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Myanmar Benefits From AGIF-R&A Collaboration

Golf in Myanmar received a huge boost through the collaboration between the Asian Golf Industry Federation (AGIF) and The R&A.

Funded by the AGIF and The R&A, acclaimed instructor Mark Holland has made three trips to Myanmar over the past 18 months to coach the national team and develop a training programme for local instructors.

Holland, formerly Head Coach of the Australian Institute of Sport Golf Programme, said: "It is very satisfying to use my experience to build a platform from which golf can grow and develop in Myanmar.

"In terms of developing players and coaches, the three trips have been very worthwhile. But we have only scratched the surface and much more work and a co-ordinated national training strategy for both groups is now required."

Holland's positive influence was borne out by the performance of the Myanmar team at last December's 27th Southeast Asian Games where they won three silver medals.

Dominic Wall, Director – Asia-Pacific at The R&A, said: "Mark has a wealth of experience in developing talented young players and there's no doubt the three visits he made to Myanmar have been very productive.

"The importance of helping Myanmar develop a training programme for its own coaches cannot be over-stated. This is often a challenge for countries looking to develop in golf and we hope this programme will be of great benefit to Myanmar."

Currently there are 127 golf courses in Myanmar. The MGF estimates there are around 50,000 club golfers in the country with a further 25,000 golfers who are not attached to clubs.

Vietnam celebrates new Greg Norman-designed course

One of Asia's most anticipated new golf courses opened recently to allow its first golfers to test it. Designed by none other than **GREG NORMAN, THE BLUFFS HO TRAM STRIP** sits along Vietnam's south-central coast, a geographical location that some designers can only dream of.

"This is one of only two pieces of land of this quality and character that I have ever been given to work with, the other being Doonbeg in the south of Ireland," said Norman, who also conceived the award-winning Dunes Course at Danang Golf Club, on Vietnam's central coast.

Routed over and around towering seaside sand dunes less than two hours southeast of Ho Chi Minh City, The Bluffs Ho Tram Strip is one of the few championship-calibre links courses with significant elevation changes, making for a golf experience that's as much a feast for the eyes as it is a challenge to tame.

While the highest point of the rugged, windswept property is 50 meters above sea level, on the 15th green, one of the most spectacular spots comes earlier in the round, on the 4th hole.

From there, players are presented

with a 360-degree view of the course, of the surrounding national forest that's a haven for wildlife, of the expansive shoreline and of

The Grand Ho Tram Strip, which opened in July 2013 as Vietnam's first international luxury casino resort.

The grand opening is planned for the end of 2014.

When finished, The Bluffs Ho Tram Strip will include an elegant, 2,300-square-meter clubhouse housing an array of dining outlets and a PGA-staffed driving range with more than 3,000 square meters worth of practice and training facilities. Limited Golf Membership opportunities will be rolled out in March.

The Bluffs Ho Tram Strip is among several components of The Grand Ho Tram Strip's first stage of development. The ambitious project already features a 541-room upscale hotel, over 10 restaurants and bars, a spa, nightclub, convention centre and casino with 90 gaming tables and over 600 slot machines.

To learn more about The Bluffs Ho Tram Strip, visit www.thebluffshotram.com

