# Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort Appoints New Director of Tennis

PHUKET, THAILAND – The Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort has appointed Mr Sean Panton as Director of Tennis, effective 15 December 2017.

Panton, a British national born in Malawi, has been teaching tennis since 1994. Since then he has been advancing the tennis skills of players of all levels at venues such as the Hyatt Regency Macau, the Four Seasons Resort in Chiang Mai, the Royal Garden Pattaya Sport & Fitness Club, and the JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa.

A resident of Phuket for 16 years, Panton was also General Manager of Thanyapura, the Phuket International Academy Sports & Leisure Club.

Since opening in 2013, tennis has been a major guest activity at the Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort, which has three outdoor floodlit synthetic courts and an indoor court. Panton takes over from James Corin who served as Tennis Director for three years at the Outrigger.

“Sean’s vast experience as a tennis coach and working at a senior level in sports-related activities in many international cross-cultural settings make him ideal to direct tennis operations at Outrigger,” said Tony Pedroni, the resort’s General Manager.

Pedroni said that apart from hotel guests, Phuket residents are also welcome to learn or play tennis at the Outrigger. Individual and group lessons, a ladies tennis clinic, and a social night are all part of the tennis scene at the resort, which is known for promoting active lifestyles.

Aside from tennis, Panton is a leading advocate for environmental protection, corporate social responsibility and inclusive community relations. In 2011, he created SEEK, an environmental civil society movement helping to consolidate green initiatives in Phuket.

Beyond tennis and environmental protection, Panton is a surfer, husband and father with a passion for music.

The tennis centre at the Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort can be contacted at +66 [0] 76 360 600 ext. 2355. Email: tennis.phuketbeach@outrigger.co.th

Green Commitment: A Tennis Q&A with Sean Panton
Here, Sean Panton, the new Director of Tennis at the Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort, talks about his on-court heroes and the challenges and rewards of taking up tennis as a hobby.

Q: Which male and female tennis players do you admire the most and why?
A: I admire Roger Federer the most. He is humble, focused and always has time for his fans. He also works to promote junior tennis whenever possible. His game is very efficient. He plays with minimal wasted effort. There will never be another Federer.

Serena and Venus Williams inspire me with their relentless commitment and love for the game, their physical prowess and their ability to not only change with the times, but to recover so well in the

face of adversity. They are truly inspiring.

Q: How has the game changed over the last 50 years or so?
A: It's a different game now. Rackets make more possible and coaching and fitness have come a long way. The game is a lot more physical and more demanding on the body for the pros. However, the beginner or club player has a much better chance of developing a solid game now as coaching is more function based as opposed to form. Equipment today is much better and makes the game easier to play.

Q: How does tennis compare with other sports as a means to keep fit?
A: Tennis uses a wide variety of physical and mental skills that makes it one of the most challenging but rewarding sports to play. After a good hour of tennis you feel physically and mentally stimulated. Keeping fit and flexible will help your game – and life in general. I know lots of people who play well into their 80s. Tennis keeps you healthy and focused.

Q: What if someone is not sure about taking it up? What advice would you give to them?
A: Tennis is easy when the focus of learning is to have fun. If you haven't played for a while you will find it a lot easier than when you used to play. It doesn't take all day to play, just an hour or so will do. Tennis is low impact so it's easy to start to play as a youth or later in life. At the Outrigger our courts are artificial grass, so very comfortable on the knees. Those interested should try it and see how easy it is to begin to succeed. My aim is to build their game around their natural abilities, so it doesn't take long to grasp.

Q: How much equipment and specialist gear do you need to get started?
A: I have rackets for you to try out depending on your physical capabilities and style. So all you really need is a little motivation and a pair of tennis shoes.

Q: Do you have to have a partner in mind or can the tennis centre at the Outrigger match you up with someone?
A: We have a data base of players from the community and 'knockers' who can play with you also.

Q: How social is tennis at the Outrigger?
A: Very. We have an excellent facility and are conveniently located, so we're ideal for social tennis. Lots of Phuket residents live close by and have frequented the courts for the past four years. We also host weekly social events and tournaments. We will be introducing leagues and mixers as well as junior development days.

Q: What about families or groups of friends who want to play together. What can Outrigger do for them?
A: We can conduct group clinics and even teach parents how to play games with and instruct their children. When we have different ages and abilities we focus on shot development and follow up with practice games so all are engaged and benefit. We can put together round robin events for friends and even elite master classes for high level players.

Q: Which time of the week is best to play at Outrigger?
A: We are open from 8am to 8pm daily. The best time is the time that suits you. Coaching is available except for Sundays but we can be flexible on that too. Let us know your time slots and we will work around you. Please note heat is a factor, so mid-day is not a good time to play.

Q: How can those interested in tennis in Phuket contact you to find out more?
A: Just call me anytime on 083 391 5869 or reach out to me by email me on tennis.phuketbeach@outrigger.co.th

Q: Finally, there's a movie about it now, but who was better, Borg or McEnroe?
A: I played with Bjorn Borg when I was 13 in Bahrain. I played with him against Vitas Gerulaitis and another ranked junior player in an exhibition game. So while Borg is my favourite, McEnroe was in my opinion better. He changed the whole mechanics of the game with no swing and use of the wrist on the serve. However, they both were great champions. Some of the matches they played against each other were epic.

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Editors can download Sean Panton's images and this release in Word & Text formats at https://app.box.com/s/t0euz5xmhr7p395eai60pbu8c5vx8ok0

ABOUT THE OUTRIGGER LAGUNA PHUKET BEACH RESORT
The 255-key Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort opened on April 2013. Located between the mesmeric deep blue waters of the Andaman Sea and tropical lagoons, the absolute beachfront Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort gives you the finest in accommodation with modern interiors subtly blended with contemporary Thai touches – all with complimentary Wi-Fi throughout.

For active family and couples lifestyles, enjoy the waterslide and large freeform swimming pool, plus tennis, squash, fitness and badminton – and the full choice of Phuket leisure interests through the activities desk. While the kids are having a great time in the Kids Club, parents can chill in the shade with a cool drink overlooking the turquoise Andaman Sea at Bang Tao beach.

Explore new taste sensations at five sumptuous food and beverage outlets including the best locally sourced food at Locavore, casual grills and drinks at Edgewater, and innovative Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisine at Metzo's.

Our exclusive Club Lounge gives Club guests an extra level of service and relaxation.

To ensure a complete holiday experience, guests enjoy signing privileges at the Banyan Tree, Angsana Spa, 30 restaurants and bars, the Canal Shopping Village and Laguna Phuket Golf club.

ABOUT OUTRIGGER HOTELS AND RESORTS
Outrigger Hotels and Resorts is a privately held leisure lodging, retail and hospitality company with corporate offices in Hawaii and operating globally in the Asia-Pacific, Oceania and Indian Ocean regions. From its Outrigger Signature Experiences to its Outrigger DISCOVERY loyalty program, the values-based company invites guests to escape ordinary with exceptional hospitality and authentic cultural experiences, incorporating local traditions and customs at each of its properties worldwide. Founded in 1947, Outrigger has grown into a highly successful, multi-branded portfolio of hotels, condominiums and vacation resort properties, including Outrigger® Resorts, OHANA Hotels by Outrigger®, Hawaii Vacation Condos by Outrigger®, Embassy Suites®, Holiday Inn®, Best Western®, Wyndham Vacation Ownership® and Hilton Grand VacationsTM. Outrigger currently operates and/or has under development 37 properties with approximately 6,500 rooms located in Hawaii (Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Hawaii Island); Guam; Fiji; Thailand; Mauritius; and the Maldives. Find out; find Outrigger at: www.outrigger.com or visit @OutriggerResorts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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