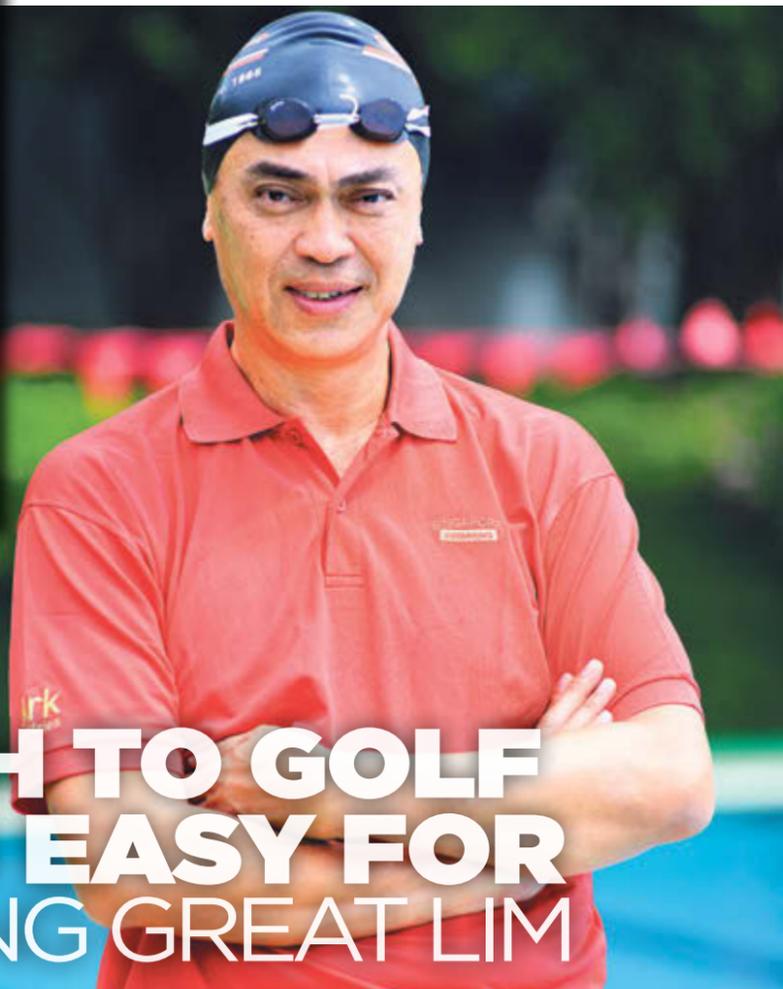


ATHLETES AND GOLF
**BY GODFREY
ROBERT**

SWING AND AUDI
PRESENT A TRIO OF
FORMER ATHLETES
WHO PERFORMED AT
THE HIGHEST LEVEL
OF THEIR SPORT AND
ARE NOW HONING
THEIR SKILLS AT GOLF

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SWITCH TO GOLF COMES EASY FOR SWIMMING GREAT LIM

FORMER NATIONAL BACKSTROKER AND THREE-TIME SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS 'NEW LOVE'

or half the race, he used to remain submerged, his head popping up only 15 metres from the walls of the swimming pools. After the “dolphin kick” turn he disappears again, then suddenly emerges for the dash to the finish.

Retired swimmer and three-time Sportsman of the Year David Lim has done that innumerable times over two lengths of many 50-metre pools from Utah to Edinburgh, and Seoul to Auckland.

And he is best remembered for the 19 South-east Asia Games gold medals (10 individual and nine relays) he garnered through this successful routine over a 10-year period.

The backstroke was his speciality (a switch he made through the advice of schools coach Lenn Wei Ling when he was in Secondary 1 at Anglo-Chinese School), although he is also a recog-

nised freestyler and breaststroker.

The 1.82-metre tall, 53-year-old had also dabbled in basketball and tennis as a teenager, but swimming for the nation was a major priority, so the Brigham Young University (Utah) graduate's focus remained on the pool.

But after quitting competitive swimming following the 1991 SEA Games, he stayed with the sport as the national coach, taking the Singapore contingent to nine SEA Games while also running his popular swim school, SwimFast Aquatic Group.

As managing director of the company which has four centres – at ACS (Barker), Methodist Girls' School, Singapore Sports School and St Joseph's Institution (International) – he is kept busy with up to 10-hour workdays mentoring kids from the ages of four to 15.

That is coupled with managing a team of foreign and local coaches at the four centres and con-



tinual engagement with demanding parents. As the sole breadwinner for his homemaker wife Grace, 11-year-old daughter Madison and caring for his 90-year-old father, Anthony, who introduced him to swimming at the age of six, he has to learn to manage stress.

His deep-set eyes settled easily as he leaned back on a comfortable chair at a restaurant at Sixth Avenue recently when discussing the game of golf, which is his “stress-reliever”.

What started out as a meaningful getaway from a hectic life as a 28-year-old is today a game that is more than a passion for Lim because he is adept at it.

Three months after gaining his proficiency certificate at the old Warren Golf and Country Club at Folkestone Road, Lim was handed a 22 handicap-index.

And within a couple of years, he was down to a 12-handicapper, his strengths being a long drive (averaging 225 metres) and near-accurate putting (three-putting is a rarity for him). Not long later, he improved to a seven-handicap purely on natural talent because he played only once a week, mainly at National Service Resort and Country Club.

Fewer playing opportunities because of a continuing hectic schedule saw his handicap subsequently rise to 13, but it did not prevent Lim from proffering the virtues of golf, especially its inherent values as a networking tool and soothing balm from his daily chores.

“I am not crazy or competitive to the point of feeling that I must win, but I always give of my best. I derive enjoyment from golf through friendship, camaraderie and a healthy dose of banter and ribbing,” said Lim.

While swimming took him to two Olympic Games (1984 and 1988), three Asian Games (1982, 1986 and 1990), two Commonwealth Games (1986 and 1990) and a host of other major championships, Lim is pleased that golf has given him some memorable occasions as well.

Top on the list is his playing with former Major winner John Daly at a pro-am event in 1995 at Tanah Merah Country Club's Garden course. As a member of Celebrities Circle, he has also played with many notable personalities and dignitaries, especially in fund-raising for corporate events.

And he surmised that like many sports, golf has changed over the years with a major overhaul of the rules being a watershed occurrence this year.

With swimming, there had been one particular rule change that would have affected him if it had been in place sooner and that is that backstrokers must surface after 15 metres either way of the pool.

“I wonder how I would have fared with this new situation, for I was admired for being under water for so long,” he concluded.

photos by Tharm Sook Wai and courtesy of Audi

SPECIFICATIONS & FEATURES

Model name: Audi Q8
Engine: V6, 2995cc, turbocharged
Power: 340hp
Torque: 500Nm
Top speed: 250km/h
Consumption: 8.9L/100km
Price: \$379,300 inclusive of COE

Features:

- Latest Audi Q design language and coupe SUV concept
- Mild hybrid technology (MHEV) with 48 volt electrical system
- Audi MMI touch response
- Fully digital 12.3" Audi virtual cockpit and head-up display
- Audi quattro all-wheel drive system
- Air suspension with Off-road mode

