

editor's
letter

BY
S. MURALI

IN TIME WITH

ROLEX

GOODBYE JURONG, A COURSE PAR EXCELLENCE



A panoramic sunset view of Hole 18.

It is one of my favourite golf holes in Singapore, on one of my favourite courses.

As I stood on the tee box of the Hole No 18 at Jurong Country Club last weekend, I decided there was only one way to play the risk-or-reward par-five: To attack it.

Erasing memories of all the times I hit it out of bounds on the left or right of the fairway, I swung my trusty three-wood to cut the corner of the dogleg.

Amazingly, I struck it perfectly, finding the fairway with about 220 metres left to the flag.

With bets on the line, I stood there for a while, deciding if I should take on the green, with a steady headwind blowing in my face.

Then I said to myself: "What the heck? This is probably the last time you are playing this hole, so do it the right way."

And so I hit one of the shots of my life, another pure three-wood that landed 25 feet short for eagle.

It was a magical moment for me, but a bittersweet one none the less.

As I walked up to the green to two-putt for birdie, I felt a great sadness.

With pristine greens that ran 10 foot 5 on the stimp-meter, to manicured fairways that made your ball sit up, to challenging doglegs that test your shot-making, JCC is clearly one of Singapore's best courses.

And in little over a week, on Dec 31, this wonderful, playable golf course will

stop accepting players to make way for terminus of the new high-speed rail connecting Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

If JCC had been run-down, underutilised or unloved, perhaps it would be a decision easier to accept.

But in its current pomp, I cannot imagine many people walking down its fairways and not shaking their heads in disappointment at its upcoming closure.

On Dec 31, JCC's effervescent captain Ross Tan and his team will be holding a party to mark the end of an era.

I am sure a few tears will be shed that night as we all bid adieu to a club that has left a lasting imprint on many of us.

No other game combines the wonder of nature with the discipline of sport in such carefully planned ways. A great golf course both frees and challenges a golfer's mind.

— TOM WATSON

photo courtesy of Jurong Country Club

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