

AUGUST 2016

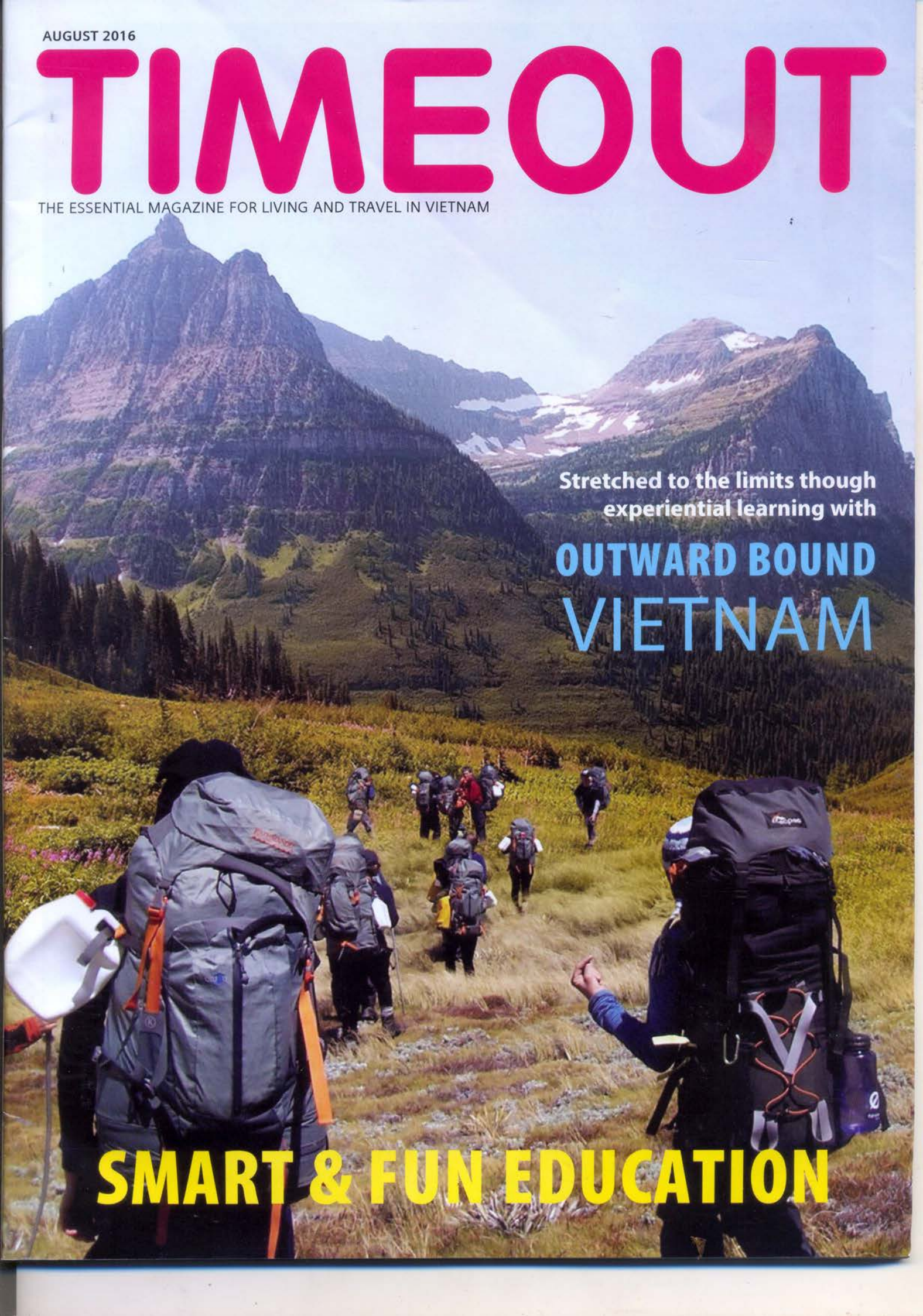
TIMEOUT

THE ESSENTIAL MAGAZINE FOR LIVING AND TRAVEL IN VIETNAM

Stretched to the limits though
experiential learning with

**OUTWARD BOUND
VIETNAM**

SMART & FUN EDUCATION



BA NA HILLS GOLF CLUB SETS ANOTHER STANDARD

The recently opened Ba Na Hills Golf Club has become the first golf club in Vietnam to use TrackMan teaching technology. By **Que Chi**

Less than four months after opening on the outskirts of Danang, Ba Na Hills Golf Club is already poised to lead the golf industry's growth in Vietnam by embracing technology in a way no other course in the country has and rolling out one of the most impressive practice facilities the country has ever seen.

With British PGA Class AA professional Matthew Pryke at the helm, Ba Na Hills Golf Club is operating with TrackMan at the core of its instructional programme. Added to that, a game-improvement centre anchored by a fully-lit, 310-yard driving range with 18 covered, fan-cooled hitting bays and five, bunker-guarded target greens simulates course conditions.

"Every club has a responsibility to help develop the game of golf, and we plan to do that here at Ba Na Hills by targeting potential new golfers of all ages, specifically juniors," said Jack Hedges,

Ba Na Hills Golf Club's general manager. "Through the use of Trackman — a tool that, to our knowledge, no other course in Vietnam has thus far implemented — we can help accelerate that process."

All over the world, TrackMan has become a vital tool in the teaching arsenal of a growing number of instructors. At Ba Na Hills Golf Club, golf swings are analysed using TrackMan 4, the Danish technology company's latest product and the most powerful and accurate launch monitor ever invented. Its stand-out feature is dual-radar technology. As one radar tracks the movement of the club, the other tracks the ball.

"Watching a player hit shots with one club and then trying to assess swing flaws along the way has become an antiquated teaching method," said Pryke, Ba Na Hills Golf Club's head golf professional. "It's just not as effective as this kind of video analysis, and our course's designer - golf legend Luke

Donald - would attest to that. He swears by the technology."

Since opening in late March, Ba Na Hills Golf Club has earned the reputation in Vietnam of a golf pioneer. The first course in the world designed by former world No. 1 Luke Donald, the challenging, parkland-style layout is also the first in central Vietnam to be located away from the coastline — in the shadow of the spectacular Annamese Mountains — and the first in the area to offer night golf. The comprehensive lighting system, which was switched on in May, allows for play until 9 pm.

Ba Na Hills Golf Club is managed by IMG and owned by Sun Group, one of the leading investors in Vietnam. Other hospitality projects in its portfolio include InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort, Novotel Danang Premier Han River and Ba Na Hills Mountain Resort, site of the longest, single-wire cable car system in the world.



Q & A WITH MATTHEW PRYKE

A graduate of the University of Birmingham, England, Matthew Pryke came to Ba Na Hills with a vast experience of working as manager at luxury golf clubs throughout Asia. He shares with Timeout his experiences of introducing the youngest, least-experienced golfers to the game and molding them into potential champions.

What is TrackMan and what are the strengths of this programme?

Trackman is a device which uses dual radar technology to track what the ball and clubhead are doing in the way of movement, position and speed. The feedback data it gives is extremely precise and assists the coach in making decisions on how to improve a player's ball flight, whatever their level or ability. You can easily organise and track a player's ability and assess them to see how they are improving through the learning process. As far as we are aware, we are the only golf club in Vietnam at the moment to implement the new Trackman 4 device.

Are there any difference between the training programme for youngsters in Vietnam and other countries?

There is a way to teach golfers and develop the game of golf by introducing new people to the sport, whatever country you're in. Like any sport, training and introducing golf to youngsters has to be fun and rewarding in order for them to keep wanting to come back. The training methods used for junior golfers might not always incorporate golf as it is also very important to improve other motor skills at the same time. Throwing, running, catching and balance skills are just some of the things that juniors will learn during coaching sessions.

What is the optimum age for starting out in golf?

Golf really is one of the very few sports that can be started at almost any age. The youngest age depends on the individual and whether they are capable of concentrating for up to an hour during the lesson. Golf is also very popular with retired people or those who have otherwise given up work as it is an excellent way to exercise and socialise at the same time.

What criteria do you use to evaluate a golf academy as satisfactory, good or excellent?

Golf academies which have a facility that offers a place to learn and practice all areas of the game for all levels of golfers and are in good condition, are considered to be good ones. If you start adding the latest teaching technologies, launch monitors and convenience services eg. F&B and changing rooms, you have something truly amazing. This is something we are very lucky to have at Ba Na Hills Golf Academy, a facility that offers everything a customer needs to improve their golf whilst staying comfortable in the environment.

What classes and sessions is Ba Na Hills Golf Club offering to young golfers?

We have just invested in SNAG (Start New At Golf) golf equipment, which is aimed at juniors of all ages to start the game with a really fun appeal. We have an academy open day scheduled for Saturday 6th August where many juniors are invited to come and try golf and have a fun day out with us. On top of this, we offer weekly weekend junior golf classes for anyone to come and get involved. These sessions are one hour long and the study topics vary each week with fun games and activities. Our aim at Ba Na Hills Golf Club is to grow the game of golf and offer many new junior golfers the chance to start a sport that they will carry with them for a lifetime.