



BY  
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## LAGUNA NATIONAL PROVIDES BOOST TO **SGA'S ROOKIE PRO PROGRAMME**

FIVE NEW PROFESSIONALS  
AND ELITE SQUAD MEMBERS  
NOW ENJOY PLAYING, TRAINING  
FACILITIES AT EAST COAST CLUB

With the 2020  
Olympic Games  
in Tokyo in mind,  
the Singapore Golf  
Association's Rookie  
Professional Programme has

been enhanced. The programme, introduced in mid-year, aims to provide a bridging platform for Singapore's elite amateurs transiting into the professional ranks.

And one key objective is to gain entry to the golf tournament at the Olympic Games, the sport having made a comeback at the 2016 Rio Olympics catering to professionals.

The programme has provided support through partial financial subsidies, access to training facilities, coaching guidance and other sport-related support.

Giving the programme added boost is Laguna National Golf & Country Club which has opened its doors to the rookie professionals and members of the SGA Elite Squad who are expected to graduate into professionals in the near future.

At a ground-breaking agreement with the SGA, Laguna National has agreed to provide access to the club's facilities to members of the Rookie Professional Programme and the SGA Elite with the aim of promoting the game and nurturing golf talent in Singapore.

As well as being able to play at the club's two courses, Classic and Masters spread around Xilin Avenue, at designated times, the players will also be able to make use of Laguna National's Teaching and Practice Facility at preferential rates.

Singapore's former No. 1 amateur Gregory Foo and Abdul Hadi are the latest additions to the rookie professional programme, joining Marc Ong, Joshua Shou and Jesse Yap.

The duo turned professional at the conclusion of last month's



Singapore Golf Association general manager Jerome Ng and Laguna National's director of golf Mark Bates (above, right) at the signing agreement.

**'WE THANK LAGUNA NATIONAL FOR THEIR GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT AND FOR ALL THE GOOD THEY DO FOR THE GAME IN SINGAPORE. IT IS GREAT TO SEE THE GOLFING COMMUNITY IN SINGAPORE STARTING TO ALL COME TOGETHER.'**

— SGA GENERAL MANAGER JEROME NG

Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship and have played in three pro tournaments so far. Ong, Shou and Yap have been competing mainly on the PGA Tour China, Asian Development Tour and the local Singapore Professional Golfers Association circuit.

SGA general manager Jerome Ng said: "We thank Laguna National for their generosity of spirit and for all the good they do for the game in Singapore. It is great to see the golfing community in Singapore starting to all come together."

Kevin Kwee, Laguna National's executive director, said: "Since its inauguration 25 years ago, Laguna National has always prided itself in making a significant contribution to golf development.

"For that reason, we're pleased to be able to offer Singapore's most promising golfing prospects, at both amateur and professional level, the chance to hone their skills at our outstanding teaching and practice facility and on our two award-winning courses.

"Singapore has some outstanding young players. With the right support, there's no reason why they should not go on to achieve success in the professional game.

"For golf to flourish in Singapore, we need to have representatives competing on the leading Tours and vying for an Olympic medal. That must be the ultimate dream."

Looking beyond the current scope of support in the Rookie Professional Programme, the SGA endeavours to proactively widen the support and development focus to include holistic skills development outside golf, such as personal and coaching development, tax and accounts management, social media marketing and people engagement skills.

"The Rookie Professional Programme has benefited me tremendously. Knowing that you have some support gives me a better mindset when playing events and the confidence to perform," said Ong.

### HSBC EXTENDS CONTRACT FOR YOUTH EVENT UNTIL 2020

HSBC has been synonymous with the game of golf for a very long time. Founded in 1865, and headquartered in London, HSBC operates through long-established businesses and an international network of around 3,800 offices in 66 countries and territories.

With such a wide reach, its golf events such as the HSBC World Golf Championships (men) and the HSBC World Championships (women) catch the attention of a global audience every year.

So it came as no surprise when the bank extended its commitment to the HSBC Youth Golf Challenge, a popular junior event in Singapore and a much-sought-after longstanding fixture, to 2020.

It is a competition for juniors between the ages of 12 and 17 and with a USGA handicap index of 20 and below for boys and 27 and below for girls, encompassing two divisions for each gender.

The second leg will be held at the Warren Golf and Country Club from Dec 10 to 12, and promising Brandon Han (above) won the first leg, with the third slated for next March.

Many of the leading national amateurs have gone through this competition which has three legs at different courses throughout the year. — Godfrey Robert

