



Editor

Ray Tsang

Staff Contributors

Ray Tsang

Joyce Cheng

Garrick Kong

Guest Contributor

Edmund Lau

Proofreader

Logan Hairgrove

## Council's Message

A newsletter is useful in keeping members informed of the activities within the community. It is also instrumental in building an identity for the community.

We are immensely grateful that Ray, Joyce, Garrick, and Logan will volunteer to create a monthly newsletter.

The newsletter is called 'Scratch'. The name may puzzle some of you. In golf terminology, 'scratch' means a zero handicap. If your handicap is zero, you are a 'scratch' golfer.

We wish the newsletter success, and we hope that its readers will very soon become 'scratch' golfers. ♣

## As I Please – A Good Sport

By Ray Tsang

Last month, I spent an afternoon with Patrick on the golf course. It was our first time playing together. Although I played poorly, losing at least a half a dozen balls, and was hungover (from partying too hard the night before) during most of the round, I was glad to spend 5 hours with Patrick. I found him to be an excellent golf buddy and a most delightful and amiable person to hang around with.

Patrick is a novice golfer. He had been to the driving range maybe four times. He was never taught how to hold a golf club, so he invented his own style. His grip was strange - as there was a three-inch gap between his hands. Basically, it was a split-handed baseball grip. It was definitely incorrect, but I did not try to amend it. It was his first time playing on the course. I wasn't going to bother him with technical tips. I just wanted him to play freely.

***"I found him to be an excellent golf buddy and a most delightful and amiable person..."***



*The split-handed  
baseball grip*

Like most first-timers on the course, Patrick struggled. He hit it fat, he hit it thin, he shanked it, and sometimes he missed the ball completely. Most people would have been frustrated and lost interest. But Patrick remained in good spirits throughout. The bad shots did not affect his mood at all. He would review a bad shot with his caddie in his Taishanese Mandarin. Every now and then his caddie would ask him to pick up the ball because he was falling behind, and he would readily comply. He took great interest in his surroundings. He was particularly fascinated by those longan trees on the course. Whenever he came across a longan tree, he would pause for a few moments to study it. Several times he actually tried to knock down some longans with a 3 iron. He had a curious appreciation (or perhaps a strong craving) for those longans.



*Those delectable  
longans*

The only good shot that Patrick hit that day happened on a long par 4. On the tee box Patrick cried, “Gosh! The hole is so long. How are we supposed to finish it in four strokes?” I said to him, “Oh, just watch. I’ll show you how it’s done.” Then I teed the ball up, took a few waggles, and swung at the ball. It was a horrible swing! I pulled the ball dead left. It went out of bounds. The other two players in the group, Garrick and Robin, both seasoned golfers, managed to hit their tee shots out of bounds as well. It was Patrick’s turn. I don’t think he had very much faith in that split-handed baseball grip. But he didn’t care. He just wanted to take a whack at the ball. He made good contact, and the ball travelled some 180 yards, just enough to reach the fairway. Patrick couldn’t believe his own eyes. It was a truly impressive shot coming out of a first-timer. We congratulated Patrick. When Patrick stood next to his ball on the fairway waiting for Garrick, Robin and I to sort things out at the drop zone, we couldn’t help but feel a little silly and ashamed. ♣



*Ray, Patrick, Robin, Garrick*

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***“He had a curious appreciation  
(or perhaps a strong craving) for  
those longans.”***

### Past Events

A Night in Admiralty – May 4<sup>th</sup> 2013



*Good food & good company*



*Sexy ladies*



*Gilbert surrounded by girls*



*Ray almost caught on fire!*



*The crew went to LKF*



*They look drunk*

Boys vs. Girls – July 27-28<sup>th</sup> 2013



*The two teams*



*Jason & Kenny goofing around with the girls*



*Sumptuous Cantonese dinner*



*The caddies*



*Some silly drinking game*



*Garrick's face is hilarious*

*Hiyas! What a wonderful opportunity to get to know some of our members during exclusive one-on-ones, bringing you all a piece of everyone's story! My first interview kicks off with Mr. Gilbert Joa, a young New Yorker and co-founder of Hong Kong Golf Outing Network Meetup. A fantastic way to end my Friday, indulging over some British afternoon tea at The Peninsula, chatting away with Mr. Joa as he shares his story with us all!*



## MEET & GREET

By Joyce Cheng

### *What brought you to HK?*

The opportunities! I thought Asia is a great place to start a new chapter and when you're young you can afford to take risks without really losing anything! I don't regret it and it's been a great experience!

### *What do you do?*

I'm an entrepreneur, working on a few side projects such as this Golf Meetup. I'm hoping it'll kick off so I can build a community of passionate golfers!

### *How and who got you started with Golf?*

A year and a half ago I was introduced by a friend, also co-founder of this Meetup, Robin! He took me to SCAA one night where he introduced me to his mentor, Roger, and I started hitting some golf balls around that night – that was my first encounter.



I was frustrated I couldn't get the ball up in the air but I enjoyed the whole process. The next day, I went and bought a set of new clubs for myself! I had no idea what I was buying, listening to the lady for 'recommendations' who was clearly ripping me off by charging me a few thousand for 3 clubs (which could've gotten me a half set!). Roger yelled at me after that, we went back the next day, refunded it all, and got myself a decent half set that suited my left-handed playing!

### *How often do you go to the range?*

When I first started playing, I went 3 times a week to SCAA practicing 9-11pm! It didn't stop there though, even if they'd turned the lights off, Roger would help me keep swinging...well after midnight. It was hard at first, trying to pick up golf quickly so I practiced a lot for the first 3 months.

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***"I was frustrated I couldn't get the ball up in the air..."***



Robin (left) and Roger (right)



This photo was taken at "Little Sheep" hotpot restaurant.



This photo was taken after a practice session at SCAA.

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***"Lifestyle! Golf is not just a game or a sport - it's a lifestyle."***



Gilbert gesticulating wildly.

***What has been your best ever round?***

My most legit game was 104 and I'm planning on breaking 100 soon!

***What, if anything, drives you mad when on the green?***

Rainy days when I want to play! I am a pretty hasty player. I hit the ball and I want to get back into the cart for my next shot. So when I'm exposed to the rain, it messes up the playing field drastically and slows me down.

***Your favorite Club?***

My 'Rescue' - a hybrid between a 4-iron and a wood. I hit very consistently with it and I trust it as it gets me out of really rough conditions, saving me a stroke on average.

***Why golf?***

Well, the other question is 'why not?' I feel like golf is a lifetime sport! It's something that you can play for the rest of your life, even with your parents. In my case, it's with my father (he picked it up just last year). It definitely helps me spend more time with him now that he's getting to the point where he can't exactly run around playing tennis with me (and not feel like he's at a major disadvantage!). So that kind of levels the playing field between us.!

***Any golf hero?***

Tiger Woods! He stands out from the rest of the golfing community, has the right mindset towards the game, has the athleticism and I feel that he is a very committed player.

***Being one of the core organizers of Golf Meetup, what was your motive behind starting this group?***

I thought there was something that was lacking here in HK. I wanted to bridge the gap between young professionals working, and youngsters who are passionate about the game.

***What do you hope to achieve with this Meetup group?***

I hope to turn this into an organization that will gain a broader reach. Right now we're limited as not a lot of people in HK or even Asia know what Meetup is. We need to extend the reach so that we can grow the community bigger.

***If you had to use a word to describe this particular sport, what would it be?***

Lifestyle! Golf is not just a game or a sport - it's a *lifestyle*. It's healthy, trains your mind, helps you become more patient and I think it gives you courage. ♣

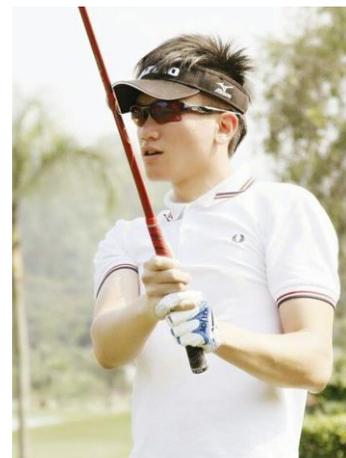
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***"I thought Asia is a great place to start a new chapter and when you're young you can afford to take risks without really losing anything!"***

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# What's in My Bag

By Edmund Lau



Handicap: 12  
Believer of the "interlocking" grip



**Alignment sticks**

They help me get on plane when I practice, and also they hold the head-covers when I'm on the course.

**Fairway wood**

Ping i20 15 degrees with Aldila Nv 75 Shaft 43 inches.

**Wedges**

Vokey SM4 50 55 60 Oil Can Finish. I like a bit of rust on my wedges, just always preferred to have rusty wedges.

**Divot tool**

I use a Scotty Cameron "Pivot", just because it looks so cool.

**Ball marker**

I usually keep either a casino chip or a hat clip.

**Tee**

I always keep a box of short and long tees.

**First aid**

A tape dispenser in case I get a blister or something gets loose during a round.

**Driver**

RBZ 9.5 degrees with Pink graphalloy bimatrix prototype shaft 44 inches.

**Hybrid**

Taylormade Rescue 11, 22 degrees standard length.

**Irons**

4-PW Mizuno Mp59 with KBS Tour Shaft +0.25 inch.

**Putter**

Scotty Cameron Newport 2, 34 inches. I've changed a lot of putters and fiddled around with my flat stick but I always come back to this Scotty.

**Snack**

I usually have bananas or peanut butter Nutella sandwiches in my bag. Keeps me up during the back nine, otherwise I'll keep thinking of having hamburgers.

**Range finder**

Bushnell tour v2 range finder, which helps me figure out the distances to hit. With this there's no need for a yardage book.

**Ball**

I use the Srixon Z-star ball since uni days, its soft and it doesn't get confused with other Pro Vs. I always mark my ball by circling the number on the ball and I never use a number greater than 4.

Welcome to The Golfing Garage, the purpose of this column is to provide some practical tips around the course in order to help you save a shot or two. I have to admit I am not a PGA Pro nor do I play to a single digit handicap, however after many years on the fairways, greens and in the water, I have experimented with many things and have developed a good ‘Spidey sense’ around the course, so in the following months I would like to share some of these with you all.

In this first column, what I would like to address is a problem which I see a lot of newcomers (and experienced golfers) do quite regularly; they aim incorrectly. More specifically what they think they are targeting and what they are actually aiming at are not the same.

Aiming incorrectly not only causes frustration but also confusion to golfers, as they scratch their heads and wonder why their well struck shot is not landing where they have hoped, or they are perplexed by how much they have missed the cup after hitting a 20ft putt.

So in order to address some of the problems associated with aiming, a technique that I have used time and time again is to ‘Aim Short and Not Long’. What this technique seeks to do is to ensure that you don’t aim at a target in the distance, but at a marker right in front of you for instance a blade of grass, a mud patch, or if you’re from OZ a kangaroo dropping.

Here is how to aim short and not long.

- 1) Before addressing the ball stand back and find a distance marker that you want to hit to, as you would normally do. In the picture (*photo A*) I am looking to hit the red line.
- 2) Begin visualizing a straight line from the distance marker to the ball in front of you.
- 3) Pick a target in front of the ball which aligns with the distant marker, such as the kangaroo dropping. In the below picture it is a mark right in front of the driving range mat indicated by the little red x. (*photo B*)
- 4) While addressing the ball always keep a clear focus on the target in front of the ball. If you lose it take a step back and start the process again.
- 5) Hit the ball through the short target and see your ball sail and hit the distance marker.

The reason why this technique works is that it allows you to **focus** at a point very close to you and not at an imaginary line out in the distance, which is easy to misalign. Even though ‘aiming short and not long’ might sound easy, it requires a lot of discipline to do it shot after shot while on the golf course. You can also introduce this technique into your short game and putting.

So the next time when you’re out on the course or at the driving range, don’t just ‘aimlessly’ hit the golf ball, try to hit each ball with purpose, by introducing the ‘Aiming Short and Not Long’ tip into your mental bag of goodies.

Happy golfing. ♣

## The Golfing Garage

- Aim Short And Not Long -

By Garrick Kong



Photo A



Photo B

**“Pick a target in front of the ball..., such as the kangaroo dropping.”**

## This Month's Celebrity Golfer

Lee Kuan Yew

Lee Kuan Yew, founding father of Singapore, tries to sink a putt using what appears to be a 'Bulls Eye' putter.

His son, caddying for him, pulls the flag out as the ball nears the hole.

Notice the boy is wearing flip-flops? That's a violation of the dress code.

The boy, by the way, is Lee Hsien Loong, currently Prime Minister of Singapore.



For information on our upcoming events,  
please visit:

[www.meetup.com/HKqolf/](http://www.meetup.com/HKqolf/)

If you have questions or comments, please  
write to us at:

[info@hkpgs.com](mailto:info@hkpgs.com)



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