

ASIA'S FINEST HONOURED IN 2008 ASIAN GOLF MONTHLY AWARDS

Shenzhen (December 5): Asia's finest golfing facilities were last night honoured at a glittering gala dinner to commemorate the ninth year of the Asian Golf Monthly Awards.

Widely regarded as Asia's golf course Oscars and the industry benchmark for excellence, prominent golf course developers, owners, club general managers and golf course architects gathered in the Grand Ballroom at the Mission Hills Golf Club in China.

Among the big winners were Mission Hills Golf Club, Indonesia's Ria Bintan Golf Club and two of Asia's best-known public facilities - the Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau Golf Course in Hong Kong and the Sky 72 Golf Club in Korea.

Mission Hills, host for the previous week's Omega Mission Hills World Cup, was voted the Best Golf Resort in Asia.

Tenniel Chu, executive director of the world's largest golf club, was on hand also to collect the award for the Best Clubhouse in Asia, the Dongguan structure not only being the biggest in the world, but also boasting outstanding convention facilities, as delegates to the second Asia Pacific Golf Development Summit will attest.

To complete a memorable evening for the host venue, Dr David Chu, the club's founder and chairman, was voted Club Man of the Year, in what was one of four new categories for 2008.

In the Best Pro Shop in Asia segment, the Hong Kong Golf Club was edged out for the top prize by Mission Hills, while Siam Country Club's Old Course won the accolade for the Best Renovation in Asia, undertaken by the team from Schmidt Curley Design.

The closest category proved to be the one for the Best Maintained Course in Asia, top honours going to Tanah Merah Country Club's Garden Course, scene of world number one Lorena Ochoa's runaway victory in the inaugural HSBC Champions.

Shanghai's Sheshan International Golf Club, host to the men's HSBC Champions, was second with the Makiling Course at Sta. Elena Golf Club in the Philippines in third sport.

In the country-by-country categories, the following clubs emerged triumphant: Spring City Golf & Lake Golf & Lake Resort, Mountain Course (China), Sunrise Golf & Country Club (Chinese Taipei), DLF Golf & Country Club (India), Ria Bintan Golf Club, Ocean Course (Indonesia), Windsor Park Golf & Country Club (Japan), Sky 72 Golf Club, Ocean Course (Korea), Saujana Golf & Country Club, Palm Course (Malaysia), Riviera Golf & Country Club, Langer Course (Philippines), Tanah Merah Country Club (Singapore), Victoria Golf & Country Resort (Sub-continent), Thai Country Club (Thailand) and Dalat Palace Golf Club (Vietnam).

The award for the Best Golf Course Architect in Asia went to Nicklaus Design, who were represented at the function by Tim Kenny, executive vice-president, Paul Stringer, senior vice-president, new business development, and Scott Tolley, director of communication for the Nicklaus Companies.

Among the multiple winners were Indonesia's Ria Bintan, a spectacular Gary Player-designed layout that was named the Best Course in Asia as well as the Best Course in Indonesia and Tanah Merah Country Club's Garden Course (Best Course in Singapore and Best Maintained Course in Asia).

Meanwhile, the Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau East Course was a deserving winner in the Best New Course in Asia category. Sculpted by Nelson & Haworth, it is third 18-hole layout to be unveiled at the Hong Kong public facility, built on an island formerly used by the British Army for shelling practice.

This year the poll was conducted on-line with more than 15,000 entries being submitted from people based in all corners of the world.

Mike Sebastian, publisher of Asian Golf Monthly, said: "The response was overwhelming, underlining the ever-growing reach of the Asian Golf Monthly Awards. As we heard from many of the nominees, there is tremendous prestige and honour attached to the awards."

Befitting its stature as the most comprehensive poll of Asia's golfing facilities, the awards were handed out to category winners at a lavish gala dinner at the conclusion of the Asia Pacific Golf Development Summit.

Georgina Wong, president of Asian Golf Monthly, said: "It was a fitting way in which to acknowledge the best of the best in the Asian golf course industry."

ASIAN GOLF MONTHLY AWARDS 2008

BEST COURSE IN ASIA

1, Ria Bintan Golf Club; 2, Spring City Golf & Lake Resort (Mountain Course); 3, Nirwana Bali Golf Club; 4, Saujana Golf & Country Club (Palm Course); 5, Alpine Golf & Sports Club.

BEST CHAMPIONSHIP COURSE IN ASIA

1, Thai Country Club; 2, Sentosa Golf Club (Serapong Course); 3, Sheshan International Golf Club; 4, Mission Hills Golf Club (Olazabal Course); 5, Hong Kong Golf Club (Composite Course).

BEST GOLF RESORT IN ASIA

1, Mission Hills Resort; 2, Empire Hotel & Country Club; 3, Sutera Harbour Resort; 4, Le Meridien Nirwana Golf & Spa Resort; 5, Spring City Golf & Lake Resort

BEST CLUBHOUSE IN ASIA

1, Mission Hills Golf Club (Dongguan site); 2, Thai Country Club; 3, Sheshan International Golf Club; 4, Sentosa Golf Club; 5, Ocean Dunes Golf Club.

BEST NEW COURSE IN ASIA

1, Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau East Course; 2, Qinghe Bay Golf Club (West Course); 3, Angkor Golf Resort; 4, Phokeethra Country Club; 5, The Banyan Golf Club.

BEST MAINTAINED COURSE IN ASIA

1, Tanah Merah Country Club (Garden Course); 2, Sheshan International Golf Club; 3, Sta. Elena Golf Club; 4, Thai Country Club; 5, Black Mountain Golf Club.

BEST PRO-SHOP IN ASIA

1, Mission Hills Golf Club; 2, Hong Kong Golf Club; 3, Sentosa Golf Club; 4, Alpine Golf & Sports Club; 5, Nirwana Bali Golf Club.

BEST COURSE RENOVATION IN ASIA

1, Siam Country Club (Old Course); 2, Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club (East Course); 3, Tianjin Yangliuqing Golf Club; 4, Karnataka Golf Association; 5, Pinx Golf Club.

BEST GOLF COURSE ARCHITECT IN ASIA

1, Nicklaus Design; 2, Robert Trent Jones II Golf Course Architects; 3, Schmidt & Curley Design; 4, Golfplan Golf Course Architecture; 5, Greg Norman Golf Course Design.

CLUB MAN/WOMAN OF THE YEAR

1, Dr David Chu (Mission Hills GC); 2, Arthur Yeo (Spring City); 3, Aakash Ohri (DLF); 4, Bruce Jellard (Bali G&CC); 5, Junie Ledesma (Sta Elena GC).

BEST COURSE IN CHINA

1, Spring City GC (Mountain Course); 2, Mission Hills Golf Club (Olazabal Course); 3, Pine Valley Golf & Country Club (Golden Bear Course); 4, Sheshan International Golf Club; 5, Yalong Bay Golf Club.

BEST COURSE IN CHINESE TAIPEI

1, Sunrise Golf & Country Club; 2, Ta Shee Golf & Country Club (East-Central Course); 3, Chang An Golf & Country Club; 4, Taiwan Golf & Country Club; 5, Orient Golf & Country Club.

BEST COURSE IN INDIA

1, DLF Golf & Country Club; 2, Eagleton Golf Village; 3, Delhi Golf Club; 4, Jaypee Greens Golf Resort; 5, Royal Calcutta Golf Club.

BEST COURSE IN INDONESIA

1, Ria Bintan Golf Club; 2, Damai Indah G&CC (PIK Course); 3, Nirwana Bali Golf Club; 4, Taman Dayu Club; 5, Emeraldalda Golf & Country Club.

BEST COURSE IN JAPAN

1, Windsor Park Golf & Country Club; 2, Wakagi Golf Club; 3, Phoenix Country Club; 4, Belle View Nagao Golf Club; 5, Bonari Kogen Golf Club.

BEST COURSE IN KOREA

1, Sky 72 Golf Club (Ocean Course); 2, The Club at Nine Bridges; 3, Pinx Golf Club; 4, Asiana Country Club; 5, Nam Seoul Country Club.

BEST COURSE IN MALAYSIA

1, Saujana Golf & Country Club (Palm Course); 2, Borneo Highlands Hornbill Golf & Jungle Club; 3, Sungai Long Golf & Country Club; 4, Kota Permai Golf & Country Club; 5, Tanjung Puteri Golf & Country Club ('A' Course).

BEST COURSE IN THE PHILIPPINES

1, Riviera Golf & Country Club (Langer Course); 2, Sta. Elena Golf Club (Makiling Course); 3, Wack Wack Golf & Country Club (East Course); 4, Mt Malarayat Golf & Country Club; 5, Eagle Ridge Golf & Country Club (Faldo Course).

BEST COURSE IN SINGAPORE

1, Tanah Merah Country Club (Garden Course); 2, Sentosa Golf Club (Serapong Course); 3, Laguna National Golf & Country Club (Masters Course); 4, Raffles Country Club (Palm Course); 5, Singapore Island Country Club (Bukit Course).

BEST COURSE ON THE SUB-CONTINENT

1, Victoria Golf & Country Resort; 2, Royal Colombo Golf Club; 3, Karachi Golf Club; 4, Gokarna Forest Golf Resort; 5, Royal Palm Golf and Country Club.

BEST COURSE IN THAILAND

1, Thai Country Club; 2, Black Mountain Golf Club; 3, Siam Country Club; 4, Santiburi Samui Country Club; 5, Laem Chabang International Country Club.

BEST COURSE IN VIETNAM

1, Dalat Palace Golf Club; 2, Vietnam Golf & Country Club (East Course); 3, Ocean Dunes Golf Club; 4, Chi Linh Star Golf & Country Club; 5, Kings Island Golf Resort & Country Club (Mountain Course).

The top-10 in each category will be published in the January 2009 edition of Asian Golf Monthly.

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