



## **The Legend of the Kaanapali Golf Resort**

When you consider all the great golf courses on the island of Maui, it is impossible to overlook the “Grand-daddy” of them all, the Royal Kaanapali Course. The Royal Kaanapali is one of only two courses in the State of Hawaii designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. (the other being the Mauna Kea Golf Club on the Big Island). This legendary course boasts decades of memorable moments in professional golf history. The challenge of the unpredictable West Maui trade winds and the huge rolling signature greens has lured many of the world’s all-time greatest golfers.

Let’s join Kaanapali’s historical spectator gallery....

**July, 1962...**The Royal Kaanapali Course opened with a bang when the original crooner, Bing Crosby, christened play with the first-ever Kaanapali foursome. Although we don’t have his scorecard, legend has it that he played a solid round with an equal mixture of birdies and bogies.

**July, 1963...**“Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf,” an ABC television series, made its Hawaiian debut on the Royal Kaanapali Course. A match-play series, this duel featured Dave Regan from the USA and Bob Charles from New Zealand. Regan birdied the first hole to take an early lead, but Charles rebounded with a beautiful round of 66 to easily outplay his opponent. Kaanapali became a favorite to this New Zealander, whose future held more than just this win.

**December, 1964...** Royal Kaanapali hosted the Canada Cup (now recognized as the World Cup of Golf). Many great golfers represented their countries, including Chi Chi Rodriguez (Puerto Rico), Bob Charles (New Zealand), Peter Thompson (Australia) and the Black Knight, Gary Player (South Africa). The American team proved overwhelming as Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus teamed up to roll over the international field. Ironically, Palmer set the course record of 65 the first round of the two day competition, and Nicklaus matched that effort with his own 65 the next day. That shared record stood for 23 years – not bad company!

**1982 – 1985...**The LPGA blazed into Kaanapali with Hawaii’s first version of the Women’s Kemper Open. A record spectator crowd of over 5,000 Maui residents and many island visitors witnessed Jan Stephenson hit the first-ever LPGA Maui tee-shot in an authentic ti-leaf skirt. The first year winner was Amy Alcott with Betsy King capturing back-to-back titles in ’83 and ’84. NBC televised this event live to a national audience for all four years.

**December 1987...**Mark Rolfing, who had earlier brought national television exposure to the Maui’s Kapalua Resort, believed strongly that the Royal Kaanapali Course was a perfect fit for the newly developed Senior PGA Tour. The inaugural event featured the “Good ‘Ol Boys of Golf,” which included

Arnold Palmer, Don January, Billy Casper and Chi Chi Rodriguez. The winner of the Senior Tour “Boot Camp” proved to be the disciplined “Sarge” Orville Moody, previous winner of the 1968 U.S. Open.

**Memories of the Kaanapali Classic, Senior PGA Tour, 1987 – 2000...** We could fill volumes with all the thrills of victory and agonies of defeat! However, here are some fun highlights...Rocky Thompson, who eagled all three par-five holes in the same round in 1990! Only three other players in the history of golf have ever accomplished that feat (including Sam Snead)...Don Bies won back-to-back Classic titles in '88 and '89...Lee Trevino hit his inaugural shot (heard around the world) on the Senior PGA Tour at Kaanapali in December 1989...U.S. Ryder Cup Captain Dave Stockton made his Senior Tour debut at Kaanapali two years later...Tommy Aaron broke a 20-year drought in 1992, nailing his first victory as a professional since the 1972 Masters...George Archer drained a 25-foot putt on the first play-off hole to defeat Stockton and Trevino in 1993...Chi Chi Rodriguez and Bob Murphy stage a “Stay in School and Stay off Drugs” Clinic for over 600 Lahaina Intermediate School Students...WOW!...Bob Murphy donated \$3,000 of his 1994 first place money to Hale Makua, Maui’s Senior Citizen Health Care Center...Mike Love and the Endless Summer California Beach Band rocked the beach and the Senior PGA Tour at the “Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf,” by winning his 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Classic titles, becoming Kaanapali’s only three-time winner...1998 brought Jay Siegel his title and he tied the course record for 10 under par!...1999 Bruce Fleisher had the round of his life and was his hottest year...1997 Hale Irwin won and then again in 2000, which turned out to be a historic win as it was the last year for the Senior’s tournament to be played at Kaanapali.

**February 2008:** The Champions TOUR returns with some of the original golfing legends testing their skills once again on the Royal Kaanapali Course. Tom Watson and Jack Nicklaus, winners of the 2007 event, along with Arnold Palmer, Jay Haas, Gary Player, Loren Roberts, Peter Jacobsen and Fuzzy Zoeller joining them.

The event was a two day SKINS GAME (alternate shot format), played February 23-24, 2008 and drew a crowd of over 8,000 people over the two days! Fuzzy Zoeller and Peter Jacobsen came through in the clutch to take home three skins (final hole playoff with Watson/Nicklaus) and \$320,000, capturing the lead and the Wendy’s trophy. Player and Roberts started off strong with a skins on hole #1, but weren’t able to hold onto their lead for long (they also received a skins on the demanding part 3, #17 hole to take home a total of \$180,000.) Returning champions, Watson and Nicklaus had some phenomenal shots, with Nicklaus holing out a bunker shot and taking home \$270,000 on Day 1.