



## *Technical Game, Physical Game, Mental Game*

### *Technical Game*

#### *Reality Check . . . .*

As part of my mental coaching theme, I tell golfers that you don't have to be perfect technically to be successful. Not on any given shot, hole, or round. Golfers intellectually get the fact that it's unreasonable to expect perfection, yet as they stand over the ball preparing to play a shot, they still expect perfection.

This may have something to do with golf on television. On any given Saturday or Sunday, the PGA Tour offers up some impressive golf that suggests perfection actually exists. Not so fast. Based on numbers from Shot by Shot, a PGA Tour statistical data gathering firm, Tour players are not as perfect as you may think.

Let's take a look at player averages for Tour events in a few key areas. These stats are based on those players making the cut (the top 70 and ties from the starting field of 156), players finishing in the top 10, and the winners.

- Fairways hit in regulation for players making the cut average 8.7/14 or 62%; players finishing in the top 10 average 9.3/14 or 66.5%; among players who win, the average is a touch better, 9.4/14 or 67%.
- Greens in regulation for players making the cut average 11.4/18 or 65%; players finishing in the top 10 average 12.7/14 or 70.5%; among players who win, the average is 13.2/14 or 73.4%.
- Looking at 1-putt greens from a distance of 4 - 10 feet, player's average success is 61%; players finishing in the top 10 average 66%; and among players who win, the average is 71%.

These numbers are very good, but certainly not perfect. Keep in mind; these are the best golfers in the world, playing their best -- for a given week. So, the best golfers in the world are hitting 65% of their fairways, 64% of their greens, and 69% of their putts from 10 feet and closer and still shooting under par; they are finding

success and shooting good numbers without being 100% in any areas of their game.

Know that you can still score from the rough and from the trees. You can miss greens and putts and still have a very good score. Successful scoring takes on many shapes and paths -- that's the game. Understanding this reality and embracing the opportunity that exists in the next shot can change your approach and help to reduce anxiety -- allowing for a more relaxed and mobile golf swing.

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## *Physical Game*

### Golf Exercise Benefits

By Mike Pedersen

Golf exercise benefits are many. Golfers have struggled for years with their games and have become very frustrated. I can't tell you how many times I play with golfers who are about to quit the game.

To explain golf exercise benefits to a golfer takes a little convincing, but in a short amount of time they become believers. There are so many I can't possibly list them all in this article, but you will be motivated to take this approach.

Some of the main golf exercise benefits are; improved power for longer drives; dramatically improved stability for better consistency; a body that moves freer, removing tension from the swing; more energy for 18 holes; elimination of injuries; weight loss; improved concentration due to a reduction in fatigue; I could go on-and-on.

### Improved Power for Longer Drives

If your body is weak and inflexible you will not be able to achieve optimal swing mechanics. Such things as a full shoulder turn, with minimal hip rotation; creating and retaining torque (energy) in your core for maximum clubhead speed; proper sequence of motion with muscles firing at the appropriate time; being able to swing just a little harder on long par 5's and still be in control.

### Removing Tension from the Swing

When you improve your flexibility (range of motion specific to your golf swing) you are able to make a full backswing with no tension in the supporting muscles of the swing. Like the shoulders, lower back, upper back (lats), and even the wrists. It

is known in most athletics that less tension equals more power.

## More Energy for 18 Holes

One of the biggest culprits of back nine blow-ups is loss of energy resulting in poor mental confidence and swing mechanics. I see this one all the time when I play...golfers who are out of shape and lack appropriate fuel intake and maintenance. Having energy for 18 holes builds tremendous confidence and a higher level of play.

## Elimination of Injuries

Golf injuries are prevalent among all amateur golfers, especially senior golfers. The golf swing is a damaging movement on the human body. Swinging a club between 80-100 mph in less than a second can be traumatic. Golfers who don't have an adequate level of golf strength and flexibility are susceptible to injury every time they swing the club. The lower back usually takes the brunt of the stress and strain. Then hips, knees, shoulders and even wrists. A stronger, more flexible golfer will avoid injuries indefinitely.

## Weight Loss

I have worked with over 10,000 golfers via my online golf performance website and they all fill out an initial golf fitness profile. Since I review every one of them personally, I see how many of them have weight loss of 10-30 pounds as a goal. There are more overweight golfers on the course than fit ones. This is because golfers have not come to the conclusion the fitness plays a critical role in golf performance. Exercising will not only improve lean muscle, but melt fat away. To not only improve their golf, but lose weight is icing on the cake for any golfer.

## Improved Concentration

How many times have you had a good score going into the back nine only to have a couple of blow-up holes that ruined your score? It happens all the time. Why? Because your body fatigues and your brain doesn't maintain a high enough level of concentration. The result is poor club selection; swing mechanics and diminishing confidence. A fitter golfer will always have the edge over an out-of-shape one. When the round progresses and tension creeps in they will prevail every time.

The above are only a few golf exercise benefits . . . but enough to hopefully convince you that it's worth looking into. The golf swing is now being viewed as a very athletic movement, like baseball, tennis, etc...and should be approached from a conditioning emphasis. I hope you now realize the return on investment from these golf exercise benefits.

About The Author: Mike Pedersen is one of the top golf fitness experts in the country. He is Golf Magazine's fitness expert at GolfOnline.com, author and founder

of several cutting-edge online golf fitness sites.

Perform Better Golf

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## *Mental Game*

Some people can see a golf shot through visualization - then have the ability to imagine the swing and the flight of the ball and see images in their minds eye, just as clearly as it sees it in reality. Others, less inclined to see or imagine can be just as effective in communicating the desired result through the words they say to themselves - they say exactly what they want to do or achieve as clearly as if they were describing to someone else the desired action. Still others communicate to themselves through feel.

Creating a felt sense within their body about how they want to act and swing. The point is the mind and body must be in harmony, in agreement about the action taking place. It's the minds job to let the body know.

Practice and develop communication with yourself -- to yourself, the action that you want from each and every shot through the use of images, words, or feelings. By effectively communicating what is wanted, the desired, conscious execution of each shot, the mind and body achieve harmony.

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