

Remembering THE TUNKU

Words By Thomas Lee Photos Thomas Lee



TUNKU AND THOMAS LEE



(TUN) HAMID OMAR AND THOMAS LEE

After World War Two, mostly Europeans played at RSGC then known as Selangor Golf Club when its courses were revived. There were only a few local golfers at the time, notably H.S.Lee and Choo Kia Peng. But after our Independence in 1957, there was a large intake of Malaysians. Being new to golf, their enthusiasm was boundless. Soon members of the Royalty, Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors and diplomats as well as business leaders and high-ranking civil servants frequented RSGC. Leading the locals were Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, Deputy Prime Minister (Tun) Razak, Home Minister (Tun) Ismail, and Finance Minister (Tun) H.S. Lee.

Tunku Abdul Rahman played often at the Club with his close friends and diplomats. He inspired the Club to organise the first Malaysian Open in 1961, and he also donated a gold trophy for a new competition in 1961 between the South East Asian countries which was called the Putra Cup

(after the Tunku). Both these competitions have continued from strength to strength to this day, and owe their roots to the Tunku.

I knew the Tunku as a boy through my father H.S.Lee as the Tunku often came to my father's house. Later when I grew up, and became involved in golf at the RSGC and at the Malaysian Golf Association, I often met the Tunku because he was always interested in our activities and would accept our invitations.

In fact, the Tunku did attend one more tournament at RSGC a few years before he passed away in 1990.

He was then quite frail and I had the privilege of supporting him as he walked. I shall always remember the Tunku for his great warmth and humour. He was always considerate, understanding and supportive. The Tunku was truly a Prince Among Men. ●