

HOT

NOUVEAU

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Thin as Sin

you don't have to be thin to be beautiful

- Maids or "Mummy"?
- Fall Suits: A Comeback
- A Trip Downunder or Pangkor Laut



Janice Khoo, medical practitioner and married with four beautiful daughters, is a golf fanatic. At the time of the interview, she was seven months pregnant and had just won a prize at a local golf tournament a month earlier. What brings on this fanaticism and when will she stop (or will she ever?) playing golf? This is what she says ...

Confession of a woman golfer

As told to JESSICA LOON

I started playing golf at the age of 13. My dad was the one who introduced me to this game. He encouraged me a lot and put me through lessons. At that time, I wasn't the only woman golfer around. There was a handful of woman golfers at the juniors clinic but many quit after a while. I suppose age could be the reason for this. Most of them were older than me and were interested in other things then.

This is understandable, as at one stage, I myself, gave up golf for squash during my university days. I simply couldn't afford the time as golf is quite a committed game. A game of golf could take away almost half a day of your time.

I picked up the game again two years ago when my husband became serious in the game. That's when the craze began. Now I am simply hooked by it. At one time last year, I was playing golf five times a week in the afternoons at the *Laguna Golf and Country Club*. You could say that it's the challenge or the company I'm with that makes me go on and on.

Someone called me a golf fanatic simply because I was still playing when I should be resting for my pregnancy. I was three and a half months pregnant when I played at a recent Pro-Am tournament in March and five months in my pregnancy when I played in another tournament in May. Surprisingly, my pregnancy was no deterrence. In fact, I played my best game so far in May. I suppose the extra member (*the baby*) gave me extra distance. I don't think I will stop just because I'm pregnant. I continued to play until I was eight months in my pregnancy.

My eldest daughter is learning the game. She started when she was six or seven years old. Like me, she loves the game. She has been to the course once but that was the only time we'd brought her. It isn't that difficult to pick up the game actually. The only requisite is good ball sense and the rest is up to you. It's a thinking game. You must know where to place the ball, know the run of the ground, the green, and the use of the club. You can start playing on the course within six months if you are really interested and serious about the game. Bluff your way through the game? There's no way you can do that unless you cheat on your score. It's very much your own game.

My second daughter is not on the game. She's too active to take it up. It's dangerous for hyperactives as they don't realise there are restricted areas they shouldn't get too near to. For beginners, it's best to be trained by a professional or someone

who's good at the game. You may not like it in the beginning as you will be at the driving range most of the time. It could be quite boring. But it's not fair to decide whether you like the game or not at this time. It's a different ball game at the golf course.

I see more youngsters at the golf course these days. I suppose it's a result of peer pressure. It wouldn't be that interesting for a younger person to play golf with someone of the older generation. It's four hours with the same person and you must be of the same wavelength. It's a good game to conduct some serious business talks though. Some say that it's the only way you can get someone for four hours. A doctor friend of mine once said that he played the game to get business. But of course, there are others in my profession who play golf for what the game offers. These are mostly male golfers though. Many times, I'm the only woman around. For this reason, I play with both male and female golfers. There's no discrimination where I'm concerned. In fact, the men are more than happy to have me around as I could always play if they need a stand-in.

For the last one year, I have been more than involved in this game. I am the vice-captain of *Laguna Golf and Country Club* and I attend meetings held by the *Singapore Ladies Golf Association*. I've more woman friends now who share the same interest as me.

My craze for golf has brought me overseas too — golf trips to Malaysia and Thailand mostly. I've been to golf courses at Phuket, Langkawi and Australia. The one to Australia wasn't exactly a golf vacation. Golf was only a part of the programme of activities then. A different golfing environment, a different thrill altogether ...

