人多的煩惱，對時間緊迫的人來說，南沙絕對是個好選擇。

兩個 18 洞球場各具特色，挑戰性各異。谷場總長度較短，對初學著或不常打球的人比較容易應付，但並不是像在公園裡走著玩那樣簡單乏味（這裡可選擇走路而不用球車），其設計甚具趣味性，球道落點相對較寬闊，水障礙很多，不過你不要過份擔憂，因為大部份水障只是讓球場看起來更優美，並非用來為難你。

山場相對來說比較長，總長超過 6,500 碼（藍丁），球道很窄，發球也需要擊出一定距離才能獲得好成績，其中七個 4 桿洞更超過 400 碼的長度，想以標準桿上果嶺非易事。和谷場不同的是，山場較少水障區，然而，球道兩旁的密茂樹木，加上地形起伏大，才是其殺著，已經讓一般球手足夠的煩惱；不過，正因為高低起伏的地勢才讓人可一睹珠三角美麗的風景。不過，如果你的發球有如美巡賽職業選手 Fred Funk 的一樣穩健，想打“小鳥”也不難，你會發現幾個短 5 桿洞不斷地向你招手，鼓勵著你可以嚐試以兩杆攻上果嶺，後 9 洞亦有一些較“和藹可親”的 4 桿洞，都是拿 Birdie 或 Par 的好機會，將已經打爛的球洞“沖淡一些”。話雖如此，山場仍然是危機四伏，首次到訪者或許打出比自己差點高五杆已算不錯。

山場可以選擇步行或用球車，但在夏天最好還是用球車比較好（星期六、日或假期必須使用）。

2005 年的時候，球會有一震撼性的決定，那就是把球場的果嶺草全換上優質的“Bent Grass”本特草來取代原先的百慕達草，花費巨大之餘，亦不容易打理，

在此要向球會致敬。本特草在冬天能提供如絲柔順的推桿表面，雖然夏天的保養不容易，幸好這一年多來甚為理想，球友的反應非常好，接下來谷場也剛完成換草工程。到目前為止，南沙是第一間中國球會擁有 36 洞本特草果嶺。

因為交通方便、價格合理和頂尖的草坪保養，所以極具吸引力，人流旺盛，所以提早預訂是非常重要的，尤其是週末及假日。 **AGE**

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球場資訊：

谷場

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坡度難度值：71.4/126

山場

標準桿72，全長6,996碼

坡度難度值：73.5/130

球場設計：John Jacobs

如何前往：

搭船：

(1) 從尖沙嘴中港碼頭往南沙港

去程：08:00, 09:00, 13:00, 14:00, and 15:30

回程：09:30, 11:00, 12:00, 16:00, and 17:30

(2) 從港澳碼頭前往南沙港

去程：08:20

回程：15:00

航程：1小時10分鐘

穿梭巴士：

南沙碼頭至球會：車程5分鐘

住宿：

球會裡有別墅區可留宿。另可選南沙大酒店（五星；離球會10分鐘），或祈福大酒店（三星；離球會30分鐘）



**Nifty Nansha (clockwise from top left):
the club's villa accommodation; an ornate feature
by the first tee; not quite the Swilcan Bridge; they
take their course maintenance seriously at Nansha;
a lady tees off late in the afternoon.**





Chung Shan challenge: the wonderful ninth, Palmer Course.

Grand Dame of Chinese Golf

At the ripe old age of 23, Chung Shan Hot Spring Golf Club continues to prove that it's still one of the best around.

Chung Shan Hot Spring is, and will be forever known as, the grand dame of Chinese golf. Opened for play in 1984, the club's first course – the Palmer – is modern China's oldest layout and, as such, holds a special place in the history of the game. Constructed at a time when wooden clubs were actually made of wood and ultra-high spinning balatas were the balls of choice, the Palmer Course might be considered short by today's titanium-enriched standards, but it still manages to retain a distinctly regal air with its narrow tree-lined fairways and

small well-protected greens.

The Nicklaus Course, which opened nine years later, ranks among the finest that the Golden Bear has put his name to in Asia and is almost the complete antithesis of its older brother. Long hitters have the advantage here, but with expansive bunkering and large, strongly contoured greens, only visitors who come armed with a stellar short game have a semi-realistic chance at matching par. Together, these two sublime courses cement Chung Shan's status as one of the finest clubs in the Middle Kingdom.

Palmer Course

Golfers playing the Palmer Course for the first time can be forgiven for thinking they've been whisked 6,000 miles west to the English Home counties. The course might well be the oldest in China but it looks much older than its twenty-three years would suggest. Bordered by mature trees and a striking variety of vegetation the Palmer's tranquil setting is enhanced by the quality of the King's design. Unlike modern construction methods used on today's courses, the Palmer was put together entirely by



Afternoon tea: The Palmer Course has an English Home counties feel to it.

hand; indeed, it provided a useful source of income for hundreds of local villagers who, despite not having the faintest idea about the game, worked tirelessly for two years shaping the course you see today.

The layout itself is situated on gently rolling terrain and, because of the variety of holes, favours players who can maneuver the ball both ways. The dogleg left par four third is a case in point. A soft draw from the tee, through a chute of trees, is required on this medium length gem. Flared drives will most likely leave you stymied behind foliage and in a tricky lie in the rough. A canal that runs diagonally through the fairway about forty yards short of the green, meanwhile, ensures that miss-hit approaches get punished. A deservedly famous hole and one of the most taxing on the course.

Like Nansha Golf Club, the Palmer Course has bent-grass greens, and come the cooler winter months these are smoothest putting surfaces in the province and an absolute delight to putt on.

The one peculiarity of the Palmer, in our opinion, is that the opening hole is the toughest on the course. Measuring

negotiated off the tee it's not the kind of scenario that fills weekend golfers with a whole lot of confidence. Still, you can take solace in the fact that things become a lot more bearable afterwards.

The Palmer is also one of the few courses in the region that you *have* to walk. Aided by undoubtedly the most

Together, these two sublime courses cement Chung Chan's status as one of the finest clubs in the Middle Kingdom.

in excess of 400 metres (that's over 440-yards; Chung Shan uses the metric system for some reason) this straightaway par four requires a heroic drive just to get within long iron or hybrid distance of the well-bunkered green. With a large pond and a fairway bunker having to be

knowledgeable (if not the chirpiest) caddies in the country, it's fair to say this is the closest you'll get in Guangdong to experiencing golf in the form it was meant to be played. In short, the Palmer is a gloriously unique track with heritage to boot. Not to be missed.



ACCOMMODATION + NIGHTLIFE

Simple rooms are available at the club's Members' Village, but those looking for a little more comfort might prefer to stay at the nearby **Chung Shan Hot Spring Resort**, which has recently reopened after a lengthy renovation. More adventurous types may prefer to spend the night in nearby Sanxiang. The best choice here is the small but comfortable **Agile Hotel** in the centre of town.

For traditional Portuguese cuisine in convivial surroundings try **Batalha** (+86 (0) 760 3386 808) situated in Sanxiang's main square. The restaurant serves a decent array of wines and its bar is a favourite hangout with Chung Shan members. **Pulau Seribu** (+86 136 8015 2232), close to McDonalds on the main road, is a good place to go for Indonesian delights, while nearby **Pear Flower** (+86 (0) 760 6336 162) dishes out tasty Korean treats.

Nicklaus Course

Seven years after collecting his sixth (and we're guessing final) green jacket, Jack Nicklaus played his course at Chung Shan on the official opening day and shot a 75. OK, he might not have been in the form of his life but Nicklaus was still a very fine player, so his three-over-par total should give a very clear indication of the difficulty of this magnificent layout.

As typifies a Nicklaus Course, Chung Shan's version is long but generous off the tee, with large, normally slick putting surfaces protected on all sides by vast acres of sand. But there's a lot more to it than that. Featuring constant - and sometimes dramatic - elevation change, the course now flows its way deliciously

through majestic dense greenery, which has matured significantly over the past decade. Water is also much in evidence, although the 18-time major champ has used it efficiently rather than submerge the whole landscape in it, which is perhaps one saving grace for higher handicappers.

Make no mistake, this is a serious test of golf but there are a few birdie opportunities out there. The par fives, although soundly guarded, are short enough to leave a wedge at most for the third shot if played conservatively, and the par threes, which are, incidentally, a brilliant collection of short holes, become decidedly more comfortable if tackled from the member's blue tees, rather than the monstrously long tips.



Guarded greens (clockwise from top left): Nicklaus' brilliant bunkering; steeping stones at the third, Palmer Course; a pond bisects the Palmer's fourth fairway.



NEED TO KNOW

CHUNG SHAN HOT SPRING GOLF CLUB

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Tel: +86 760 6690 055

Fax: +86 760 6690 108

Website: www.cshsgc.com.cn

Palmer Course

Par: 71. Yardage:

6,484 / 6,284 / 5,774 / 5,057

Course/Slope Rating:

71.9/129 / 71.2/128 / 68.8/123 / 69.8/119

Nicklaus Course

Par: 72. Yardage:

6,995 / 6,654 / 6,310 / 5,385

Course/Slope Rating:

73.7/128 / 72.2/124 / 70.6/121 / 71.0/121

Designed by Arnold Palmer (Palmer) and Jack Nicklaus (Nicklaus)

Private club; visitors welcome on weekdays throughout the year and on weekends during the low season.

Caddies mandatory; carts mandatory on Nicklaus Course.

GETTING THERE

China Ferry Terminal (T.S.T) <>

Zhuhai Ferry Terminal:

Outbound: 07:30, 08:30, 09:30, 11:30, 13:30, 15:30, 17:30 and 19:00.

Inbound: 08:00, 10:00, 12:00, 14:00, 16:00, 17:00 and 17:30.

HK-Macau Ferry Terminal (Sheung Wan) <> Zhuhai Ferry Terminal:

Outbound: 08:40, 10:30, 12:30, 14:30, 16:30, 18:00, 19:30 and 21:30.

Inbound: 09:00, 11:00, 13:00, 15:00, 16:30, 18:00, 19:30, 20:30 and 21:30.

Sailing Time: Approx 1hr 10mins.

Zhuhai Ferry Terminal <> Club: Taxi; 35mins, approx RMB100.

COSTS

1 Day Package

Palmer Course - Weekday: \$930

Weekend: \$1,710

Nicklaus Course - Weekday: \$860

Weekend: \$1,420*

*Tee off after 1pm only

Cart surcharge (Nicklaus): \$220

Note: includes 1 x Green Fee, 1 x Caddie Fee, Locker, Lunch (weekdays only), HK <> Zhuhai Ferry Ticket.

TO BOOK CALL + 852 2187 3146



中山溫泉高爾夫球會

廣東省中山市三鄉

電話: (86) 760 6690055

傳真: (86) 760 6690108

電郵: golf@gccs.com.hk

網址: www.cshsgc.com.cn

球場資訊:

阿諾龐瑪球場

標準桿 71, 全長 5,929 碼

球道 / 坡度難度值: 73.7/128

球場設計: 阿諾龐瑪

積尼告斯球場

標準桿 72, 全長 6,396 碼

球道 / 坡度難度值: 73.7/128

球場設計: 積尼告斯

如何前往:

搭船

(1) 從港澳碼頭前往珠海九州港

航班: 08:40, 10:30, 12:30, 14:30, 16:30, 19:30, 21:30, 航程: 1 小時 10 分鐘

回程航班: 09:00, 11:00, 13:00, 15:00, 18:00, 19:30, 20:30

(2) 從尖沙嘴中港碼頭往珠海九州港

航班: 07:30, 08:30, 09:30, 11:30, 13:30, 15:30, 17:30, 航程: 1 小時 10 分鐘

回程航班: 08:00, 10:00, 12:00, 14:00, 16:00, 17:00

碼頭來回球會

球會穿梭巴士只限週五、六、日和假日的士: 35 分鐘 (約 100 元人民幣)

住宿:

可選於球會之會員村留宿, 或剛翻新之中山溫泉賓館 (4 星) 及市中心之雅居樂酒店

中山溫泉在中國高爾夫界是大名鼎鼎的“祖父輩”球會, 1984 年開業, 第一座球場——阿諾龐瑪, 是現代中國最古老的球場, 在中國高爾夫歷史上佔有一席重要的地位。在那個時代, 木桿就是用真正用木頭製造, 高旋轉性的球是用巴拉塔斯 (Balatas) 物料製作出來, 今時今日我們用鈦金屬球桿來應付阿諾龐瑪球場, 也許會感到距離稍短, 但是, 兩旁植滿茂盛樹林的狹窄球道與面積極小且被嚴密保護的果嶺, 讓它仍保持著無與倫比的尊貴地位。而 1993 年啟用、由“金熊”積尼告斯設計且簽名的積尼告斯球場, 則被肯定為金熊在亞洲的作品中表表者。它與阿諾龐瑪球場幾乎是完全相反, 距離長, 重炮手在此會有很大的優勢, 但要留意那些大而深的沙坑、起伏頗大的果嶺, 球道擊球的準確度, 短桿技巧如果夠熟練, 那將會有極大的回報。兩座球場各有千秋, 都是使中山溫泉成為全國最佳球會之一的大功臣。

阿諾龐瑪球場

第一次打阿諾龐瑪球場的人, 可能會感覺像飛越 6,000 英哩到英國的古老球場揮桿, 是可以理解的。因為這個球場是中國歷史最悠久的, 而且看起來遠比 20 年歷史更為古老。到處佈滿成熟茂密的大樹和植物, 營造出龐瑪獨特而超卓不凡的設計。不像今日其他利用現代化方法建造的球場, 龐瑪球場的一沙一石全由人手堆砌; 而這些上千名人手都是來自當地村民, 他們當初完全不知道什麼是高爾夫, 卻能憑著認真辛勤的巧工, 以兩年時間造出現在你我看見的龐瑪球場。

球場地勢屬於平坦, 因為有好幾個不同走勢的狗腿洞, 若球手能夠懂得打出不同效果的飛行路線, 將會有相當的優勢。標準桿 4 桿的第三洞便為一例。略呈左狗腿走勢, 穿過樹叢要打出向左的弧形飛行線。如果不小心偏右了 (對右手球手來說更容易如此), 球要不是落在樹後被樹阻擋去路, 便就是掉到難以處理的長草區裡。球道中間到果嶺前約 40 碼處橫臥著一條小河流, 意味著如果有任何失誤, 都將會得到“處罰”。這個洞的難度可說是全場最高的, 也因此“威名遠播”, 無人不知, 無人不曉。

龐瑪球場其中一個突出之處是果嶺採

用“Bent Grass”本特草種。幾乎每一座廣東省的球場都會選擇較硬的百慕達草種, 但在較冷的冬天月份, 本特草就會成為全省最柔順的果嶺草皮, 站在上面推桿絕對是一種享受。

我們認為龐瑪球場的較有“問題”在於全場最困難的球洞就是第一洞。第一洞球道長度超過 400 米 (亦即超過 440 碼, 中山溫泉球會使用公制米單位), 標準桿 4 桿加上筆直的球道, 要求球手在未完全熱身的情況下, 要揮出一記英雄式的長距離開球, 然後再來一桿長鐵, 才能直搗被沙坑環繞的果嶺。不容開球有任何妥協的大水塘和球道沙坑, 讓假日型球手 (就算是具備十足信心) 備感壓力, 還好, 過了第一洞的嚴厲考驗, 之後會豁然開朗。

龐瑪球場是廣東地區中少數必須走路打球的球場之一。沒有球車, 但是有全中國高爾夫知識最豐富的球僮 (他們早在球場建立初期就開始投入服務), 可以說, 在這裡打一場球, 可以真真正正地體驗傳統的高爾夫。整體而言, 這個中國最古老球場——龐瑪球場是獨一無二的, 不容錯過。

積尼告斯球場

在積尼告斯第六度穿上綠夾克 (我們猜這是最後一次) 之後的第七年, 他到中山溫泉球會自己設計的積尼告斯球場開幕日打出了 75 桿, 雖然他未必能與其本身最巔峰狀態的時期相比, 但以他的實力, 超標準桿 3 桿的成績還是清清楚楚的告訴我們這個壯麗宏偉的球場絕對不容易征服。

正如尼告斯的典型設計, 中山溫泉的這個球場距離很長, 球道較寬闊, 果嶺大, 且週邊佈滿廣闊的沙坑, 可以放手開球, 但推球入洞仍然很考功夫。尼告斯場較多高低起伏的變化, 與龐瑪球場一樣, 球道在茂密雄偉的森林中穿梭, 加上巧妙地運用水障礙, 18 次大賽冠軍的積尼告斯有效地令難度大大提高, 高差點球手打得不好也是無可厚非的。

即使尼告斯球場不易馴服, 仍然有機會抓小鳥, 因為五杆洞雖然多陷阱, 但距離較短, 在第三桿看你的短打修為了。而三桿短洞有時也有驚喜, 如果從藍 T 或白 T 開球, 距離亦偏短較易應付。

如果打出比差點多幾桿的桿數, 已屬萬幸。AGE

Golfing in Guangdong Monthly Highlight

Nansha Golf Club

南沙高爾夫球會

Daytrip

Weekday HK\$790 / Weekend HK\$1,150

18 holes green fee, caddie, locker, lunch,

pier <> club transfer,

HK <> Nansha ferry ticket

2 Days:

Weekday HK\$1,360 / Weekday +

Weekend HK\$1,600 / Weekend HK\$1,820

2 x 18 holes green fee, caddie, locker,

breakfast, Club Resort (Twin share),

pier <> club transfer,

HK <> Nansha ferry ticket

Orient Golf Club, Macau

澳門(東方)高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$560 / Weekend HK\$1,200

18 holes green fee, caddie, shared cart,

locker

*Lunch included on weekend

Firestone Golf Club, Shenzhen

光明高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$560 / Weekend HK\$920

18 holes green fee, caddie, shared cart

and locker

* Set lunch included on Tuesday &

Wednesday

Green Bay Golf Club, Shenzhen

碧海灣高爾夫俱樂部

Weekday HK\$640 / Weekend HK\$1,110

18 holes green fee, caddie, locker fee

* Cart included on weekend,

No single cart surcharge

Yinli Foreign Investor Golf Club

銀利外商高爾夫俱樂部

Weekday HK\$650 / Weekend HK\$1,050

18 holes green fee, shared caddie & cart,

locker, set lunch,

Huanggang <> Club Shuttle

* Complimentary breakfast served on

Saturday & Sunday before 10:00

Long Island Golf Club, Dongguan

東莞長安高爾夫球會

Weekdays 2 days special HK\$1,550

2 x 18 holes green fee, shared caddie &

cart, locker, breakfast, one set lunch,

Club Resort (Twin share)

*HK <> Club shuttle is available at

HK\$143 per person

Agile Golf Club, Zhongshan

中山長江高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$970 / Weekend HK\$1,890

18 holes green fee, caddie, Shared cart,

HK <> Zhongshan ferry ticket

Lotus Hill Golf Club

蓮花山高爾夫球會

Daytrip

Weekday HK\$780 / Weekend HK\$1,180

18 holes green fee, caddie, locker, lunch,

pier <> club transfer, HK <> Lotus Hill

ferry ticket

2 Days

Weekday HK\$1,490 / Weekday + Weekend

HK\$1,900 / Weekend HK\$2,290

2 x 18 holes green fee, caddie, locker,

breakfast, lunch, Club Resort (Twin

share), pier <> club transfer,

HK <> Lotus Hill ferry ticket

Orient Golf Club Zhuhai

珠海(東方)高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$640(Tue) HK\$680 /

Weekend HK\$990

18 holes green fee, caddie, locker,

HK <> Zhuhai ferry ticket

* Set lunch included on Tuesday,

Pier <> Club roundtrip shuttle available

at HK\$55 per person.

Golden Gulf Golf Club Zhuhai

金灣高爾夫俱樂部

Weekday HK\$730(Mon) HK\$830 /

Weekend HK\$1,160

18 holes green fee, caddie, Shared cart,

free range warm up, Pier <> club shuttle,

HK <> Zhuhai ferry ticket

Lakewood Golf Club Zhuhai

翠湖高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$740 / Weekend HK\$1,150

18 holes green fee, caddie, lunch,

HK <> Zhuhai ferry ticket

* Pier <> Club roundtrip shuttle

available at HK\$55 per person.

Palm Island Golf Resort, Huizhou

棕櫚島高爾夫球會

Weekday HK\$890 / Weekend Special

Offer

18 holes green fee, caddie, shared cart,

locker, HK <> Club Shuttle

Lake Front Golf Resort, Huizhou

湖景高爾夫渡假村

Weekend HK\$820

18 holes green fee, shared caddie & cart,

locker, Huanggang <> Club shuttle



For more packages,
please visit www.golf007.com
or call (852) 2187 3146



Where is everybody?
Not much here apart
from great golf.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

Gaoming Silver Ocean Golf Club, a three hour sail up the Pearl River, might not boast a huge array of facilities, but if it is peace and quiet you want then this little beauty is well worth the trip.



There's no mega clubhouse, no fancy spas or saunas; there's not even any of those security guards who insist on saluting your every move. All they've got is an uncomplicated clubhouse, a dilapidated driving range and a cracking 18-hole track that beats the pants off a great many other courses who have ploughed millions into their marketing efforts.

Well, it's good, very good in actual fact, and because of the lack of visitors – more than likely you'll have the course to yourself – and the natural beauty of the place, this is one of the most rewarding golf trips that you can take.

As you might have guessed, Gaoming is a bit different. There's no mega clubhouse, no fancy spas or saunas; there's not even any of those security guards who insist on saluting your every move. All they've got is an uncomplicated clubhouse, a dilapidated driving range and a cracking 18-hole track that beats the pants off a great many other courses who have ploughed millions into their marketing efforts. This is as simple as golf gets in China and by golly it's refreshing.

Routed through a series of wonderfully wooded valleys, it's fair to say there's nothing particularly easy about Gaoming. Opening up with a daunting par four, which requires a fairly lengthy carry over water with the approach, the course meanders uphill and down dale throughout and features an excellent variety of holes that test the driving ability and putting touch of all who play it. It's not long by any stretch of the imagination – from the tips it barely covers 6,650 yards, while the blues come in at a very accommodating 6,227 yards – but it's tight, and those who can keep it on the straight and narrow will beat the wayward gorillas every time. The greens, which can be a decidedly elusive bunch to hit even

when you're slap bang in the middle of the fairway, are considered small by current golf course architectural trends and are tricky to read thanks to their strong contouring and, this being tropical Guangdong, their grain.

It would be easy to wax lyrical about the number of outstanding holes out there, but we'll keep our commendations reserved for the second – a glorious dogleg right par five that hugs the side of a lake; the ninth – a diminutive par four where the drive needs to be played through a chute of trees and where the short iron second is hit to a tiny green protected by both sand and water; and, finally, the 151-yard thirteenth, whose star-shaped island green tends to dominate post round discussion.

Because of the time required to travel there, and the rather limited ferry schedule, Gaoming is more suited for a weekend trip than a mad one day dash. If you're looking for other courses to play whilst in this neck of the woods try Gary Player-designed **Zhaoqing Resort and Golf Club**, a thirty minute taxi ride away.

ACCOMMODATION

The club has a hotel of sorts situated on-site. The rooms are clean and tidy although given the club's location, twenty minutes from the town of Gaoming, many will opt to stay at the four-star Royal Yin Hai Grand Hotel, which has better access to the town's plethora of restaurants, karaoke bars and massage joints.

If you like your golf off the beaten track then charming Gaoming Silver Ocean is the place to go. It's not as if the course is *that* difficult to get to: sit on a ferry for almost three hours and then hop in a taxi for twenty minutes and you're there. But hardly anyone ever golfs in this picturesque corner of the Pearl River Delta because they think it's simply too far away or, more likely, they've never actually heard of it.

NEED TO KNOW

GAOMING SILVER OCEAN GOLF CLUB

Renhe Town, Gaoming, Guangdong
Tel: +86 (0)757 8808 118
Fax: +86 (0)757 8801 163

Par: 72, Yardage:
6,663 / 6,227 / 5,896 / 5,452
Course/Slope Rating: N/A

Private Club; visitors welcome.
Carts and caddies are mandatory.

GETTING THERE

China Ferry Terminal (T.S.T.) <>
Gaoming Ferry Terminal
Outbound: 08:20
Inbound: 15:30
Sailing Time: Approx 2hrs 50mins
Gaoming Ferry Terminal <>
Gaoming Silver Ocean Golf Club:
Club shuttle bus; 20mins. A taxi
will cost approximately RMB50.

COSTS

2 Day Package

Weekday: \$1,200 Weekday/Weekend:
\$1,340 Weekend: \$1,460
Note: includes 2 x Green Fee, 2 x Cart &
Caddie Fee (shared), Locker Fee,
Breakfast, 2 x Lunch, HK <> Gaoming
Ferry Ticket, Pier <> Club Transfer,
Club Resort (Twin Share).

TO BOOK CALL + 852 2187 3146

如果你喜歡非一般的高爾夫挑戰，高明會是不容錯過的選擇；一般人認為高明球會很遠，需要乘搭3小時船程、加上20分鐘車程，我並不否認，不過，當您抵步後，你便不會再抱怨，而且會精神為之一振，這裡景色獨特，天然壯麗，寧靜舒泰，是一座難能可貴的漂亮球場；正因沒有太多球友注意到這座球場，球場人流並沒有像其他珠三角地區的球場那麼興旺，便變成這裡的「優點」之一，所以你太有機會獨佔球道，無須急急忙忙，可以慢慢欣賞風景、優哉游哉地享受揮桿之樂。

高明跟其他國內大部分球會所走的發展路線不大相同，這裡沒有大型豪華會所，也沒有水療按摩或桑拿設備，更沒有那些不論你走到哪裡都老是你舉手敬禮的保安員；只有簡單的會所、簡陋的練習場、和一個精彩的18洞球場，已經勝過很多花下千萬市場推廣的球會。這種簡單清爽的風格，在中國高爾夫業界中堪稱是一朵奇葩。

大多數球道徘徊於景色優美、樹林茂盛的山谷之中，跌宕起伏的走勢，說容易也是騙你的。Par 4的第一洞已經讓人頭疼不已，開球要既準確也要有距離，攻果嶺一刻要長距離飛越水障，球場彷彿向您先下馬威，警告著您千萬不能胡來。每個

球洞都有著不同刁鑽難度，球道高低起伏，開球和推球都要萬分準確。距離倒是不算太長，真正的總長大約6,650碼，如果打藍Tee也才6,227碼，主要難度在於球道狹窄，則有偏差，兩側的叢林隨時吞下你的小白球。而果嶺面積相對其他球場來說也屬於小康之家，而且大多數斜度甚高，令人較難正確判讀果嶺，草紋亦對推桿路線產生很大的影響。

事實上高明有很多特色球洞值得一提，但我們無法全部介紹，只能精挑細選幾個做代表：第2洞，是右狗腿的5桿洞，左面蜿蜒環抱著湖泊，右面是一片密林；第9洞，是短的4桿洞，發球要飛躍樹叢，然後用短鐵桿進攻細小又被沙池和水障保護的果嶺；第13洞，是151碼的3桿洞，它的星形果嶺絕對是你打完球後的「最佳話題」。

因為交通需時，渡輪航班少，我們建議最好週末假日去高明銀海歡度兩天，一天即日來回未免會很累。如果希望在兩天的行程內多嚐試另一球場，Gary Player設計的肇慶高爾夫球會就在附近，車程約30分鐘。 **AGE**

高明銀海高爾夫俱樂部

廣東省高明市人和鎮大沙水庫

電話: +86 (0)757 8808 118

傳真: +86 (0)757 8801 163

球場資訊:

標準桿72, 全長6,663碼

坡度難度值: 未有資料

球場設計:

如何前往:

搭船:

從中港碼頭至高明港:

航班時間08:20 航程: 2小時50分鐘

從高明港至中港碼頭

航班時間15:20 航程: 2小時50分鐘

球會週末假日提供穿梭巴士往返高明港(約20分鐘), 需事先致電球會查詢

搭的士:

高明市往球會: 約需50人民幣

住宿:

球會有住宿, 另可選市中心之銀海大酒店(4星)





Gorgeous Gaoming (clockwise from top): the water-fronted green at the second; the monstrously long par-five tenth plays uphill all the way; the delightful ninth; the par-three twelfth and its island green; not all of China's clubhouses are super-sized.



GOLF UPDATE

NEW PLAYS

SkyCity Nine Eagles Golf Course Gasp! Hong Kong has a new golf course. OK, so it's only 9 holes and it's at the airport but hey, golf is golf. This par-29 layout, which includes seven par threes and two par fours, features the SAR's only island green and is further characterized by vast waste bunkers. Open to airport users, the HK\$100 million project finally opened in mid-July and is floodlit to allow for night golf. The course's diminutive clubhouse includes a Thai restaurant. Full review in September issue of AGE.

For more details call +852 3760 6688.



Swinging at SkyCity: Hong Kong's newest course.



Mega Mission Hills: the Dye Course opens on the 1st August.



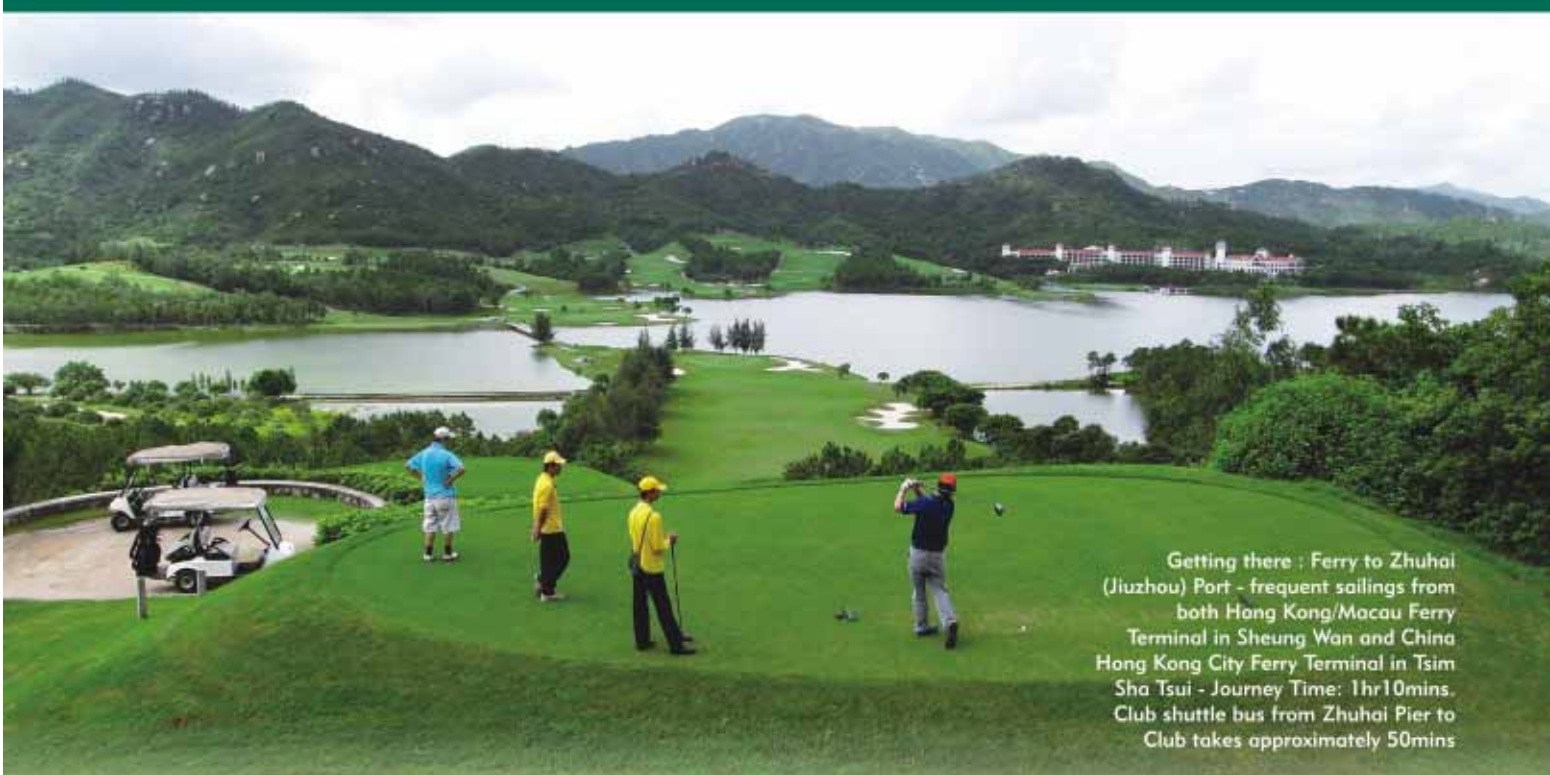
Zhang's par-three course harks back to another era.

Mission Hills Golf Club The world's biggest club just got bigger with the unveiling of two new (and very contrasting) courses. The **Zhang Course**, designed by former Chinese number one Zhang Lian-wei (with a little help from Brian Curley who, along with design partner Lee Schmidt, are the chief architects behind the majority of the club's layouts) officially opened on

the 18th July and is China's first eighteen hole track comprised entirely of par-threes, many of which have been inspired by the design features of some of the most famous holes in golf – the 118-yard seventeenth, for example, features a bunker in the middle of the green, reminiscent of the sixth at venerable Riviera Country Club. The **Dye Course**, on the other hand, is a full-blooded, no nonsense layout featuring plenty of elevation change and those characteristically penal Pete Dye bunkers. Like the notorious TPC at Sawgrass – home of the Players' Championship, the so-called 'fifth major' – Dye has incorporated over 3,000 railroad ties into his design. You'll have to have some influential friends if you want a round at either course however: both the Zhang and the Dye are open to Mission Hills Chartered Diamond members and their guests only.

Pine Valley Sports & Country Club

珠海萬盛鄉村俱樂部



Getting there : Ferry to Zhuhai (Jiuzhou) Port - frequent sailings from both Hong Kong/Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan and China Hong Kong City Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui - Journey Time: 1hr10mins. Club shuttle bus from Zhuhai Pier to Club takes approximately 50mins

Nested in a picturesque woodland hills, Pine Valley is an oasis of tranquility in mountainous and rural Doumen County, west of Zhuhai in China's Guangdong Province. Designed to the highest international standard, the Pine Valley 18 hole golf course is an integral part of the Club. Nature herself created a magnificent setting for this truly unique golf course. It offers a wide variety of interesting, and challenging playing conditions for the guests. Each holes is carefully crafted along the reservoir and rolling hills to provide one of the most scenic golf courses in the region



GOLF PACKAGES

Day Trip

Mon & Thu HK\$850

Tue, Wed, Fri HK\$930

Sat, Sun, Public Holidays HK\$1,250

18 Holes green fee,
shared caddie & cart, locker,
Pier transfer
HK <> Zhuhai ferry ticket

Two Days Package

Weekdays HK\$1,650

Fri + Sat HK\$1,820

Sun + Mon HK\$1,720

Weekends HK\$2,390

2 x 18 Holes green fee,
shared caddie & cart, locker,
Club Resort (Share twin),
Pier transfer
HK <> Zhuhai ferry ticket

Enquiry Hotline :

2187 3146

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GOLF UPDATE



Dragon Lake digs: Luxury accommodation at the Guangzhou club's quaint European-style village.



Angel in Asia: Cabrera will tee it up at November's Barclays Singapore Open.

NEW STAYS

Dragon Lake Golf Club Following the opening of an additional nine holes earlier this year, this Guangzhou club, situated within easy reach of the international airport, has cut the ribbon on the first phase of their European-style village, which includes a luxurious hotel and spa. The complex will eventually encompass retail outlets, a range of leisure facilities and a sizeable real estate zone.

Palm Island Resort Home to arguably the best golf course accommodation in the region, this Huiyang club, about an hour's drive from the border, has introduced another luxury sleeping option for golfers planning an overnight stay – a boutique hotel. Each of the two suites – the Lavender and the Orchid – includes two bedrooms (one en-suite) and comes complete with butler service, a private kitchen and balcony.

Call +852 2181 0232 for more details.



Room with a view: Palm Island's new boutique hotel overlooks the Nicklaus-designed course.

TOUR UPDATE

Recent US Open champ **Angel Cabrera** has announced that he will heading to Sentosa Golf Club for the Barclays Singapore Open, which takes place from 1-4 November. The chain-smoking, steak-eating Argentinean joins an already stellar list of players in the \$4 million event, which is considered the 'Major of Asia' – Ernie Els, Vijay Singh, Michael Campbell, Darren Clarke and defending champion Adam Scott have also confirmed their participation.

Lakefront Golf & Resort, Huizhou



Superbly located within the ancient city of Huizhou, just an hour and ten minutes from the Hong Kong border, Lakefront Golf Club and Resort has established itself as one of the premier golf retreats in the Pearl River Delta thanks to its first-class 18-hole championship golf course and five star accommodation and clubhouse amenities.

Taking advantage of its picturesque setting amid natural woodland, the CJ TAN-designed course features an excellent blend of holes that never fails to interest. Water, constant elevation change and routinely excellent playing surfaces combine to make this 7,013-yard layout a definite must-play.

Off the course Lakefront continues to impress. The extremely well-equipped clubhouse and resort features a plethora of facilities including a luxuriously appointed hotel that ranks among the region's best. Other amenities available on-site include: a spa, fine dining, swimming pool, tennis courts and a well-stocked pro shop.



LAKEFRONT

惠州海景高爾夫渡假村



Tee Booking

Weekday HK\$450 * / 490

Weekend & Public Holiday HK\$710

18 Holes Green Fee, Caddie,
Shared Cart, Locker Fee.

* Thursday Only, Included Set Lunch

Two Days Packages

Weekdays HK\$1,030

Fri & Sat or Sun & Mon HK\$1,310

Weekend & Public Holiday HK\$1,570

2 x 18 Holes Green Fee, Caddie,
Shared Cart, Locker Fee,
Breakfast, 5 Star Club Hotel (Share Twin)

Club Shuttle

are available now on Friday to Sunday

Roundtrip : HK\$160 per person
(Advance booking is required)

Huanggang Depart : 09:00

Club Depart: 17:30

1 hour 30mins from Huanggang

Enquiry Hotline :

(852)2187 3146



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Golfing Asia Monthly Highlight



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Chiangmai (清邁) 4 Days 3 Nights HK\$3,620 up

HK ⇨ Chiangmai Round Trip Air Ticket by TG
3 Nights Novotel Hotel (Twin share)
Daily Breakfast
Choice of 2 Rounds Weekdays Green Fee
(Green Valley / Highland / Lamphun / Gassan Khuntan / Marina /
Lake City Golf Course)
Airport ⇨ Hotel Transfer

Ho Chi Minh (胡志明) 4 Days 3 Nights HK\$3,980 up

HK ⇨ Ho Chi Minh Roundtrip Air Ticket by VN
3 Nights Windsor Plaza Hotel (Twin share)
Daily Breakfast
One Round Weekday Long Thanh Golf Club Green Fee & Caddie Fee
One Round Weekday Vietnam Country Golf Club Green Fee & Caddie Fee
Half Day City Tour & Entrance Fees
English / Cantonese Speaking Tour Guide
Land Transfer

Ria Bintan (民丹島) 4 Days 3 Nights HK\$3,860 up

HK ⇨ Singapore Roundtrip Air Ticket by CX
Singapore ⇨ Bintan Ferry Ticket
3 Nights Nirwana Resort Garden View Room (Twin share)
Daily Breakfast, 2 Dinner vouchers to consume meals at either
Nirwana Resort Hotel's
Jeju Restaurant or The Coffee Shop Buffet Restaurant.
Ria Bintan 2 x 18 Holes Green Fee, Caddie & Shared Cart
Bintan Pier ⇨ Resort Transfer

Johor (新山) Sofitel Palm Resort 3 Days 2 Nights HK\$3,080 up

HK ⇨ Singapore Roundtrip Air Ticket by CX
Two nights stay at Sofitel Palm Resort (Twin share)
Daily Breakfast
2 x 18 Holes green fee, caddie or shared cart
Singapore Airport ⇨ Hotel ⇨ Club transfer

Kuala Lumpur (吉隆坡) Deluxe 4 Days 3 Nights HK\$3,750 up

HK ⇨ KL Roundtrip Air Ticket by CX
3 Nights Sunway Lagoon Resort (Twin share)
2 Rounds of Saujana Golf Club Weekday Green Fee
Whole Day Pass for Sunway Lagoon Theme Park & Water Park

Hanoi (河內) 4 Days 3 Nights HK\$3,690 up

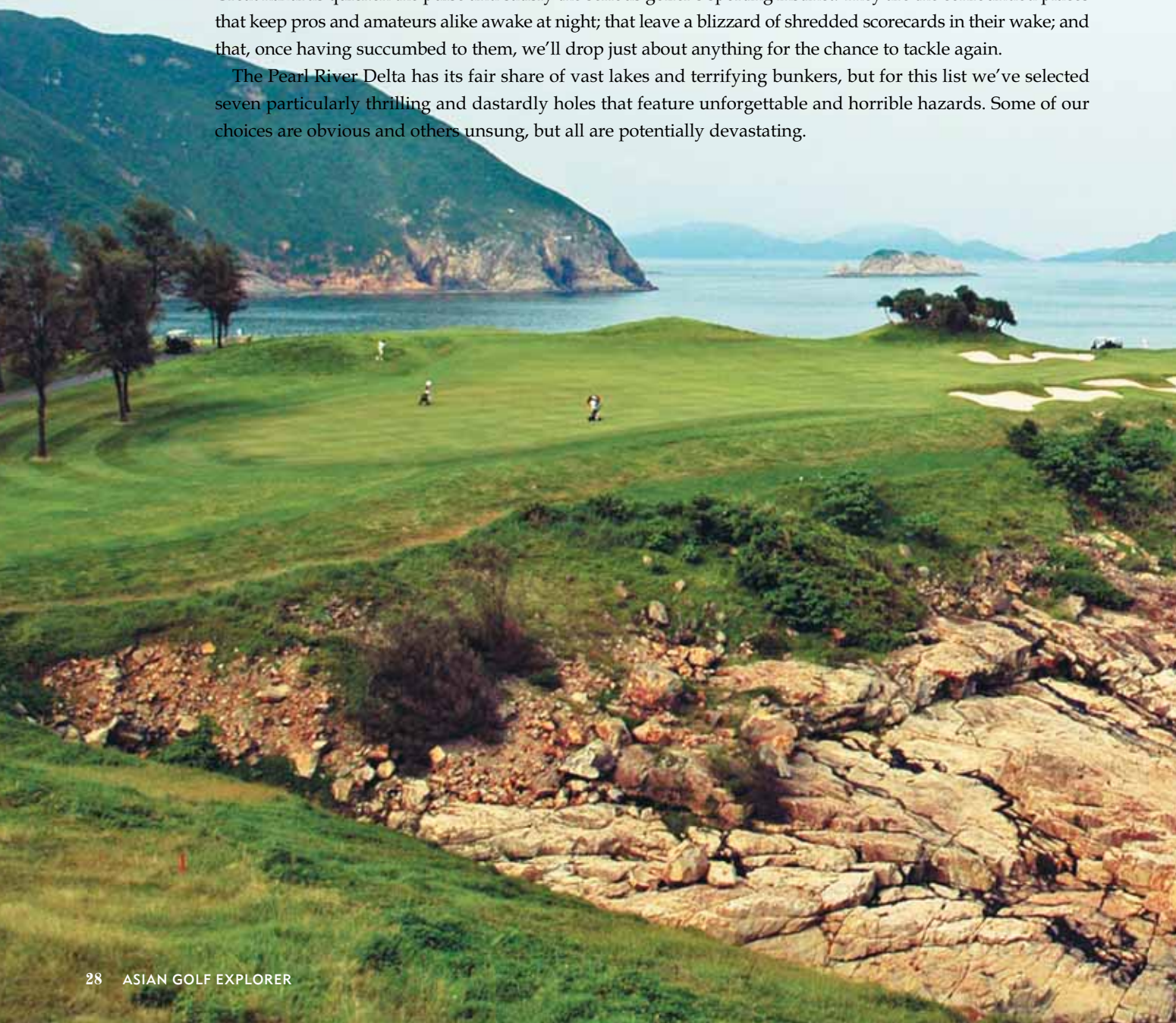
HK ⇨ Hanoi Roundtrip Ticket by HX
King's Island 18 Holes Green Fee, Caddie Fee
Chi Linh Star 18 Holes Green fee, Caddie Fee
3 Nights stay at Zephyr Hotel (Twin share)
Water Puppet Show
Half Day City Tour
English / Cantonese Speaking Tour Guide
Airport ⇨ Hotel ⇨ Club ⇨ Tourist Spots transfer

CARD- Wreckers

With potential peril at every turn, these seven holes are defined by their hellish hazards.

Hazards help make this game great. It could be argued that without them golf would just be a walk in the park. Great hazards quicken the pulse and satisfy the serious golfer's sporting instinct. They are the confounded places that keep pros and amateurs alike awake at night; that leave a blizzard of shredded scorecards in their wake; and that, once having succumbed to them, we'll drop just about anything for the chance to tackle again.

The Pearl River Delta has its fair share of vast lakes and terrifying bunkers, but for this list we've selected seven particularly thrilling and dastardly holes that feature unforgettable and horrible hazards. Some of our choices are obvious and others unsung, but all are potentially devastating.





THE 3rd AT CLEARWATER BAY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

香港，清水灣高爾夫球會 - 3號洞

Clearwater Bay, Hong Kong. Par 4, 402 yards. Architects: Sawai & Furukawa. Redesign by Thomson & Perret, 2006.

Because of its proximity to the crashing waves of the South China Sea, the third (formerly the fourteenth) at Clearwater Bay has always looked dramatic, but prior to last year's renovation it wasn't quite the formidable challenge that you might have expected it to be. Back then it only measured 330-or-so yards and a decent strike with a fairway wood or long iron would easily send balls flying over the rocks to the safety of the landing area beyond. Now, though, it's a completely different story. The tees have been brought back and to the left and a revamp to the bunker configuration have made this the toughest driving hole on the course. If you're looking for a thrill try and fly the left hand trap – it's a 250-yard carry. Non-sadists can play up the left and hope for a straight one – any amount of cut spin in Clearwater Bay's typically breezy conditions will send that brand new Titleist to an untimely end.



THE 7th AT LOTUS HILL GOLF CLUB

番禺，蓮花山高爾夫球會 - 7號洞

Panyu, Guangdong. Par 3, 151 yards. Architect: Bernhard Langer.

Arguably the most recognizable par three in Chinese golf, the signature hole at Lotus Hill is a real thriller. Although it's the carry over water that puts the fear of god into most players, it's the towering rock formation immediately behind the putting surface that makes this hole special. Because of the shallowness of the green it's not uncommon to see over-hit shots ricocheting off the monolith and onto the putting surface.

But by the same token it's also not that uncommon to see a ball rebounding back off and into the murky depths, meaning a trip to the dreaded circle of shame (drop zone) is in order. From there it's no picnic either. A short pitch back over the lake from a tight lie is the scenario that faces those who find the drink.



THE 1st AT DISCOVERY BAY GOLF CLUB, DIAMOND COURSE

香港，愉景灣高爾夫球會 - 鑽石球場1號洞

Discovery Bay, Hong Kong. Par 4, 369 yards.

Architect: Robert Trent Jones Jr.

There's nothing like easing yourself into a round, is there? The first on the Diamond Course at Discovery Bay is possibly the most mind-scrambling hole in Hong Kong. Imagine the scene: you get up at the crack of dawn to catch the DB ferry and because of your early tee-off you haven't got time to hit a few balls or even stroke a few putts. You dash off to the first tee and realize you're starting on the Diamond Course – good grief! – which requires a forced carry over jungle with the tee shot. Grrrr. You know a good drive will clear the rubbish but you haven't swung a club in weeks so you start thinking of other options. You want to aim away from the hazard – but go too far and you'll be looking at a lost ball. Perhaps an iron up the left for safety? OK, but you'll really have to rip it to have a chance of reaching the green with your second. So which option do you end up taking? It doesn't matter. Whatever you do your ball will always go into that damn ravine.

THE 4th AT KAU SAI CHAU, NORTH COURSE

香港，滘西洲公眾高爾夫球場 - 北場4號洞

Kau Sai Chau, Hong Kong. Par 3, 205 yards. Architect: Gary Player.

The notorious fourteenth at Kau Sai Chau is one of those holes that has you thinking about it a long time before you actually stand on the tee.

Literally thousands of potentially great rounds have been ruined by this monstrously difficult par-three, and it's all too easy to see why. From the tips it measures over 200-yards, and although it plays a bit shorter than that on account of the drop in elevation, nothing less than the perfect shot will be rewarded. Hit one a little heavy and you'll be in the mangroves. Hit one fat and you'll be in the ocean. Thin one a bit and it'll shoot through the miserly shallow green into the trouble behind. Tug it a hair and you'll be in the left

hand bunker facing a decidedly nasty little splash. Even if you find the green you'll more than likely face a roller-coaster of a putt for birdie, such are the slopes on the putting surface. Make a par here and the uphill slog that is the walk to the next tee won't feel quite so bad.



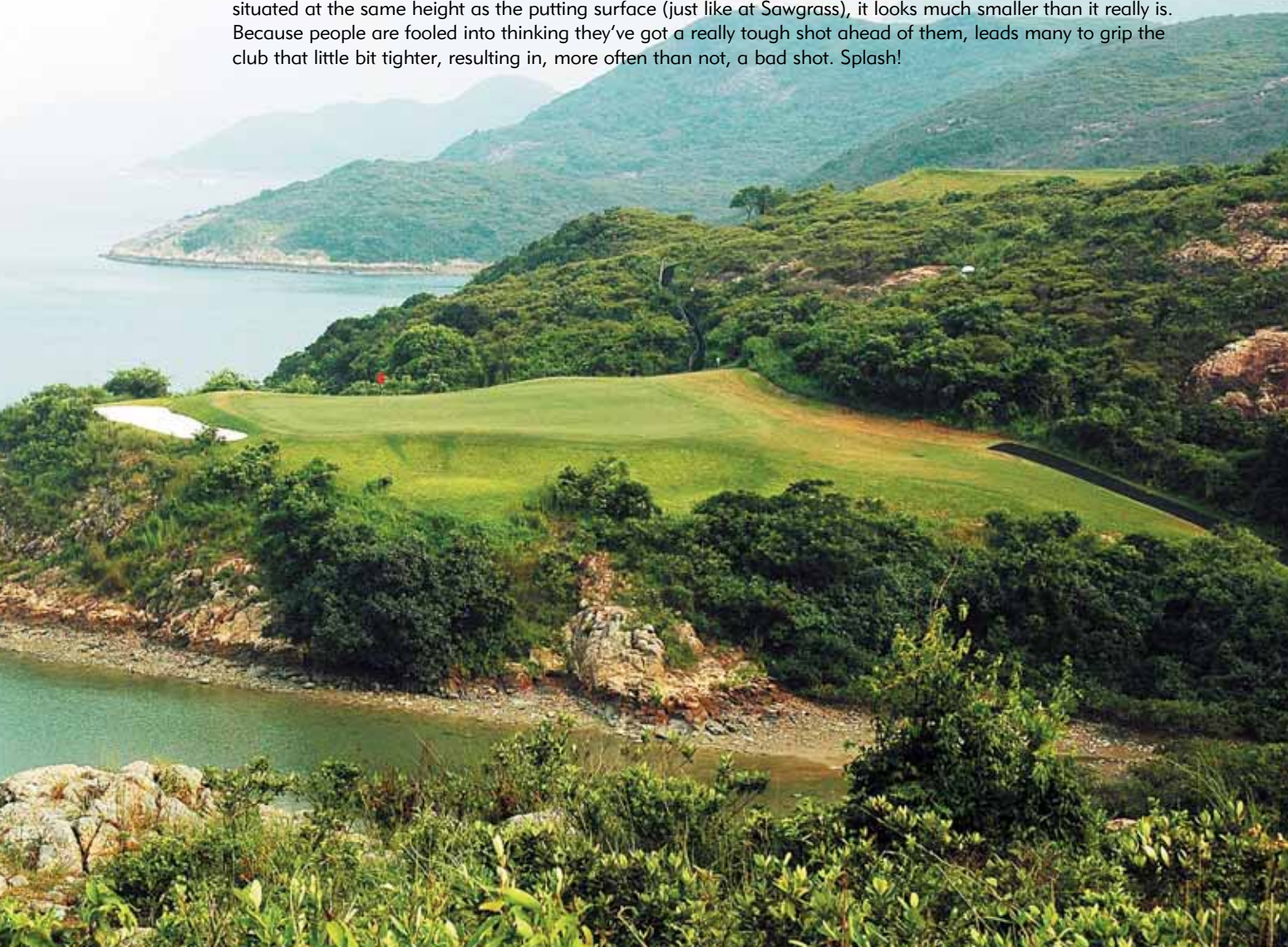


THE 8th AT SHENZHEN GOLF CLUB, C COURSE

深圳高爾夫俱樂部 - C場8號洞

Shenzhen, Guangdong. Par 3, 132 yards. Architect: Nelson & Haworth.

Island greens are almost *de rigueur* in China – no doubt exacerbated by the annual sight of tour pros nudging wedges across the pond on the seventeenth hole at the TPC Sawgrass during the Players' Championship. We could have picked a number of other similar holes in the region – the sixteenth at the Faldo Course, Mission Hills and Lakefront's fifth immediately spring to mind – but we've gone for Shenzhen Golf Club's eighth, because at only 132-yards from the back tee it's the shortest of the bunch, yet we've seen more balls in the water here than anywhere else. It's all a mind game, of course. The green is actually pretty enormous but because the tee is situated at the same height as the putting surface (just like at Sawgrass), it looks much smaller than it really is. Because people are fooled into thinking they've got a really tough shot ahead of them, leads many to grip the club that little bit tighter, resulting in, more often than not, a bad shot. Splash!





THE 9th AT MISSION HILLS GOLF CLUB, NORMAN COURSE

深圳，觀瀾湖高爾夫球會 - 格諾曼球場9號洞

Dongguan, Guangdong, Par 4, 462 yards. Architect: Greg Norman.

We couldn't do a story on hazards without mentioning the Norman Course at Mission Hills. With its fearsome bunkers, dramatic elevation changes and wrist-jarring fescue, the Shark's design – all 7,228 yards of it – is almost a hazard in itself. That the Norman Course is one of the most difficult in the country is beyond doubt, but it's also a fantastically beautiful place...at least it is until the club decides to add another million villas to the landscape. Any number of holes on the Norman could have made it onto this list, but we're going for the long par four eighth, with its freakish fairway and gruesome greenside traps. Not only are they exceptionally deep, but they're wickedly placed, too.

THE 13th AT HILLVIEW GOLF CLUB, MASTER COURSE

東莞峰景高爾夫球會 - CD場8號洞

Dongguan, Guangdong. Par 4, 365 yards. Architect: Jim Engh.

On the face of things, the thirteenth at Dongguan's wonderful Hillview Golf Club wouldn't appear to be too taxing. It is, after all, only a short par four rising slightly uphill with a nice generous fairway to aim at. But clustered just short of the green are a remarkable twenty-three bunkers – and they're some of the deepest pits you're likely to find. Like the dastardly pot bunkers that come into play on the great links courses of the British Isles, Hillview's traps are unforgiving little blighters, and, if found, are a sure fire way of racking up lofty numbers. You have been warned. **AGE**



Golfing in China Monthly Highlight

Lijiang (Jade Dragon & Ancient City Golf Club) Golf Package

麗江高球行

4 days 3 nights : HK\$4,980 (ZH)

HK\$5,180 (KA)

HK or Shenzhen <> Lijiang round trip ticket by KA / ZH, 3 nights stay at 5 stars Treasure Harbour Hotel (Twin share) with daily breakfast

Jade Dragon 玉龍雪山 GC 18 holes green fee, caddie, shared cart, locker fee.

Ancient City 古城 GC 18 holes green fee, caddie, shared cart, locker fee.

3 x half day local tour admission fee, transport and guide fee.

Airport <> Hotel <> Club transfer



Hainan Haikou Special Golf Package

海口抵玩高球行

3 days 2 nights : HK\$1,590

HK (HX) <> Haikou roundtrip air ticket

2 nights at Haikou Hotel (Twin share)

2 rounds of green fee (Choice of IBL GC 依必朗 / Dongshan GC 東山 / Taidat GC 台達)



Hainan Haikou Deluxe Golf Package

海口豪華高球行

3 days 2 nights : HK\$2,390 up

HK (HX) <> Haikou roundtrip air ticket

2 nights at 5 stars beachside New State Hotel (Twin share) with breakfast

West Coast GC 西海岸 18 holes green fee, caddie, locker

Meishi Mayflower GC 美視 18 holes green fee

Airport <> Hotel <> Club



Hainan Sanya Golf Package

三亞高球行

3 days 2 nights : HK\$2,280 up

HK (HA) <> Sanya roundtrip ticket

2 nights hotel of your choice (Twin share) with breakfast (Selected hotel only)

Yalong Bay GC 亞龍灣 18 holes green fee

Sun Valley GC 紅峽谷 18 holes green fee

Airport <> Hotel <> club transfer



Hainan Boao Golf Vacation

博鰲高爾夫假期

3 days 2 nights HK\$2,290

HK <> Haikou Roundtrip Ticket by HX

BFA 亞洲論壇球會 2 x 18 Holes

Green Fee

5 Star Sofitel Hotel 索菲特

accommodation

daily breakfast, welcome drink

free access to unique Dongyu Island

Hot Spring in the hotel,

one session of foot massage in Dongyu

Island Hot Spring

"Heaven Town" Karaoke RMB100

coupon & 30% discount of beverage

free access to swimming pool & gym

Airport <> Hotel <> Club transfer



Huang Shan Golf Package

黃山高球行

4 days 3 nights : HK\$3,690

HK (MU) <> Huangshan roundtrip air ticket

3 nights 5 stars Club Resort New Wing

room (Twin share) with breakfast

2 x 18 holes green fee, caddie, shared

cart, locker

Airport <> Club transfer

* Local Tours can be arranged



Guilin Merryland Golf Resort Package

桂林樂滿地高球行

3 days 2 nights : HK\$2,880

HK (KA) <> Guilin roundtrip ticket

2 nights at 5 stars Golf Resort (Twin

share) with breakfast

2 lunches at club

2 days UNLIMITED green fee

Airport <> Club Transfer



Shanghai Lake Malaren Golf Resort Package

上海美蘭湖高球行

3 days 2 nights HK\$3,280

HK (MU) <> Shanghai roundtrip ticket

2 night at 5 stars Club Resort (Twin

share) with breakfast

2 x 18 holes green fee, caddie, shared

cart, locker

Airport <> Club transfer



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James is a qualified PGA instructor with John Jacobs' Golf Schools based at Central Golf. To learn more about John Jacobs' Golf Schools and Central Golf visit www.centralgolf.com.hk.



Correct Turn = Correct Contact

By James Brown (British PGA Professional)

I see many golfers making an incorrect turn during their backswing, which leads to an incorrect swing path, angle and contact.

If you swing back correctly your through swing will be a reflex reaction.

One of the main problems I see is the releasing of the legs during the backswing. In any sport, balance comes before power; you must use your feet and legs properly to resist the turn of the top part of your body.

The feeling should be to remain relatively still yet lively from the hips down. Allow the shoulders and torso to turn back - you want to feel your left shoulder turning towards your right foot (approximately 90 degrees). You will feel the coil build against the waist, hips and legs as you move back. To ensure you have made the correct turn and coil, try holding the top of the backswing for 10 seconds - you will



Step 1: At address. Feel the balance.

Step 2: You will feel the coil here.

Step 3: Practice turning with resistance from your right leg.

find it almost impossible and will feel a considerable amount of muscular strain.

You will now feel the need to unwind is a reflex reaction and your through swing will now start and move through the ball with the correct path and angle, as well as increasing the amount of power you will be able to apply through the ball.

Study the pictures below of the training exercise to ensure you make a correct turn during the backswing. **AGE**

Key Check Points:

- Maintain knee flex
- Keep the legs and feet firm
- Turn your left shoulder towards your right foot - encouraging weight transfer to shift to the inside of your right foot
- Ensure you feel the 'coil' (the resistance of the lower half of your body against the turn of the top half of your body)

GOLFING JAPAN:

It's a Different Game

No longer the ludicrously overpriced pastime played exclusively by the country's elite, golf in Japan has changed significantly since the heady days of the late 1980s. But the Japanese still like to put their wacky spin on procedures.

Story by Alex Jenkins

When the little old lady indicated that I should remove the dripping wet bath towel from my otherwise naked self and deposit it into the laundry basket she was hauling across the locker room floor of Osaka's venerable Naruo Golf Club – I think that was the only time during my weeklong tour of Japan that I felt like a dumb *gaijin*, or foreigner, uninitiated in the post golf rituals of this rugged archipelago. I had just returned from the hot baths of Naruo's *onsen*, where I had

timidly joined a group of elderly gentlemen who were soothing their strained muscles in the steaming mineralized waters, and was mentally congratulating myself on not having breeched any of the strict rules of etiquette that tend to dominate society here. But then, from seemingly out of nowhere, she appeared and was demanding my towel. I was, if truth be told, more than a little taken aback. But could you blame me? After all, Naruo is one of the finest inland

courses in Asia – a sort of Sunningdale of the East – and the last time I checked, that friendly club in the heart of leafy Berkshire wasn't employing the services of somebody's grandmother to assist male visitors in cleaning up after themselves. Nevertheless, after a quick scan of my immediate surrounds confirmed that nobody else seemed to find her presence in the least bit unsettling, I thought what the hey, whipped away my sole remaining cover of decency and

このホールでは
キャプティが前方へ
出て台図をするまで
ティーショットを
しないで下さい。

競技委員長

bade her a cheery “*domo arigato*.”

I really shouldn't have been all that surprised, of course. The Japanese golf experience, like pretty much everything else in this most hospitable of nations, is different, and markedly so. But it's also wonderfully refreshing. And as a golfing destination the country presents one

close to half of the total for the whole of Asia – a great many of which can be seen as you descend from the clouds for final approach into Tokyo's Narita airport. The eastern seaboard of Honshu – the largest island in the archipelago and home to over seventy five percent of Japan's population – is covered in pleas-

” admits Thornton, as we sit enjoying a couple of bottles of ice-cold *Asahi* in Naruo's agreeable oak-paneled bar, “but it's underserved. When people talk of astronomical costs – be it for hotels, food or even golf – they're referring to how it was in the late 1980s before the economic bubble burst. Those days are long gone.

“When people talk of astronomical costs – be it for hotels, food or even golf – they're referring to how it was in the late 1980s before the economic bubble burst. Those days are long gone. Compared to other great golf destinations like the British Isles, Japan actually offers very good value.”

of the final frontiers of the first world that hasn't been touched by the hand (or club) of mass tourism.

I had wanted to visit Japan for as long as I could remember. But of all the generic images of the country that had found their way into my consciousness over the following years – from bullet trains to *karaoke* bars, from ancient Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines to *sushi* restaurants and suit-wearing, *sake*-drinking businessmen – it was that of a beautifully landscaped golf course set amid a jaw-dropping background of snow capped peaks and the pastel tones of cherry blossom (“*sakura*”) that interested me the most. Whether I saw this in a magazine or on television I'm not sure, but it was by far and away the most exotic golfing landscape I had ever seen. Golf in Japan looked unquestionably good, and I wanted to try it for myself. Besides, I'd heard Japanese golfers always stopped for lunch and a beer after nine holes, which sounded like something I could easily get used to.

It might surprise many to learn that there are over 2,300 courses in Japan,

ing lowland forest, and as we glided overhead I couldn't help but notice the sheer number of golf holes hewn out of the mighty deep-green pines below. In the five minutes prior to touchdown I counted at least eight courses – a heart-lifting sight for any travel weary golfer at the end of the four hour flight from Hong Kong.

But when was the last time you heard of anyone actually visiting the country with the sole purpose of teeing it up? Save Tiger Woods' annual pocket-filling foray to the Dunlop event at the amenity-packed Phoenix Seagaia Resort on the southern island of Kyushu, my guess would be never.

The main reason for this, as is the case with Japan's stagnant tourism industry in general, says John Thornton, founder of Japan Golf Tours, a new operator aimed at English speakers and whose help I came to rely on almost constantly, can be explained by the common perception that we have long associated with the Land of the Rising Sun: that it is the most expensive country in the world.

“It's an unfortunate reputation to have,

Compared to other great golf destinations like the British Isles, Japan actually offers very good value.”

I was inclined to agree. Prior to arriving in Japan I had spent a fortnight visiting family in

London, and my recently-acquired credit card now bore the ugly scars of endless swiping. Japan, by comparison, seemed affordable – a far cry from the HK\$4,000-a-night Tokyo hotel rooms and multi-million dollar golf club membership fees that stereotyped the country two decades ago. Today, a room in an upscale hotel in the capital will cost around HK\$1,000, while a midweek round at a nice course within easy reach of downtown shouldn't set you back more than HK\$900.

But you wouldn't want to go all the way to Japan just to play just *nice* courses. In the same way you wouldn't travel to Scotland and not play the classic links, you can't go to Japan and not play the courses of one Charles Hugh Alison – acknowledged by many as being some of the best outside the States and the United Kingdom.

Unlike his contemporaries – men like A.W. Tillinghast, Donald Ross, George Crump and Alister MacKenzie – Alison's is not a name that many recreational golfers in the west will be immediately familiar with. But his work during the



Postage Stamp: like most C.H. Alison courses, Naruo features tiny, well-bunkered greens. Inset: a motorized caddie cart.



Golden Age of golf course architecture – the first three decades of the twentieth century that were highlighted by the great designs of Pine Valley, Cypress Point, Winged Foot, Pine Valley and Augusta National – cannot be overlooked. During his time as junior partner to the great Harry Colt, Alison collaborated on such noteworthy gems as the Seaside Course at Sea Island in Georgia and the original eighteen holes at Long Island’s Timber Point. The unsung Englishman is even credited with helping to complete four remaining holes at Pine Valley after Crump died in 1918. But it was in Japan where Alison really found fame.

During his one and only visit to the East – a six month tour in 1931 – Alison

designed four courses and re-designed several more, including Naruo. My first stop, the Fuji Course at the Kawana Hotel, is located a little less than two hours south of Tokyo on the Izu Peninsula, a coastal resort area which, to my eye at least, resembles the less-touristy stretches of the French Riviera. It is also among five of Alison’s Japanese courses that *Golf Digest* saw fit to include in their 2006 list of the best one hundred courses outside of the U.S.

Established in the roaring twenties by Baron Kishichiro Okura, a young Japanese anglophile with a penchant for fast cars, the Kawana Hotel is a grand art deco structure developed in the style of an English country hotel, with floor-to-

ceiling windows overlooking lovingly manicured gardens and the rich aquamarine depths of the Pacific. A favorite with Hollywood A-listers of yesteryear, John Wayne has stayed here and it was also the setting for part of Marilyn Monroe and Joe Di Maggio’s honeymoon. It took only one round on the Fuji Course and a delicious serving of *kare raisu* (Japanese curry) afterwards for it to become a favorite of mine, too.

Alison courses are noted for their small greens and vast irregular-shaped bun-



Course on the coast:
the breathtaking Fuji
layout at Kawana.

kers (known in Japan simply as 'Alisons', or 'Arrissons', depending on how good the accent is of the Japanese you talk to), and while the Fuji Course is no exception to this rule, it's the elevation changes here that add just as much drama. Being a weekday, the course wasn't overly busy so I went out as a single, my only partner being my female caddie, Koizumi-san. Like almost everywhere else in Asia, caddies, and the motorized trolleys they operate, are a mainstay at golf courses in Japan. But unlike, say, China and Thailand where they're normally young girls in their twenties, Japanese caddies are usually considerably older – Koizumi-san, with the greatest respect, didn't look a day under fifty. She was, however, as fit as a fiddle and made for amusing company. After scaling the 470-yard fifteenth – a spectacular cliff-

hugging par-five that only the longest hitters can reach in two; yardages go out of the window at mountainous Kawana – I sought out a shaded bench by the next tee for a quick breather. Koizumi-san, dressed in multiple layers and a golf-ball resistant helmet, wasn't having any of it: "Come, come, Mr. Jenkins...let's go. Rest later," she said in her surprisingly good English. Needless to say, slow play is not an issue at Kawana.

The next day I took a two hour local line train ride to Gotemba, a medium-sized town situated at the foot of mystical Mount Fuji. I had seen Fuji-san, Mr Fuji, as the Japanese affectionately refer to the country's highest peak, from the back-nine at Kawana some forty five

miles away. But it's only when you get up close and personal like I did at Gotemba Golf Club that you can fully appreciate its simply awe-inspiring presence. Gotemba, designed by Shiro Akaboshi, one of Japan's most recognized designers and a disciple of Alison, is a fairly typical Japanese course in that it occupies wickedly undulating terrain and, at times, features staggeringly narrow landing areas. I had been told that in winter people ski down the side of Mount Fuji; quite frankly, they'd probably get just as much buzz out of skiing

we zipped the two hundred and forty-five or so miles in an hour and fifty three minutes, pulling into Kyoto's futuristic station precisely fifteen seconds in advance of our scheduled arrival time.

Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, is an interesting mix of the old and the new. One moment you're strolling past steel and glass office towers (each with their own Starbucks in the basement, I'm sorry to say); the next you find yourself ambling down narrow lanes, which more often than not lead to quaint little water gardens and attractive pagodas. Before

catching my afternoon train to Osaka and Naruo I wandered around Rokuonji, otherwise known as the Temple of the Golden Pavilion – Kyoto's most famous attraction – which, although fascinating, was full to the brim with school kids on a field trip. Not

Cliff-hugger: Kawana's signature fifteenth.



down the first hole at Gotemba, such is the startling change in altitude. What it might lack in width, Gotemba more than makes up for in scenery, however, and I had thought that it might have been the same course I had seen in that image all those years before. I couldn't be certain; its setting is definitely exotic enough, but, sadly, there were no cherry blossoms. 2007, I was later informed, has been a rather lackluster year for *sakura* in Japan.

From Gotemba I took a bus to Mishima station, from where I caught the famous *shinkansen*, better known outside of Japan as the bullet train, to Kyoto. I had been looking forward to travelling on the *shinkansen*, and it didn't disappoint:

quite the Zen-like serenity I was hoping for, but no matter; I would find that on my last day at Hirono Golf Club, my final golf stop.

Regarded as the best of Alison's Japanese designs and one of the most exclusive clubs in Asia, Hirono, a thirty-minute drive from the earthquake-prone port of Kobe, is truly first-class. Less undulating than Kawana and Naruo, Hirono rolls magnificently through ancient parkland consisting of *matsu* (Japanese pine) and *take* (bamboo), and features delightful ornamental ponds and rather more brutal vegetation-filled ravines. The notorious Alison greenside bunkers – massive, bizarre-looking pits dug well below the surfaces of the el-

REGIONAL Golf

evated greens - are perhaps more pronounced here than on any other course in Japan, and since the championship tees have been moved back in a valiant attempt at preventing the course from succumbing to the mercy of whichever jumbo-headed, titanium-enriched driver tour pros are wielding these days, the jagged fairway traps now much more in play. I played in the company of Murata-san, an elegant septuagenarian member who, since retirement, was knocking it round this most gorgeous of settings up

to three times a week. Over our midway lunch, I asked Murata-san if he had experienced much golf overseas. "Oh yes," he replied, before regaling me with a list of some of the world's most famous layouts. "And which is your favorite?" I asked. After a long pause, Murata-san put down his beer glass, blushed slightly in that self-effacing way the Japanese do when you ask them a potentially embarrassing question, and replied, "I think...Hirono." I could really see why. **AGE**





Heavenly Hirono (clockwise from top left): typical Alison greenside bunkering at the seventh; the JGA museum is well-worth a look after a round; Hirono is the highest ranked course in Asia, according to *Golf Digest USA*.

Trip Planner: Golf in Japan

While it's possible to book tee times and organize travel within Japan independently, given the language difficulties you'll doubtless face and the fact that the better clubs operate on a strict private basis it's an awful lot easier engaging the services of a tour operator.

Spring is the best time to go: it coincides with *Hanemi*, cherry blossom season, and the temperatures are warm but not hot with little chance of rain. Try and avoid Golden Week (2008: April 28 – May 5), a collection of four national holidays in just seven days when hotels, trains and sightseeing spots are crammed with vacationing Japanese. Fall, sandwiched between the blistering heat of summer and the winter snowfall, is another ideal time for golf; the turf is usually at its best in September and October.

WHERE TO PLAY

Around Tokyo

KAWANA HOTEL RESORT, FUJI COURSE

Japan's answer to Pebble Beach, the Fuji Course is the most revered seaside track in the country, and the only Alison-designed layout that doesn't require a member's introduction. Kawana has another eighteen holes – the Oshima Course – which is a shorter and more forgiving test set in attractive parkland. Less than two hours from Tokyo.

1459 Kawana, Ito-City, Shizuoka; +81/557-451-111, princehotels.co.jp/kawana-e. Yardage: 6,691. Par: 72. Architect: C.H. Alison, 1936. Greens Fee: \$1,688-\$2,165 (hotel guests only).

GOTEMBA GOLF CLUB

Occupying a hillside with breathtaking views of Fuji-san, Gotemba can get a little funky in places, but first-class maintenance and its proximity to the fabled volcano make for a memorable round.

1924-2 Koyama, Gotemba-shi, Shizuoka; +81/550-871-555, gotembagolf.com. Yardage: 6,345. Par: 72. Architect: Shiro Akaboshi, 1971. Greens Fee: \$625-\$992.

Around Osaka

NARUO GOLF CLUB

A delightful character-packed layout known for its tiny well-bunkered greens and elderly membership (average age over seventy), Naruo wouldn't look out of place among the great heathland courses of the English Home counties. Like Kawana, the course features *korai* greens – a spiky strain of grass that requires a positive stroke. Forty-five-miles from Osaka.

1-4 Kanegaya, Nishi-Uneno, Kawanishi-shi, Ikeda, Hyogo; +81/727-941-011, naruogc.or.jp. Yardage: 6,564. Par: 70. Architect: H.C. Crane, 1920. C.H. Alison redesign, 1931. Greens Fee: \$1,070 (Member's guests only).

HIRONO GOLF CLUB

One of the world's most outstanding inland courses, Hirono could be the best-kept secret in golf. Attractive ponds and Alison's vast bunkers are the obvious hazards to avoid, but the elevated greens are a difficulty in themselves with tricky-to-read slopes and hidden borrows. After playing, delve inside the interesting Japanese Golf Association (JGA) museum, which is housed in a clubhouse annex. Thirty minutes from the center of Kobe.

7-3 Shijimicho-Hirono, Miki-shi, Hyogo; +81/794-85-0123. Yardage: 7,169. Par: 72. Architect: C.H. Alison, 1932. Greens Fee: \$2,070 (Member's guests only).

Tour Operators

Japan Golf Tours is the only golf tour operator catering specifically to non-Japanese speakers. They organize two annual tours – during the spring and autumn – but can also tailor trips for groups of eight or more throughout the year. The huge advantage of booking through JGT is that they can also arrange golf at some of the country's most prestigious clubs, including Hirono and Naruo. See japan-golf-tours.com; 828-329-6000 (U.S. Office).

Another helpful website is golf-in-japan.com, a good English language resource detailing all the courses in the country and their contact details.



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Footjoy Reelfit Is this the most practical golf shoe ever made? With Footjoy's Boa lacing system you need never have to worry about your laces untying themselves ever again. By turning the dial on the heel of the shoe, 2 feet of steel micro cable can be tightened until you have a perfectly snug fit. With just one click the shoe is loosened, and can be slipped off. For those who prefer a more traditional look but don't want to sacrifice the same comfort and durability,

Footjoy also offer their **Contour Series** of footwear, which is available in a range of two-tone and solid colours.

Footjoy Reelfit HK\$2,160

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Call 3165-1288 or visit www.footjoy.com.

Ping Jas Craz-E One One minute everyone's talking about square drivers; the next, its square putters. By producing a square head out of lightweight aluminium, the Ping engineers have been able to place 96 grams of tungsten in the four corners. This makes the new Craz-E the most forgiving putter from Ping to date, even superseding the huge Doc 17, because of an astronomically high moment of inertia which prevents less clubhead twisting.

HK\$2,260. Call 2744-2203 or visit www.pinggolf.com.





MacGregor has made quality clubs for quality players for as long as anyone can remember. Jack Nicklaus played with MacGregor equipment during his glory years and Jose Maria Olazabal – considered one of the best iron players in the history of the game – has used the company's highly-regarded blades throughout his whole career. Although recognized as one of the most traditional golf club manufacturers, the MacGregor of today is a much-changed animal. They're still producing first-class irons for the better player, of course, but it's their use of pioneering new technology in the game improvement and putting departments that spells excellent news for amateur golfers the world over.

Face-Off DCT Putter Series We always thought that mis-hit putts don't go as far as those struck on the sweet spot. However, thanks to MacGregor this is no longer the case - their new Bobby Grace-designed Face-Off DCT Response (pictured) and DCT1 putters were engineered to produce the same roll - and distance - for centre and off-centre strikes, turning mis-hits into pure putts. While it comes with two interchangeable faces (titanium and urethane) to handle slow or slick greens, what makes this putter special is its insert, which has two polymers with different rebound properties: high-rebound in the heel and toe, low-rebound in the centre. So instead of thudding off a dead spot, your mis-hits bounce off a livelier area, rolling as if struck dead centre. Genius.

HK\$ 1,800. Call 28918222 or visit www.macgregor.com.hk.

Mactec NV-NX These stylish irons don't just look great; they're among the most forgiving on the market thanks to a nifty piece of engineering called Cup Face 360°, which MacGregor says has widened the sweet spot to mega proportions, leading to a stronger ball trajectory and lower spin rate. Although they're designed for the average player, lower handicappers will like the fact that they're less offset than most game improvement irons, while higher handicappers and beginners will love the 30g dual tungsten inserts in irons 3 thru 6, which get the ball airborne exceptionally easily. Available in both steel (NS PRO 950GH) and graphite shafts.

HK\$13,000 steel or graphite (3-P,A,S)



Callaway X-Hybrid This is the third hybrid that Callaway have released, and it's undoubtedly the best of the lot. Like the FT hybrid before them, these are shaped more like traditional woods to appeal to a larger market. The modified X-sole plate, places the leading edge closer to the ground, which helps the ball become airborne quickly from difficult tight lies. Callaway's variable face-thickness technology is used to help reposition weight around the head, making this the most forgiving steel Callaway hybrid yet. Available in 18, 21, 24, and 27 degree options.

HK\$1,300. Visit www.callawaygolf.com.



Callaway X-Series Accessories Who knew Callaway made sunglasses and watches? Continuing the X-Series theme, the California-based company reckons their X602 range, which is available in a choice of black, blue and Warbird red colours, is the most technology-forward design of eyewear that they've ever created. The firm's eye-catching X-Series line of timepieces, meanwhile, will appeal to the young (at heart) and hip, and come in both stainless steel and PU rubber models.

HK\$1,500 (X602) / HK\$660-780 (X-Series watches). Visit www.callawaygolf.com.



Odyssey White Hot XG #7 Let's face it, Odyssey were always going to have a tough task bettering their unbelievably successful 2-ball series of putters. But with their new White Hot XG range, and the XG #7 in particular, they might have found a worthy successor. The XG #7 is a modified mallet with weighted wings which, like the 2-ball before it, makes alignment amazingly easy. The big sell here, however, is the feel: helped by an elastomer core and urethane surface, the Odyssey's insert gives exceptional feedback, making problems with distance control a thing of the past.

HK\$1,200 Visit www.odysseygolf.com.



Two Bar Mallet

Barbados



Geurin Rife These distinctive putters are massively popular on the Champions Tour, with many of the golden oldies wielding the company's Two Bar range to seemingly great effect; Denis Watson recently captured the Senior PGA Championship using the **Two Bar Mallet** version. The brand's other range – the stylish Island Series – has found its way into a number of tour bags, including that of Justin Rose who uses the **Barbados** model. Featuring a roll groove face, Rife putters get the ball rolling quicker than traditional flat face ones and feature all the benefits of exceptionally high moment of inertia.

HK\$1,400 (both models). Call 2889-1050 or visit www.rifeputters.com.

JC-606



Fourteen Not everybody will have heard of this Japanese equipment manufacturer, which is a shame because among the anoraks out there, Fourteen is well known for consistently coming up with a great range of exciting, if pricey, golf gear. Ernie Els, before being lured into signing a 14-club contract with his previous equipment provider, used one of the company's hybrid models for a couple of seasons. New products for 2007 include the **TC-770s** – a drop dead gorgeous set of forged cavity backs designed for low-mid handicappers and the classic-looking **JC-606** – a 430cc titanium driver that sounds great at impact and flies even better. A good brand to get if you want to raise an eyebrow the next time someone looks in your bag.

TC-770 HK\$12,440. JC-606 HK\$5,290. Call 3428-8110 or visit www.fourteengolf.com.

TC-770s



Sammy Ng Instructional DVD

From one of Hong Kong's foremost coaches, this four hour long instructional DVD covers all aspects of the game, from the basic fundamentals right up to more advanced techniques, which all players - from beginners to low handicappers - will find beneficial. Ng, who learnt his craft from some of the world's top names, including Butch Harmon and short game wizard Dave Pelz, is an amusing host and presents his tips in a frank and easy-to-follow style - easy-to-follow if you can understand Cantonese, that is: non-Chinese speakers will have to wait and see if the Hong Kong legend produces an English version. Also available in Mandarin. HK\$10 from each copy sold will be given to the Spastics Association of Hong Kong.

\$150. Call 2882 1350 or visit
www.golf007.com/new/r/dvd



Few on this side of the pond are familiar with a chap named Harold Swash, yet he's almost a legend in European golf. Nicknamed the "Putting Doctor," Harold's been teaching the art and science of putting for over 40 years. Last year, he coached three-quarters of the European Ryder team. And they did alright.

A self-described "innovative engineer," he has also developed and patented the most helpful putting technology available. The C-Groove?

With a 20-degree upslant, these milled edges impart an instant upward pressure to the backside of the ball which causes an over-the-top rolling action almost immediately. Other putters cause the ball to lift, spin and skid within the first 18 inches or so of travel. Which makes it far more likely to deflect from a perfect line.



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Even when struck slightly off center, the concentric grooves roll the ball earlier and truer. The result is more



C-Groove Putters are available in 10 models, and growing.

consistency. The end result, more putts made. Clever man, this Mr. Swash.

Yes, pros are leaning towards Yes! As a small company, we can't pay fat endorsement deals like you-know-who. Still, word is getting around. These damn things really work. So far, over 200 pros (some very big names) are now using Harold's brain child, even though there's no financial inducement on our part.

Maybe, since almost half their strokes are made with a putter, they realize there are more important things than endorsement checks. Like tournament checks.



For the hole story, visit yesgolf.com

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INTERVIEW

Robin Moyer is one of the most renowned photographers in the golf industry. We caught up for a quick round with the globetrotting shooter to find out how to take that perfect picture.

A Quick 18: Robin Moyer

AGE: What makes a great golf course photograph?

RM: One that gives the viewer a sense of what it is actually like to be on the golf course, and hopefully one that reveals some of the features of the hole. I like to see the pin in every shot, though occasionally will opt for a vantage point that emphasizes the tee shot, especially if there is a prominent landscape feature in the distance.

AGE: Is there a favorable time of day to take golf course photos?

RM: Early morning for about an hour after sunrise, or late afternoon light, best reveals the shaping of the fairways, greens and other features. Mid-day light is very flat and uninteresting, though some fairways that are lined with trees need more vertical illumination.

AGE: Are the best courses the easiest to photograph?

RM: Some courses I find visually uncomfortable for photography and some just call out to be photographed. Nicklaus courses (and those of his former designers like Lee Schmidt and Brian Curley) and the courses of Nelson & Haworth come to mind as "picture perfect." They are often also the most fun to play. Links courses are often the most challenging to shoot, as they are usually on fairly flat ground and need a bit of elevation (ladder, golf cart, cherry picker, balloon? Or helicopter) to reveal the routing and amplify the design.

AGE: What's the most difficult aspect of photographing courses in Asia?

RM: Without a doubt, the weather and the general air pollution makes shooting in China difficult. I have spent many disappointing and fruitless days in Beijing and Shanghai waiting for the wind to blow away the pollution and haze. Golf courses always look best

(especially to the owner) in bright sunshine with clear blue sky and puffy clouds. On the other hand, a bit of atmosphere can add a lot to the image and I am always ready to jump out on the course between thunderstorms.

AGE: You rarely take golf course photos with people in them. Why is that?

RM: Just as I prefer to play golf on courses without people (a round in two and a half hours is my usual), I tend to photograph them the same way. That means waiting around on crowded courses for a break in the long trail of golfers.

AGE: Do you have to play golf to take good golf course photos?

RM: It certainly helps. Firstly, a passion for the game is important. Secondly, a knowledge of the game is important. I have occasionally commissioned non-golfing photographers and they have rarely come back with meaningful photos.

AGE: How much is your equipment worth?

RM: All in all I estimate I have about US\$100,000 worth of equipment, ranging from 35mm film and digital cameras and lenses (including several prime Leitz lenses with adaptors for the Canon 1Ds2), to Arca-Swiss 4x5 and a wooden 8"x10" camera, tripods, ball heads, graduated filters (all neutral density). Plus loads of digital memory cards several Apple computers and laptops with terabytes of back-up and lots of up-to-date software.

AGE: How much Photoshop do you use?

RM: I use Photoshop extensively and have done since Photoshop 2 was released in 1990. I used it then to work on files I had made from film and was transmitting via telephone line and slow modems to *Time* magazine. This was the

start of the digital revolution. Now, Photoshop is my darkroom. I use Photoshop to enhance the image, rarely change things radically.

AGE: Obviously you travel a lot. How much do you spend on travel each year (airfares and hotels)?

RM: A lot. This past year I have been working on a project that has taken me to China, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. In a few months I will shoot in Alaska, California, New York, Quebec, France and Morocco.

AGE: Favorite course in China? Why?

RM: Tiger Beach Golf Links (in Shandong province; see July issue of *AGE*), without a doubt. Aside from the fact that I shot a 71 there on my 60th birthday, it is a great track and continually evolving. As the owners and management get more experience by visiting Scotland and Ireland to see links in situ, they bring more understanding and are now allowing the weather to dictate playing conditions, rather than over watering and over fertilizing.

AGE: Favorite course in Asia? Why?

RM: Sherwood Hills in Cavite, Philippines, is the course in Asia where I could play the rest of my golf, every day. Fast greens, fast fairways, eminently fair and management and members are delightful. I play whenever I can.

AGE: Favorite hotel in Asia?

RM: All time? The Oriental in Bangkok. But I tend to spend a lot of time at Manila Southwoods Manor. It is very basic, but perfect for a golfer. I am a member of Southwoods. The Manor has a view of the eighth fairway and is a five minute walk to the clubhouse. And conveniently, it is only a 20-minute drive from Sherwood Hills.



What's in your (camera) bag?

Cameras: Canon 1Ds 2 (16.7MP), 16-35mm, 17-200mm, 50mm f/1.2 L, 85mm f/1.2 L, plus Leica 35mm f/2 and 50mm f/2. I will be purchasing the 1Ds 3 (22MP) when it comes out and use the 2 as a back-up. The 1Ds 2 surpasses the quality of my 6x7 cameras, so I have sold them. I also have a Nagaoka wooden 8x10 camera, which I use very occasionally, usually with a 240mm Schneider lens and always for specific client needs, like billboards, etc.

Accessories: Graduated neutral density filters; Gitzo tripods with Arca Swiss ball heads; spirit levels; sensor cleaning kits and compressed air; squeegee blowers; 8 2GB high speed memory cards; 8 GB memory stick; Macbook Pro dual quad Intel.



AGE: Favorite airline?

RM: Whichever is convenient to my travel plans is my favorite and with a good brand of champagne.

AGE: Do you have a favorite golf course photograph?

RM: I'm pretty fond of a shot I made of the first hole on the North Course at Kau Sai Chau. Sort of looks like Jurassic Park.

AGE: What do you love about your job?

RM: I love photography and I love golf. What could be better?

AGE: Anything you dislike about your job?

RM: Blue flags. If I can't see them, the golfers can't either. Get rid of them.

AGE: Which course would you most like to photograph?

RM: Cypress Point. I drove by last May on my way to Point Lobos in Monterey and salivated, but the course is strictly, strictly private. Some day I will try to arrange it.

AGE: Lastly, any tips for budding golf photographers?

RM: Skill as a photographer takes years to develop. Learn photography. Get a tripod. Take your time. Learn the course. Wake up early. Be patient. **AGE**

About Robin Moyer

Robin is the author of *The Great Golf Courses of China* (2006), *Golfing Philippines* (2001), *The Pocket Guide to Golfing Phiippines* (2003), and *As American a Picture* (1976). Formerly he was chief photographer for *Time* magazine in Asia (1983-1998) and the recipient of many awards for his work, including World Press Photo of the Year 1982 and The Robert Capa Gold Medal for Courage and Enterprise from The Overseas Press Club of New York (1983). His personal photographs are in private collections and in the Masters of Photography Collection at the U.S. Library of Congress. He has been struggling with a single figure handicap for years. To contact Robin please email him at editor@golfing-asia.com.

Picture perfect (clockwise from top): Robin in action; the seventh at Mauna Lani, Hawaii; the daunting par-three twelfth at Mangilao Golf Club in Guam; the first at Kau Sai Chau – one of Robin's favourite photos. Images courtesy of Robin Moyer.





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金伯樂馬術學府現已隆重開幕，我們率先安排參觀，讓你親身體驗星級的馬術樂趣。而限量會籍現已接受申請，機會一瞬即逝，請即致電指定代理中國龍會籍服務有限公司查詢，盡享優越的貴族運動。

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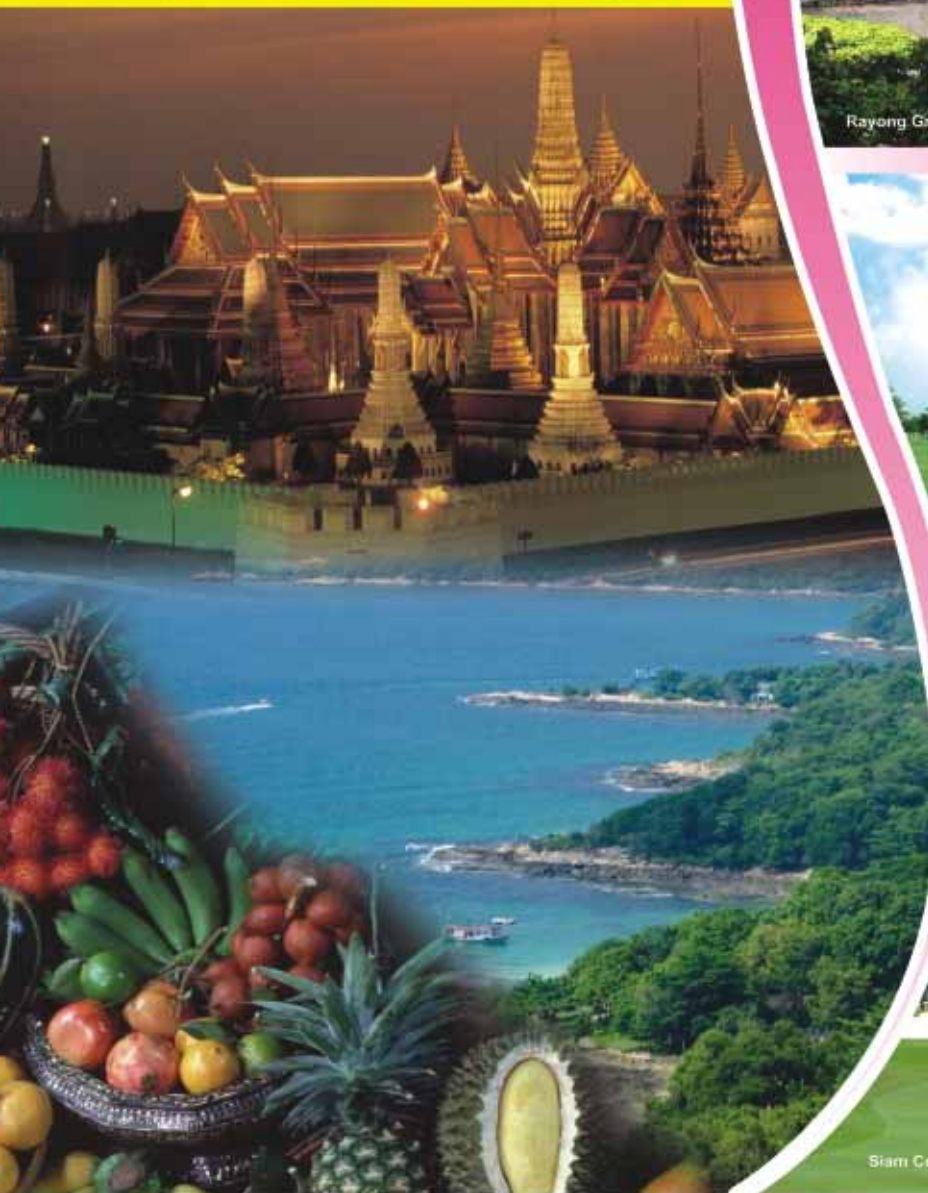
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