

DRAGON DANCE

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Dragon Dance.

What does the term Dragon Dance have to do with a country club? The Dragon Dance is the official coronation ceremony for the Captain and Lady Captain as leaders of the Hong Kong Golf Club for a year. The political structure of a private country club in Hong Kong is somewhat similar to a traditional private club in the United States but with varying differences. The Captain of the club is similar to the President of a club in the USA. The HKGC has a president also, but is basically a position of title only. The president has no real leadership duties such as the duties carried out by the Captain. The Captain oversees the General Committee, which is composed of the Conveyor or committee chairman from each of the various sub-committees of the club. The Club has sub-committees of finance, golf, courses, buildings, membership, and legal. The head of each committee or Conveyor along with the Captain and Vice Captain compromise the General Committee. The Captain chooses the conveyors, and the Captain along with each of his chosen conveyors selects individuals for each particular sub-committee. The past captains committee meets regularly to discuss matters of the club, and has the responsibility to choose the vice-captain. The vice-captain usually has served on one or more sub-committees over the years. It appears that generally the captaincy is rotated between a European and an Asian mem-



A previous Captain and the new Captain.

ber on an alternating yearly basis. At the Annual General Membership Meeting in early May, the nominated leadership positions are pretty much given a rubber stamp unanimous vote of approval by the membership in attendance. With the Captain being a candidate of the previous captains' choosing, the political structure is maintained. One of the final acts of the acting Captain reign is hosting of the Captains Dinner. This is a black tie affair that is attended by the previous captains to honor the outgoing captain and the incoming captain, and also a time for the current Captain to show his appreciation for the help and support of the previous

captains. Although a black tie affair, I thoroughly enjoy the experience of the evening. I find it very interesting and educating to be able to speak to previous captains to learn about the history and political happenings of the Club.

Back to the Dragon Dance. The Dragon Dance is a Chinese custom to honor the new, incoming captain with a wish of good luck and a dance to ward off potential evil spirits. The event is such that a mid-morning brunch is served, the Dragon Dance takes place then Captain hits a drive off of the first tee to officially begin his reign in office. Prior to hitting the drive, many of the club's caddies spread across the first fairway. The lucky caddy that retrieves the Captains drive is rewarded with a Lisee envelope containing \$500HKD. After the Ceremonial drive, a golf tournament is played on one of the golf courses, followed by a social evening of drinks, food and awarding of prizes. The Captain's Drive-In is held on a Sunday, the Lady Captain's Drive-In is held on the proceeding Tuesday which is Ladies Day. The Captain's reigns are usually for one year, with an occasional instance of a Captain serving a two-year captaincy. The club structure and position titles are very much European with the dragon dance very much an Asian cultural tradition. In the Asian culture, dealing with spirits both good and bad is very



The dragon dancing for the new Captain.

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Dragon Dance—

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important. As you may recall from a previous article about Chinese New Year, spirits are an important part of the Asian world. The entrance into my home has a large evil mask mounted on the wall that is suppose to scare off any potential bad spirits from entering into my home. So far it must be working, as no evil spirits have been apparent to my knowledge! While the change of captaincy signals the start of a new year in the political structure of the club, it also signals the beginning of the off-season for golf due primarily to the transition into summer weather. The warm, humid, wet summer weather has the affect of sending many of the European club members back to the cooler summer weather of various European countries with many of the remaining members forgoing golf during the summer months. While golf does continue, the amount of club competitions and events is drastically curtailed for the months of June, July, and August. For me, this pattern has been a drastic change to what I have always been use to. This year I will be returning to the United States for the first summer vacation in the month of June since I started in the golf course business. Just as the days and nights are opposite between Hong Kong and Green Bay, so are the golf seasons switched. I do look forward to a relaxing break away from golf in June. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on one's view point, this summer will be much busier than normal and my vacation a bit shorter as the preparations for the Olympics swing into high gear beginning June 2nd. The 2nd signals the first lock down period leading up to the Olympics in August. Beginning June 2nd, the membership will have the Old Course and the Hong Kong Open composite course available for play. The non-composite holes on the Eden and New Courses will be closed to play due to infrastructure construction for the Olympics. Viewing marques, refreshment areas, media installation, security installations, etc will be started. The maintenance staffs are looking forward to maintaining the non-composite holes without golf play for a period of at least three months. The somewhat slower pace of the off season will this year be compromised by the Olympic Preparations, a period of time I'm sure will encompass both satisfaction and frustration. For us, the real critical period will be as soon as the Olympics are completed. I'm sure there will be members ready to tee off at 6 am the day after the Olympics! Tentative plans are to hopefully bring the courses back into playing condition by mid-September, but this timeframe will be dramatically affected by the weather during and after the Olympics. Generally the summer season is marked by periods of abundant if not very excessive amounts of rainfall with a typhoon sprinkled in for a bit if excitement. The summer of 2007 was rather dry by Hong Kong standards, so I'm anticipating this summer to be much wetter. My first year in Hong Kong was marked by rainfall totals in excess of 750mm for each month of May through August. Hopefully that will not be the case this year with all the Olympic preparations to be undertaken. As was the case in Wisconsin, in Hong Kong one also just learns to cope with the weather, accept it, and move on as best as you can. Such are the challenges of working in the golf course business in whatever country. Just another experience and challenge in the Adventure of Life.



Heat Stroke Quiz

(See related article on Page 27)

True or False

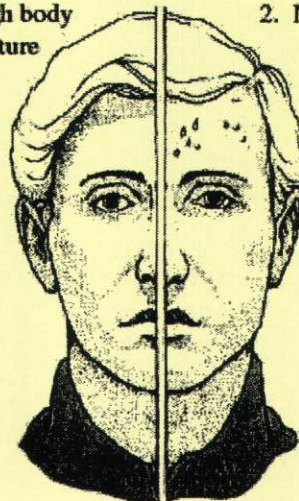
1. The illness caused by heat stress is very real. T F
2. Heat stress may result from the buildup of muscle generated heat in the body. T F
3. Exposure to heat stress is not a problem with children. T F
4. The most serious heat related illness is heat stroke. T F
5. Over 20% of those who suffer a heat stroke die. T F

Heat Stroke

1. Dry, hot skin
2. Very high body temperature

Heat Exhaustion

1. Moist clammy skin
2. Normal or subnormal temperature



Signs and symptoms of heat stroke and heat exhaustion

Answer Key

1. T, 2. T, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T