Star et al

THE STAR, SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER 2023

TEE UP GOLF

All geared for the **Showdown**

(a) Maybank Champ onship





() Nayban

Allisen Corpuz

Celine Boutier

World's best players make their way to Maybank Championship





Danielle Kang Ruoning Yin

> Intense competition expected to unfold in Kuala Lumpur

Fans have much to look forward to at inaugural tournament

Kelly Tan

Heavy hitters roll into town

LPGA stars arrive for inaugural Maybank showdown

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THERE is a new standard being set in women's golf. It's an unparalleled golf lifestyle experience at the inaugural Maybank Championship on the LPGA Tour.

Set to be held on the West Course of Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club from Oct 26 to 29, the heartbeat of this prestigious event is the Maybank Village, a vibrant hub where golf enthusiasts and the public in general can engage with the essence of Maybank's Asean story

As Maybank Group president and chief executive officer Datuk Khairussaleh Ramli aptly put it: "The Maybank Championship is more than just a golf tournament. It's a lifestyle experience that reflects Maybank's commitment to the Asean region and its values of inclusivity, sustainability and diversity

Indeed, highlighting Maybank's first venture with the LPGA Tour, which comes on the heels of a 14-year association with elite global tournament golf, will be a star-studded field that includes almost 20 major championship winners and nearly all the top-20 players in



Atthaya Thitikul will fancy her chances here this week. - AP

the Rolex Women's World Rankings.

Included in the line-up are the winners of this year's majors: Ruoning Yin – the KPMG PGA Championship, Allisen Corpuz – the US Open and Celine Boutier – the Evian Championship. Add to that the likes of Nelly Korda, Brooke Henderson, Jin



Family-orientated approach

Families are warmly welcomed, with free entry for children under the age of 12 and special privileges for Maybank Cardholders (Debit, Credit, and Charge Cards) and MAE App users.

The Maybank Championship's commitment to making sports accessible to all aligns with its mission in Humanising Financial Services.

Check the Entrants

For a complete list of participants, visit https://www.lpga.com/tournaments/maybank-championship/tournament-entries, and for additional details and ticket reservations, check out http://www.maybank. com/championship. Join us in celebrating golf and a vibrant lifestyle.

Other exciting activities

Beyond the Maybank Village, other exciting activities await, among them

> 'Letter to my younger self' by pro players: Immerse yourself in the personal reflections of golf players as you read letters they've penned to their younger selves. You can even write a note of your own to your younger self and stand a chance for your letter to be featured on the Maybank Championship social media platforms.

> Score merchandise autographed by your favourite stars: Participate in a survey and walk away with a golf umbrella autographed by the pro players. Join Maybank in celebrating the golfing lifestyle at this exclusive event. Golf enthusiasts are invited to come and support their favourite heroes up close.

Young Ko, Ariya Jutanugarn, Jennifer Kupcho, Danielle Kang,

Sei Young Kim, Patty Tavatanakit, Hinako Shibuno, Yuka Saso, Ashleigh Buhai and Lydia Ko.

All of them major champions in their own right – and you've got one of the best fields ever assembled in Asia.

The discussion of whether they come to Kuala Lumpur with a bit of form is another matter.

This is so, if only because, with this pedigree, turning in a fine performance after a run of patchy results is not something bevond them

Índeed, it can and has been achieved in numerous cases and across all the tours.

Notwithstanding this, a few of these stars are in pretty good nick themselves, not least China's world number two Ruoning

The 21-year-old Kuming-born Ruoning, who has won twice so far this season, having also captured the DIO Implant LA

Maybank Champonship

Open in March and taken her seasonal earnings past the US\$2.5mil mark, is widely regarded as one of golf's brightest rising stars – men or women

It should prove to be a mighty exciting time watching her deal with Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club's West Course this week.

In a social media post, she said she was looking forward to coming out here and the challenge it presented.

No doubt, the fans and everybody else associated with the event will be interested to see how she fares.

If she keeps to the trend of her campaign so far, she should put in a decent performance, perhaps one good enough to take the inaugural title.

But it won't be easy. Not with the calibre of the rest of the field, who will have just as much intention of triumphing next Sunday as anybody else.

Thailand's Tavatanakit and France's Boutier, who have Thai family, are also likely to enjoy good support from the galleries.

Atthaya Thitikul, who shot to world number one as a 19-yearold last year, is another popular player from across the border and will be expected to do well.

Korda, Henderson, Jin Young and Kang are also expected to draw huge followings, just as they do when they globetrot the tour during the season.

Korda in particular is hugely popular and might want to use that to secure a first win of the season – a campign troubled with injury and form.

It should all tilt towards a fascinating tournament in Kuala Lumpur



Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club's West Course should provide a decent test for the LPGA players in the inaugural Maybank Championship.

Maybank Championship 2023

Dates: Oct 26 to 29 Tour: LPGA Venue: Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club Course: West Format: 72 Holes Length: 6,246 yards Par: 71 Field: 78 Players Purse: US\$3mil **Race to CME Globe:**

500 Points

Ticket Options Weekday Pass Thur & Fri: RM38.00 Weekend Pass Sat & Sun: RM68.00

Season Pass All Four Days: RM88.00



Families are warmly welcomed to the club, with free entry for children under the age of 12.

THE battle for supremacy among the players at the Maybank Championship this week will ultimately be decided on the West course of Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club.

And according to the LPGA website, it will measure 6,246 yards and should prove a handy test for the players over the coming week.

This layout was originally crafted by Nelson and Haworth Golf Course Architects in 1991, before a major facelift in 2007 and 2008, by Parslow and Winter Golf Design, and then tweaked again in 2018.

All of this has led to a layout that now has some standing in tournament golf. This week, there will be

MALAYSIA'S contingent in the inaugural Maybank Championship will have a lot riding on it.

The players comprise Maybank's Asean ambassador Kelly Tan, this year's trio on the Epson Tour – Natasha Andrea Oon, Alyaa Abdulghany and Ashley Lau, and two leading amateurs, Ng Jing Xuen and Jeneath Wong.

The US\$3mil Maybank Championship is set for Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club's West Course from Thursday through Sunday and will feature a formidable line-up of LPGA Tour stars.

They include Rolex Women's World Ranking number two Ruoning Yin of China, South Korea's world No 3 Jin Young Ko, American world number four Nelly Korda, France's Celine Boutier – No 5 in the rankings, world number six Hyo-Joo Kim, also of South Korea, and world No 9 Allisen Corpuz of the US.

There is a string of other potential winners, among them Canada's Brooke Henderson, Thailand's Atthaya Thitikul and American Danielle Kang.

For Natasha, this could be the

The West should prove tough test

several factors that will almost

surely come into play when the event proper gets underway on Thursday.

Perhaps not least among these will be the weather and how tough the course is set-up. At just over 6,000 it won't play as long as it does for the men, but it could still be made a

difficult tract to negotiate. There will be enough hazards to prove troublesome for those who might be a bit wayward, and if the pin placements are situated on some of the sloppiness of several of the putting surfaces, getting to the

taming them. The setting around the finishing hole has always had its allure and this week will probably be no different.

green might be as tough as

The par-5 18th is long nay standards, it's the sand traps, approaching and around the green, which should make for a few headaches.

the par-3s could be said to hold their own attractions. And it is the relatively short No 15 that plays downhill which garner a lot of attention.

Not only is it popular with fans, given the way it is laid out and the vantage points from where the fans get to watch from, but it has long proven to one of the short holes that carries a hole-in-one prize – often a car.

For the ladies who get into Kuala Lumpur early and maybe have more than just a practice round here, it could prove rather decisive.

Everything you need to know at Maybank Championship

THE elevated golf lifestyle experience at the Maybank Championship 2023, to be held on the West Course of Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club from Thursday through Sunday, has at the heart of this LPGA Tour event the Maybank Village. This is a vibrant hub where golf enthusiasts and the public can expect a unique experience, discoverng the essence of Maybank's Asean story.

The Maybank Championship has always been more than just a golf tournament and this year, the tournament aspires to deliver that and more. Spectators can immerse themselves in a multi-sensory interacive experience, where golf meets fun and learning with a purpose that reflects Maybank's commitment to the Asean region and its values of inclusivity, sustainability and diversity.

Highlighting Maybank's first venture with the LPGA Tour, which comes on the heels of a 14-year association with elite global tournament golf, will be a star-studded field, but there will be more than just olf to enjoy during tournament week.

Maybank has unveiled a lineup of exciting interactive experiences, allowing fans to indulge their senses, ignite their curiousity and create unforgettable memories.

Heighten your senses with blind-brewing

At the Reach Independence and Sustainabl

Entrepreneurship (R.I.S.E.) Booth, is a showcase of merchandise by entrepreneurs, who are also individuals with disabilities (PWDs). This platform is meant to tell the story of their relentless entrepreneurial spirit.

There will be a blindfolded coffee-making activity, known as 'blind brewing', which is a fascinating approach to brewing coffee that relies on the sense of taste, touch and smell rather than visual cues. Also, visitors can craft themselves custom braille name cards.



Disabilities don't hold people back. Come and learn more

Tiger Conservation

In between the golf festivities, you can also take a moment to learn about Tiger Conservation at the interactive LED screen display. Witness the stark contrast between a world with and without tigers and learn how we can contribute to preserving these magnificent creatures.

Visitors can purchase merchandises from the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) exhibit as all proceeds will be channelled towards their animal conservation efforts.



Learn about a world with and without tigers. - AFF

Putting your game to the test For golf

enthusiasts, they can put their skills to the test at a golf simulator game, presented by MST Golf, in collaboratior with Epson. This challenge will allow them to show off their swing and putting game.



Getting to Maybank Championship

For visitors and spectators going to KLGCC, consider the following options to make your journey seamless and avoid the traffic Shuttle services are available from MRT Phileo Damansara (from Thursday to Sunday, 6am to 6pm), Sime Darby Convention Centre (only on Saturday and Sunday, 7am to 6pm)

> Take a Grab ride to and from KLGCC (Thursday to Sunday, 7am to 7pm) with a RM5 discount promo code: MAYBANKCHAMPIONSHIP (Limited redemptions, T&Cs apply)

Malaysians expected to shine

For Jing Xuen, who won gold at the South-East Asian (SEA) Games in Cambodia in May, and Jeneath, a **Pepperdine University sophomore** who made her debut at the US Open in June, this will be a great chance to showcase some of the wonderful talent that they have.

course where she comes into on her own, among her compatriots. Having just been crowned the

Epson Tour's Rookie of the Year, there's little doubt the 22-yearold will be keen on a performance to underscore her outstanding season on the US women's feeder tour.

Such has been Natasha's year that she also assumed the top ranking among the country's women's players.

Alyaa and Ashley took a while to get going on tour but did show flashes of better things to come.

And both will be just as determined to make an impression on home turf.

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But again, that could be said for all six Malaysians in the field, from whom Kelly will be expected to deliver the most.

Maybank Champ onship





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26 – 29 OCTOBER 2023 KUALA LUMPUR GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB maybank.com/championship

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Kelly Tan Two-Time Malaysian Olympian

Ashley Lau 2022 Big Ten Golfer of the Year.

Natasha Andrea Oon 2023 Epson Tour's Rookie of the Year

WITH EVERY SWING, WE INSPIRE FUTURE GOLFERS AND CELEBRATE STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY.

Join us for a thrilling showcase of 78 golfers and unforgettable experiences at Maybank Championship.

COMPLIMENTARY

Season Pass For Maybank Debit, Credit, and Charge Cardmembers* The American Express Cards are issued by Malayan Banking Berhad pursuant to a license from American Express. *Terms and conditions apply. Get tickets here:

