

Mad About Golf

Three youths to benefit from training under Mardan

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THREE promising youngsters will benefit from the Youth Golf Programme-Mardan Adoption Scheme, an initiative of the Youth Golf Network Limited.

The three are Joey Poh, who completed her diploma in sports management and exercise science at the Sports School, Leverett Chua, a Secondary 2 student of St Gabriel's Secondary School, and Muhd Syabil Abdul Kadir, a Secondary 4 student at Montford Secondary.

The trio will be adopted by Raffles Country Club, where Singapore's No. 1 Mardan Mamat is a club professional.

Raffles will extend its golfing facilities to the three students.

Initiated in 1997, the Youth Golf Programme trains about 400 secondary school and junior college students every year with no fees charged.

With the high cost of playing golf in Singapore for non-club members, some of them previously had to travel to clubs in Johor, namely Pulau Springs, to play the game.

At a press conference at National Service Resort and Country Club (Changi), Youth Golf Network's chairman Dr Janice Khoo said: "Mardan is a shining light for the youths. He is Singapore's home-grown professional who has risen from the ranks of a caddie to be an international champion.

"I thank Mardan for his presence here, and he is happy to do something for the less fortunate.

"To date we have trained some 4,400



LESSON FROM THE MASTER: Mardan Mamat, Singapore's No. 1 pro, showing Leverett Chua, Joey Poh and Muhd Syabil the finer points of putting.

PICTURE:
BERITA HARIAN

students from schools that offer golf as a Co-Curricular Activity."

Of the three selected, Joey, 19, who started playing golf at the age of nine, comes with impressive credentials.

Daughter of teaching pro Poh Ah Hai, she was in the Singapore team for the Queen Sirikit Cup in 2010 and 2011, and played in the HSBC Women's Champions at Tanah Merah's Garden course in 2009 and 2010.

Mardan is impressed with her compact swing style and would like to take her game to a new level.

Leverett, 14, started golf at the age of three and attained a handicap index of 21 last year.

A member of Pulau Springs where he competes every weekend, he hopes to join

the Victoria Junior College golf team and then aspire to be in the national team.

Syabil, 15, who plays off a handicap index of 22, idolises Mardan and wants to emulate him.

According to pro Ian Sim, Syabil is "a very earnest and attentive student who displays readiness and preparedness during lessons. He is very responsible and courteous."

Mardan said: "I'm impressed with the three youngsters, and I believe they have good potential. As a kid, I had help from many people. I want to give back to the golf community as my way of saying 'thank you' for all the support I have had."

Mardan will help the three players, mostly on Saturdays, and on weekdays when he is free.