

Golf Digest

South Africa

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PREVIEW

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THE YIPS



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★ **BY JORDAN SPIETH** ★

GOLF GEAR THAT WINS ★ INSIDE THE EPIC BOGEY THAT WON AT BIRKDALE



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07/18 BEHIND THE SCENES

50 YEARS SINCE GARY CONQUERED CARNOUSTIE

By Stuart McLean, Editor



Carnoustie, where the Open Championship returns from July 19 to 22, has no exclusive golf club rich in history like the Royal & Ancient

(St Andrews) or Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers (Muirfield). It's a municipal links in a commuter town with a railway station on the main line between Dundee and Aberdeen. Many spectators will arrive by train. And Carnoustie is again expected to have the smallest attendance of any Open venue.

Yet Carnoustie is the most interesting and challenging of the links which form the modern Open rota. Part of that attraction lies in the history of its Opens, and the rarity of those occasions. Only seven, just four in the last 50 years. It was removed from the rota for 24 years before returning in 1999 once a hotel had been built on site. A fierce examination of a golfer's skills and patience, it is a links where golfers are more prone to incurring disasters than any other.

Carnoustie's last Open was 2007, and the leaderboard shows a different cast of golfers from the modern generation. Of the current top 50 on the World Ranking, just eight were at Carnoustie when Pádraig Harrington became the first Irish winner in 60 years, beating Sergio Garcia in a playoff. Rory McIlroy made his Open debut as an amateur, and a first round 68 created headlines. He claimed the silver medal, although he was T-42 on a total of 289.

That was the winning score in the 1968 Open at Carnoustie, and this year marks the 50th anniversary of what many regard as Gary Player's finest major triumph after going head-to-head with Jack Nicklaus in the final round. (See page 60 for photos.) The 1968 Open is not celebrated as much as it should be, possibly because the real winner that year might have been Carnoustie itself. It's where its reputation grew as a mean

beast, a place where even the world's best had to grind out pars.

In 1968 Nicklaus was the very best, having a sequence of 10 top-5s in 12 majors. Yet over 72 holes at Carnoustie he failed to birdie a single par 3 or par 4. He had five birdies and two eagles on what was then the longest course in major history. At 7 252 yards (6 631 metres) it was only 150 yards shorter than it will be played this year. Only Billy Casper and Nicklaus broke 70, once each, over the four days.

Casper, a two-time US Open champion, was playing in his first Open at age 37. Few Americans then made the voyage across the Atlantic. With a first prize of £3 000, 20 percent of what was being offered on the PGA Tour, it was not popular.

Carnoustie was the fifth of Player's nine majors, and he trailed most of the way; five behind Casper after two rounds, then a 71 saw him narrow the lead to two. He was third entering the final round, paired with Nicklaus two behind him. Playing in a strong wind that final Saturday (this was long before the Open moved to a Sunday finish), Player took the lead with a level par front nine. But bogeys at 10 and 13 saw him step on to the tee of the par-5 14th hole tied for the lead with Casper and New Zealander Bob Charles. Nicklaus was two back. Known as the "Spectacles" because of two large bunkers set in a ridge fronting the green, the hole proved pivotal.

With Nicklaus already on the green for two, Player crushed a 3-wood over the bunkers directly at the flag. "I had to lean sideways to see the top of the flag," he recalled. The ball ran up to the pin for a tap-in eagle. Casper later made a six there. Player's 73 saw him win by two from Nicklaus and Charles, with Casper fourth after a closing 78.

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Reproduction **New Media Publishing**



Published by **New Media Publishing (Pty) Ltd.**

New Media House, 19 Bree Street, Cape Town 8001

PO Box 440, Green Point, Cape Town 8051

Telephone: 021 417 1111

E-mail: info@newmediapub.co.za

Web: www.newmediapub.co.za

Printed by **novus print**, a Novus Holdings company



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Play

SOLID AND FAR MADE SIMPLE

BY GERINA PILLER

I hear a lot of people say to shift all your weight away from the target when you take the club back and then shift it back to your front side on the way through. I'm sure that works for some, but my swing doesn't have a lot of lateral movement. Mine's more about rotation. I think it's because I grew up playing baseball, where you start your swing with your weight already on the back foot and then you just step and turn, getting the bat to move its fastest as it strikes the ball. I took what I learned in baseball and applied it to my golf swing.

The benefit, I've found, is that it makes it easier to find the sweet spot on the clubface and create effortless power. If you tend to sway too much and/or swing too hard, you've got to rely on really good timing to have the same consistency. So if you're struggling to hit it solid and far, try copying the way I swing. Here I'm going to walk you through how I do it.

—WITH KEELY LEVINS





ADDRESS AND BACKSWING

STAY CENTRED

At address my weight is pretty neutral, meaning equally supported by both feet. Still, I like to be aware of the weight on the inside of my right foot. When I sense it there, I know I can swing back and create some leverage for the hit. Essentially, I'm loading my weight before I start swinging. But as I take the club back, my body doesn't drift off the ball the way you see it move for a lot of golfers. My weight stays pretty centred (*left*). I'm rotating instead of moving laterally. It feels like my upper body is twisting away from the target while my lower body braces against it. When you try this, you'll feel a lot of torque building in your core muscles. That's good. You'll need to release that tension when you swing down. That's what creates the power you need to hit it further.

Where's the *whoosh* in your swing?



DOWNSWING AND FOLLOW-THROUGH

LET SPEED BUILD

The mistake I see amateurs make is trying to generate as much speed as they can with their hands. If you hit it worse when you're swinging your hardest, this is probably the reason. Instead, let the speed gather so the clubhead is at its fastest as it strikes the ball – that's how you get effortless power. If you think of your swing as moving along a clock face, you want it at its quickest from 7 o'clock to 4 o'clock. To get a feel for this, hold your club upside down and swing it trying to make that *whoosh* sound loudest when the grip end is closest to the ground. This will teach you what it feels like to put your energy in that 7-to-4 zone. Now flip the club around and re-create that same feeling – and speed – when you hit shots. You might be surprised how much power you can generate without having to sway off the ball or swing like a maniac.

Gerina Piller, a three-time member of the US Solheim Cup team, had a fairway accuracy of 75.6 percent on the LPGA Tour in 2017.



“Constantly borrowing tees? You need a new downswing.”

STAND AND DELIVER

Thrust with your hips to launch the ball

If you're regularly popping up tee shots or the ball isn't rolling very far once it lands in the fairway, you're hitting down on the ball too much. That's okay for an iron shot off the turf, but not if you're swinging a driver. A telltale sign your downswing is too steep is if you're constantly breaking tees in half like you're splitting firewood.

If you want to maximise distance with your driver, you've got to hit up on the ball, and a simple fix is to literally stand up during the downswing. Let's practice this move.

As you start the club down, I want you to thrust your hips forward like I'm doing here. I recommend doing this without a ball at first to get comfortable with this move, because it will feel quite different than your usually steep downswing. But once you get the hang of it, you can start hitting tee shots this way. And I'm sure you'll be pleased with the results.

What this stand-up/hip-thrust move does is shallow the club's path into the ball and gets it moving upward just before impact. That, in turn, launches the ball high – but not pop-up high – and with far less backspin than if you hit down on it. That's really important to increase your carry distance and get the ball to roll more.

How do you know you've changed your angle of attack? Well, you might dislodge the tee swinging this way, but it should live to see another swing. — WITH RON KASPRISKE

DAVID LEADBETTER, a Golf Digest Teaching Professional, runs 32 academies worldwide.



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GET LONGER

One move to start ripping your driver

A lot of golfers have been told to keep the trail elbow close to the body on the backswing. I can't think of a worse tip for driving. With the trail arm cramped going back, the golfer has a very narrow swing and a restricted body turn – and will struggle to create power and consistent strikes.

Forget that. I want the trail arm (right arm for righties) to be as long as possible for as long as possible. That does a few amazing things. First, it widens the swing arc, which increases the distance the clubhead travels back and, in turn, creates more room for it to accelerate into the ball. A wide arc also pulls

the body into a full rotation. Second, with the clubhead moving back straighter, it won't get stuck behind the body. Golfers who get stuck either swing into the ball from too far inside (pushes or hooks) or heave the club away from the body on the downswing (pulls and slices). Third, it creates space between the club and the body, so the trail elbow can drop down at the start of the downswing and set up a powerful inside path to impact.

You in? Then make this your one swing thought: *Trail arm long for as long as possible.* You'll hit longer, straighter drives.

MICHAEL BREED is Golf Digest's Chief Digital Instructor.

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Did a mechanical tweak help resuscitate the tour's best short game?

TIGER: CURED!

Top teachers weigh in on how he overcame the chipping yips

INTERVIEWED BY MATTHEW RUDY

STAN UTLEY

► “When Tiger got in trouble with his chipping, he tended to let the handle move too wide in the backswing. When that happens, the head isn't really swinging; you're moving the whole stick together. Then if you accelerate the grip to start the downswing, you bring the grip through impact first, which ruins the engineering of the club. In the swings I see now, the club is setting earlier and releasing earlier, and he's using the bounce. When you use the bounce, the lies don't become scary. You're hitting the turf with the back of the wedge and skidding. You want to land the plane shallow and on the back wheels.”

RANDY SMITH

► “It's absolutely amazing to me what he's done to recover – a total transformation. You can call it release point, rust or whatever, but there was something yippy going on. He was literally playing away from his wedges. But as the greatest player in the world might do, he figured out something different – a different feel, a different way to approach it, a slight grip change. Anything to feel less action in his hands. That's fine in practice, but he's now doing great on the real stage. His short game is back. He still has the yips. In the back of his head, they're still there. But for now, the change is a warm blanket.”

HANK HANEY

► “Everybody wanted to see what kind of swing speed Tiger was going to have

when he came back from the spinal-fusion surgery, but I really believed the obvious short-game issues he had would prevent him from coming back in any real way if he couldn't figure them out. He's obviously found something in a technique change that's been working – to a degree – and that's great. You still see some of those strange shots every once in a while. That's his reality now. You can have some good stretches, but when you have the yips, they're in there. It's just a matter of how you try to manage them.”

DAVID LEADBETTER

► “Tiger didn't have the chipping yips because of a mental issue. It was physical. He had the shaft leaning too far forward, and the leading edge was digging. You can get away with that on certain types of grass, but many times the grass would grab the clubhead and cause it to stub. If you don't correct that, you could end up with a full-blown case of the mental chipping yips, but he corrected the issue. His right hand is much more involved in the shot. The club releases and glides along the grass. It's a much more effective way to chip. And with his hand-eye coordination, he can be as great as ever that way.”

MIKE ADAMS

► “Tiger had bad chipping fundamentals that exposed the leading edge instead of the bounce – not the yips. He took it back too wide, which shut the face, and he dragged the handle through the shot. That created too much shaft lean – something he had been trying to do in his full swing – and it leaked into his short game. I can't

think of another player who had that happen like that, but who else has been as willing to change swings? Now he's setting the club sooner, letting his right arm fold, releasing it better and using the bounce. Right-hand-only drills helped him a lot. He once again is an awesome wedge player.”

DAVE STOCKTON

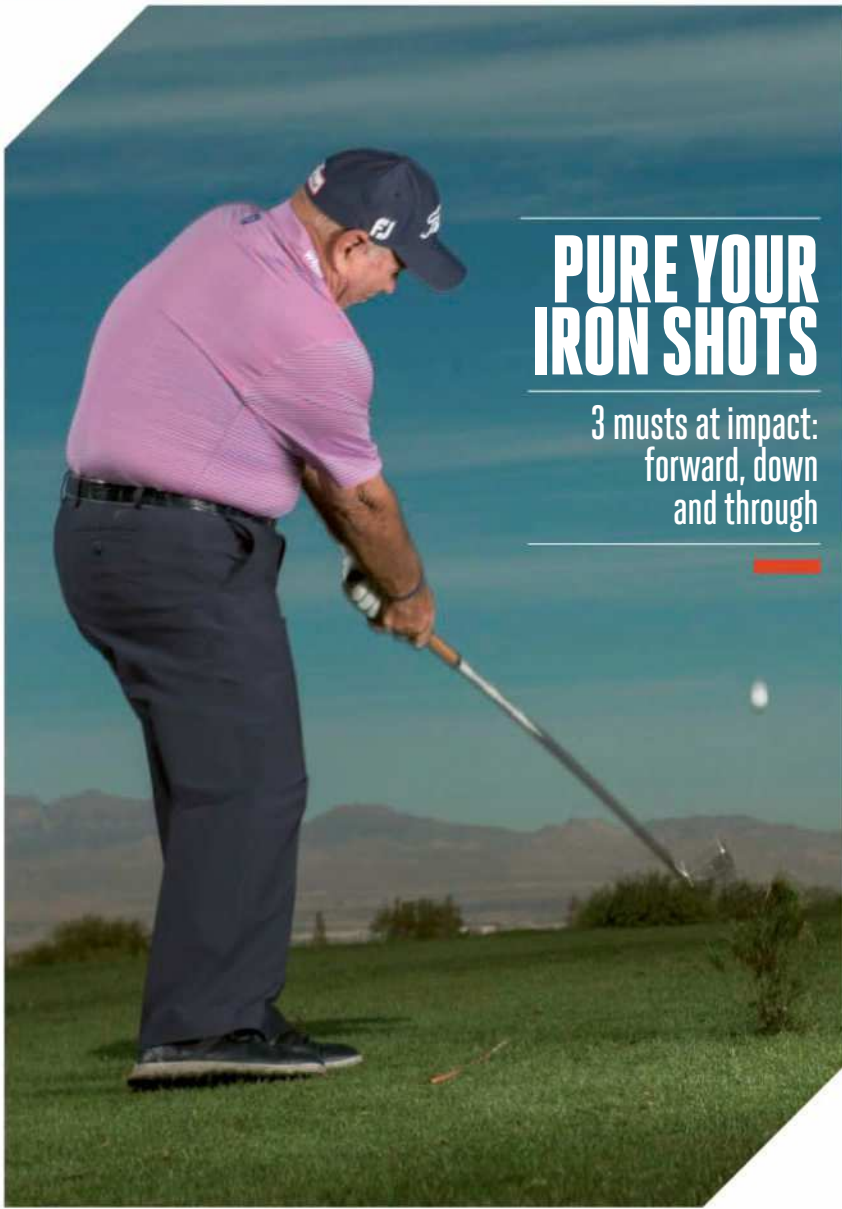
► “Tiger has always used his right hand a lot more on those shots than I do, as opposed to letting the left hand control the action. He uses his hands as a unit, but when that right hand takes over, that's when the club starts digging. I was surprised to see that become his problem because he was always so great at those shots. When you struggle, it can get difficult fast because you start trying too hard to fix the problem and then you lose your feel. But now, he seems to be swinging much more free. He's got it back in the groove. Maybe what he needed was some time to work on his game.”

JAMES SIECKMANN

► “Imagine if you've been amazing at something your whole life, and you never had to think about how to do it. Then all of a sudden, when you tried to do it, it didn't work. Tiger was thinking the same things he always had, but he didn't get the same result. He was confused. His setup had got so different, with his head behind the ball and his shoulders closed. He was in a position where he couldn't hit the ball first. A lot of people think he had the yips. He didn't. Tiger had a bad motor pattern. And when he found the right pattern again, it came back quickly – and so did his confidence.”



Think of a shortstop throwing hard to first base.



PURE YOUR IRON SHOTS

3 musts at impact:
forward, down
and through

You hear it all the time: “Hit down on the ball and take a divot.” And it’s good advice, but you have to be in position to actually do it. In fact, a few positions. Let’s look.

First, play the ball in line with the logo on your shirt, on the left side of your chest. It’s hard to hit down on the ball if it’s way up in your stance, but moving it way back is no good, either. With the ball back, you’re less likely to make a good shift to your front side on the downswing – and that forward shift is the most important move into impact.

The second position is staying in your posture as you swing down and through. The instinct to straighten up is common, either to try to lift the ball or because it’s more difficult to turn while staying in posture. A good thought is to feel like you’re “on top of the ball” with your chest at impact, like your chest is looking at the ball. That’ll help keep you down and into the shot.

The third piece is driving your right side – arm, shoulder, knee – at the target (*top left*). This prevents you from slowing down before impact and trying to flip or scoop the ball off the ground. Good iron players really fire that right side, extending the right arm and pushing through with the body. Think of a shortstop throwing hard to first base for a double play; nothing stays back —WITH PETER MORRICE

Butch Harmon is based at Rio Secco Golf Club, Henderson, Nevada.



MY FAVOURITE DRILL TO FEEL SOLID CONTACT

▶ If you hit a lot of fat iron shots, chances are you’re not shifting to your front foot in the downswing. Even hitting thin shots usually means your weight is back – instead of crashing into the turf, the club misses the ground and catches the ball when it starts swinging upward. Work on my favourite drill to groove solid strikes.

Grab a short iron, take your setup, then angle your back knee inward so your back foot is up on its toes (*right*). That will push the majority of

your weight to your front side. From this setup, hit some half and three-quarter shots. You’ll make ball-first contact with your weight forward at impact and feel a nice push off your back foot as you go through.

Mix in some regular swings from your normal setup, feeling your weight firmly on your front side during the forward swing.



GET THAT 3-WOOD OFF THE GROUND

Screaming one down the fairway is a result of trying too hard

If you're topping your fairway woods or can't hit them above the tree line, chances are you're not staying in your address posture when you swing the club. If it makes you feel a little better, it's a common fault – one that I'm going to help you correct.

Before I give you a simple swing thought to get those shots soaring, let's talk a little about why you might be struggling to hit a 3-wood off the deck. For most amateurs, it starts with the wrong mind-set. This is a stressful situation, because it's not a shot you practise a lot or face more than a handful of times each round. You're not used to pulling it off, and that lack of positive experience can produce anxiety that results in a bad swing. Another reason you

struggle with these shots? You're trying too hard to rip one high and far down the fairway. Getting home in two on a par 5, or reaching the green on a long par 4, comes from making solid, centre-face contact with the ball – not from swinging full out or trying to add loft to the shot with some body English. So swing your fairway woods without tension, and that includes pace. Don't rush down from the top of the backswing, and don't straighten up in the through-swing thinking this will get the ball up. On the contrary, it usually leads to that worm-burner you're used to hitting.

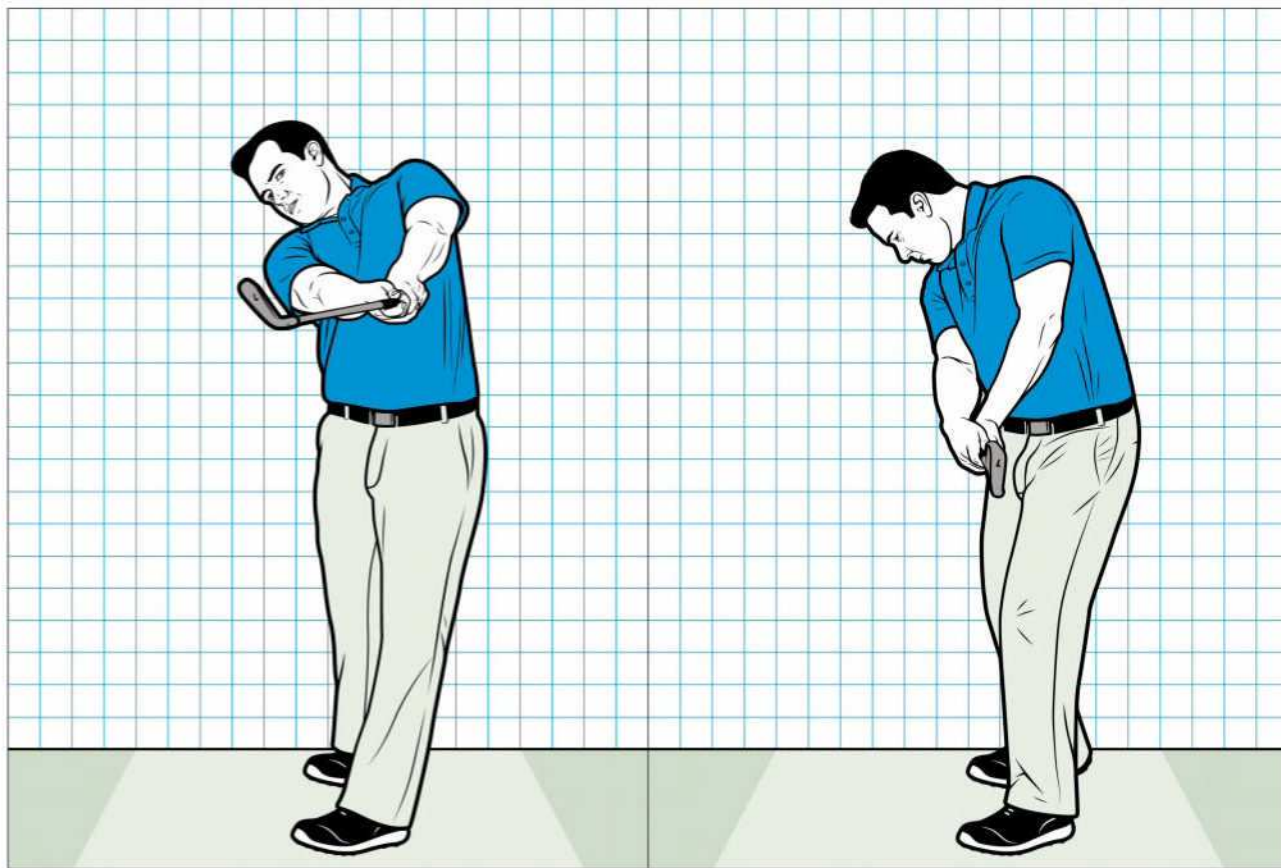
Posture is the primary culprit for line drives and topped shots. If you think of the club moving along an arc determined by your posture at address, the moment you straighten up, you

change the arc. Good luck hitting it in the centre of the face when you do that. Things happen too fast to make the necessary adjustments. So if you're in need of one swing thought to help flush your next fairway wood, think *maintain my address posture* through impact. Feel like the ball simply gets in the way of your swing. You're not hitting at the ball, you're swinging *through* the ball.

This thought will improve your mechanics, and clear some of the clutter out of your mind that led to that nervous, clunky, rigid swing. You'll hit the shot like you're swinging a wedge.

RICK SMITH, a Golf Digest Teaching Professional, recently opened a new academy, the Rick Smith Golf Performance Centre at Trump National Doral in Miami.

The head rotates in a tour-pro follow-through



BAD ADVICE = BAD SHOTS

Why 'keeping your head down' as you swing is killing your game

BY NICK CLEARWATER

It's probably a familiar scene in your fourball. Somebody (maybe even you) tops a shot and immediately offers an analysis of why it happened: "I lifted my head." Well, maybe, but that isn't why most shots are topped.

In fact, a lot of times it's the opposite problem. We measure thousands of swings at GolfTEC studios, and we also have an extensive database of tour-player measurements to compare what they do with what you do. What we've found is trying to keep your head down is probably doing more harm than good. If you want to learn a skill that will keep you from

topping it – and get you closer to hitting the same kinds of consistently good shots the professionals do – develop a tour-pro follow-through that involves a rotation of the head. Here's how.

Pose like you see here (*above, left*) – legs straightened, shoulders and hips facing the target, head rotated in that direction, too, and the grip extended as far away from the body as possible – that's key.

You'll notice this is a significantly different look to the follow-through we see from many amateurs – especially if you're trying to keep your head down

through impact (*above, right*). When you're scrunched up like that, you don't have room to extend your arms, and that lack of extension puts you in poor position to make solid contact.

Keep rehearsing the tour-pro follow-through you see me demonstrating. Once you've burned the feel of it into your memory, hit some soft, slow shots while getting into that same position after impact. The closer you come to copying it, the easier it will be for your swing to bottom out in a predictable place every time.

Then you'll no longer worry about having to make an excuse for your bad shot before the ball stops rolling.

– WITH MATTHEW RUDY

Nick Clearwater, GolfTEC's Vice President of Instruction, is based in Englewood, Colorado.

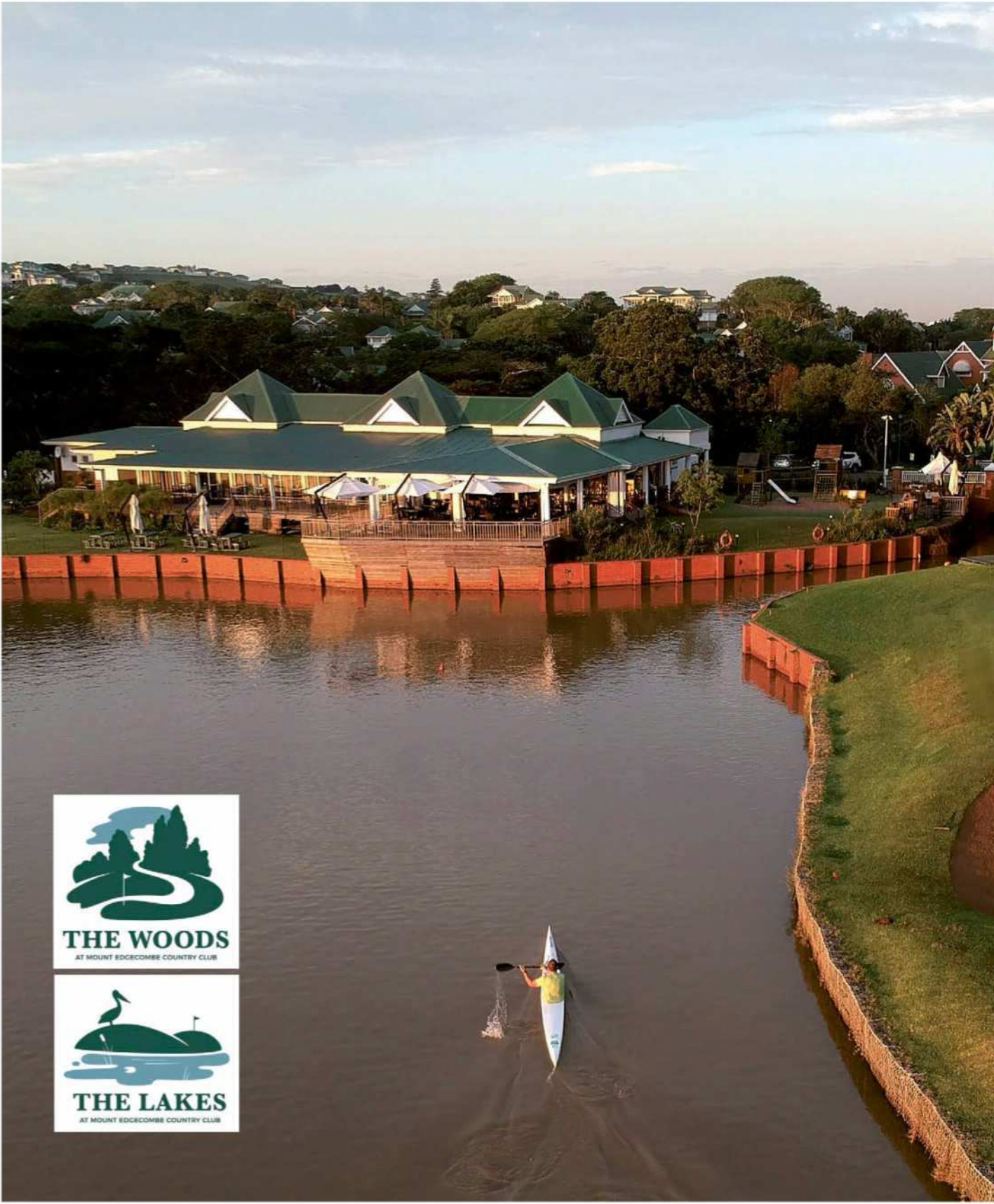


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The Watershed Café, and the ninth green of The Lakes course.

Life

THE LAKES & THE WOODS

Mount Edgecombe courses given a name change.

Mount Edgecombe Country Club have rebranded the golf experience at their two KZN golf courses, renaming them The Lakes and The Woods. A modernised pro shop managed by Melville Muir, new bag drop area, and improved access to the clubhouse have been part of a major upgrade at the Umhlanga golf estate which began last year with the opening of The Watershed Café.

Golf director Micky Hough is thrilled with the latest changes at Mount Edgecombe, which include the re-routing of several holes on The Woods, formerly known as the No 1.

“Our two courses were MECC No 1 and No 2 for 21 years, and the name changes gives them a clearer identity,” he said. “The full title is The Woods at Mount Edgecombe Country Club. The Woods is parkland golf on the estate’s older layout, and The Lakes was chosen for its central water features.”

This rebranding means that all six of the 36-hole club facilities in South Africa now have distinctive names for their courses which will resonate with golfers.

The Watershed Café on The Lakes course has proved a fabulous facility for club members and estate residents since

its opening in July last year. It overlooks the scenic Pani Dam in the centre of the course, and two of the golf holes, No 9 and No 14, which run parallel to each other on either side of the dam.

The Watershed is seen to symbolise a turning point and milestone for the estate. The old building was originally a “second clubhouse” in the early years of the estate, but subsequently was primarily used as the halfway house for The Lakes. While still retaining this service for golfers, now it exudes a feel-good vibe which has made it the popular social hub of the Mount Edgecombe estate, a place to meet for coffee, breakfast, lunch or dinner.

There are two function rooms for conferences and society evenings, plus play facilities for kids.

— STUART MCLEAN



“
**ANY GOLFER
 WORTH HIS SALT HAS TO CROSS
 THE SEA AND TRY
 TO WIN THE BRITISH OPEN.**
 —JACK NICKLAUS
 ”

POINT/COUNTERPOINT

► What to call that one major played outside the United States?

BRITISH OPEN

It's confusing if you don't call it the British Open. Imagine if the Tour de France was called "The Tour"? Chaos.

Former champs of all generations – from Johnny Miller to Rory McIlroy – call it the British Open.

Technically, it won't be played in Great Britain in 2019, but it has been all but once the previous 147 times. In that entire span, calling it the British Open has never resulted in a World War, so relax, people.
 —ALEX MYERS



OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

When it started, in 1860, there were no other Opens. So there was – and is – no need for further explanation or identification.

The winner is Champion Golfer of the Year. Again, no need for any national or international recognition. It is what it is.

Next year it will be played at Royal Portrush, in Northern Ireland. That is the third nation represented on the rota. Clearly, it does not have a home country and therefore cannot be anything other than "the Open."
 —JOHN HUGGAN

TRANSLATING BRIT GOLF TO YANKEE GOLF

► Connect the British term to its corresponding American one

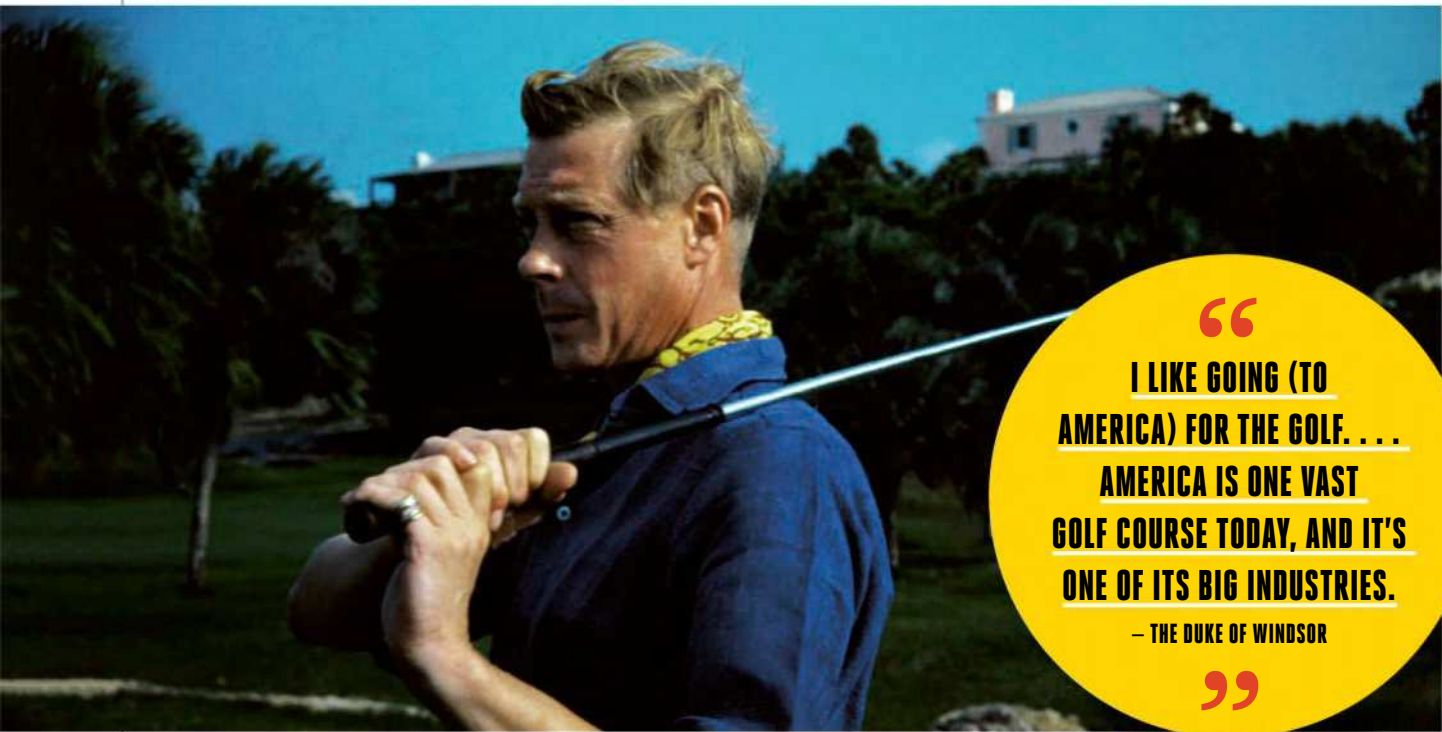
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 TIDDLER | A FIXED |
| 2 FOOZLE | B WATER HAZARD |
| 3 CRACKING | C MESS UP |
| 4 LOSE THE PLOT | D TESTER |
| 5 HOW'D YOU GET ON? | E COLLAPSE MID-ROUND |
| 6 SORTED | F WHAT'D YOU SHOOT? |
| 7 BURN | G GEAR |
| 8 KIT | H GREAT SHOT |

ANSWERS: 1. D, 2. C, 3. H, 4. E, 5. F, 6. A, 7. B, 8. G



HOW TO MAKE YOUR COURSE MORE LIKE CARNOUSTIE

- Move the tees back. How far back? Like, Thursday. ► Make competitors dunk their hands in ice water before each tee shot.
- Make the fairways so narrow people can stand on either side and shake hands.
- Month-old hot dogs only at the turn.
- Re-route the course so that the 18th green is the one next to the never-ending game of Marco Polo at the pool.



“
I LIKE GOING (TO AMERICA) FOR THE GOLF. . . . AMERICA IS ONE VAST GOLF COURSE TODAY, AND IT'S ONE OF ITS BIG INDUSTRIES.
 – THE DUKE OF WINDSOR
 ”

YOU GOTTA FIGHT . . . FOR YOUR RIGHT . . . TO PARTY!

► Is your club's Fourth of July celebration a dud? Here are five unusual ones as picked by our course-ranking panelists

EASTWARD HO! GC Chatham, Mass.

► Every player receives a small American flag on the first tee. When their round equals par plus their handicap, they place their flag at the site of their ball. Players still holding their flags at the end split the pot.

FOREST HIGHLANDS Flagstaff, Arizona

► In addition to a parade with golf

carts, bikes and basically anything that moves, the club throws a food-truck extravaganza with live music.

HIGHLAND G & CC Indianapolis

► Members dress in full patriotic garb and watch, among other activities, a belly-flop contest.

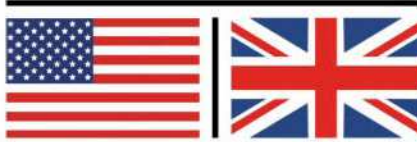
OLD ELM CLUB Chicago

► No official entry, no

flights. Whoever shoots the lowest score on July 4 is crowned club champ. The winner's putter goes on permanent display in the locker room.

OLD WARSON CC St. Louis

► Kids build boats and paddles out of cardboard and duct tape to compete in the club's Cardboard Regatta and race the length of the pool.



MADE IN THE USA OR UK?

- 1 “BOGEY”
- 2 “BIRDIE”
- 3 WOOD TEES
- 4 GOLF SHOES
- 5 ELECTRIC CARTS

ANSWERS: 1. UK, 2. USA, 3. USA, 4. UK, 5. USA (DUN)

The Best British Golf Club Traditions

2½-HOUR RULE
The time allocated for each segment of a match day with another club – morning foursomes, then lunch, then afternoon foursomes.

THE DIRTY PINT
All present contribute loose change, and the bartender mixes a commensurate concoction.

SNOOKER
Contrary to popular belief, the British won't play golf in any weather. A billiards table and a toasty fire make for an excellent Plan B.

NO TIPPING
If you happen to lose all your cash to your opponents, you can still exit the premises with dignity.

5 WAYS TO CELEBRATE YOUR GOLF FREEDOM THIS INDEPENDENCE DAY

DISREGARD THE 90-DEGREE CART RULE; DRIVE DIAGONALLY AT WILL. CHANGE YOUR SHOES – THEN YOUR PANTS – IN THE PARKING LOT. ONLY SAY “NICE SHOT” WHEN YOU ACTUALLY MEAN IT. LEAVE THE RAKE INSIDE THE BUNKER WHEN THEY EXPLICITLY ASK YOU TO LEAVE IT OUT (OR VICE VERSA). REPLACE YOUR DIVOT WITH A DIVOT FROM A DIFFERENT FAIRWAY.

Teammates *can* share clubs, with one caveat.

Q

How big a difference do shoes make? Is it something I should be concerned about, or should I just focus on keeping my head still?

A

The consensus here is that good shoes give you the stability to stay balanced throughout your swing and to negotiate different terrains. But how important is that? Hoping to bring scientific rigour to our answer, we asked our shoes expert (associate editor Keely Levins) and our instruction editor (Ron Kaspriske) to rate the importance of shoes on a scale of 1 to 10. Keely gave them an 8, and Ron gave them a 2 before launching into an hour-long soliloquy on how there are no “quick fixes” that will lower your scores. So their average score was 5, which is to say shoes are more important than the type of tee you use (2) or whether your ball marker is

“lucky” (3) but less important than having a clubfitting (8.5) or practising (9.5).

•••

Can you use a teammate's clubs in a scramble?

Scramble-format tournaments aren't technically covered by the *Rules of Golf*, so these decisions are up to the tournament committee. But typically the committee defaults to R&A rules. Rule 4-4 says you may share clubs with your team or teammate – provided the total number of clubs between the players doesn't exceed 14. If you both head out with full bags and you want to try your teammate's hot putter mid-round, that's allowed only on practice putting and chipping (assuming they're not prohibited by your tournament committee).

•••

A friend's long birdie putt stopped on the edge of the cup. As he got close, he jumped up, came down heavy and the ball fell in. Does he get credit for the birdie? Or is there a penalty for his seismic influence?

Noooo! Not cool, and not a birdie. We shudder to think what the green must have looked like after this earth-shaking stunt. The penalty for moving a ball at rest, in either stroke or match play, is a stroke. And you have to put the ball back where it was (Rule 18-2). FYI, if the ball had still been moving and your friend tried to influence its direction like this, Rule 1-2 would have applied. That means loss of hole in match play or a two-stroke penalty in stroke play.



I just turned 24, and I routinely drive the ball 240 to 270-plus metres. I've had no formal lessons. Should I listen to all the old guys at the range telling me to take my talent seriously? Or is this normal?

Uh, no, Mike, this is not normal. Most of us couldn't hit a 270-metre drive if we were teeing one up on tarmac. If your titanic tee shots are being verified by the driving-range elders, you might want to first check that their prescriptions are up to date. But if you are confident in your skills as a bombardier, then might we offer you a suggestion? Go play golf! Sounds like you've got a future in this game, kid. Don't waste it.



Nick Faldo works on his technique, sans footwear.

SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS HERE:
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FANCOURT HERITAGE CLASSIC

Play The Links, Montagu and Outeniqua courses.

The 5-star Fancourt resort in the Garden Route will be hosting the Heritage Classic for a 16th consecutive year from September 20 to 24. It is held annually in celebration of democracy in South Africa.

Entries are open for the 54-hole betterball event, managed by Annie Lawson Sports Promotions, over the three Fancourt courses – The Links, Montagu and Outeniqua. The Montagu, a Golf Digest Top 10 layout, is currently closed for upgrading, and reopens in September in time for the Classic.

The Links, a private club boasting the country's No 1 course, is the golfing hallmark of the Fancourt estate

and Africa's only course certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary through its commitment to the protection of the environment and preservation of golf's heritage.

All three courses were designed by a team led by Gary Player and continue to garner praise from the international community.

Fancourt received two accolades in 2017. The World Golf Awards named Fancourt as **Africa's Best Golf Hotel**, while the International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO) presented Fancourt with the **Golf Resort of the Year Award (Rest of the World)**. These reflect the high standards visitors

can expect at the resort.

Fancourt offers amazing accommodation and spa facilities that maximise the resort experience. The Outeniqua mountain range provides a picturesque backdrop.

The Heritage Classic includes a traditional Heritage Day braai and prizegiving Gala dinner. The tournament fee of R11 750 per golfer sharing includes 4 nights' accommodation, full English breakfast daily, welcome dinner, green fees, giveaways and daily prizes. Entries close on September 1.

**For bookings contact Reservations
+27 (0)44 804 0010 or
reservations@fancourt.co.za**





1 PING G400 SFT
▶ Heel-side weight gives your shots more draw spin. A lighter swingweight makes the club easier to square. **R6 499**



2 CALLAWAY ROGUE DRAW
▶ Internal and external heel weighting, combined with a slightly upright lie angle, yield more draw to your flight. **R7 999**



4 TOUR EDGE HL3 OS
▶ The large cupface provides more hitting area, and the offset shape and upright lie angle help fight those right misses. **SPECIAL ORDER**

3 TAYLORMADE M4 D-TYPE
▶ With 41 grams of weight in the heel, this driver puts almost twice as much mass towards the draw side than the company's movable weight M3. **R7 000**



5 COBRA FMAX
▶ A deep, heel-bias centre of gravity, plus offset and a lighter swing-weight, fight a slice and launch shots high. Larger grips provide more swing control. **R3 999**

A QUICK WAY TO CURE YOUR SLICE

Draw drivers really work, our testing shows

BY MIKE STACHURA

JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY HATES A SLICE. This isn't an opinion. It's fact. Golftec, the instruction company that has given more than seven million lessons at its nearly 200 locations, revealed two details about its customers: 96 percent want to hit anything but a slice, and only 8 percent come to Golftec hitting a draw. The slice, friends, is still golf's most confounding swing fault, or as Nick Clearwater, Golftec's vice president of instruction calls it, "an epidemic." The good news is that it's a very fixable problem. Yes, by all means, see a quality instructor. A slice is caused by the most common of swing flaws: swinging the club down steeply on an out-to-in path with an open face to that path at impact. This creates sidespin that sends the ball curving weakly to the right. ▶

"It's really just a misunderstanding of how to make the ball curve," Clearwater says. "People keep swinging further to the left hoping the ball will go the way they want it to. It doesn't work."

The latest draw-bias drivers cannot correct your out-to-in swing path, but they can help negate the slice spin imparted at impact. How can we say this with such certainty? Well, we put the new draw-bias drivers to the test and found they really do what they're designed to do.

For our test, we had average golfers hit the latest draw drivers without telling them what they were testing, and we measured the results against their own drivers using a Foresight Sports GCQuad launch monitor. Seventy percent of the golfers hit the draw drivers more to the left (12.2 metres further on average compared to their

regular drivers). Interestingly, they also hit the draw drivers further – 5.2 metres on average. It's worth noting that these results were immediate – less than five swings for each player.

Drivers that are designed to fight a slice have been around for decades. Traditionally, they had severely closed faces, but the new models we tested look very much like a typical driver. The technology might be nicely hidden, but the results are very apparent.

The key to these new drivers is internal weighting that shifts the centre of gravity (CG) towards the heel. There are adjustable drivers on the market that allow golfers to load the club's movable weights towards the heel, but those tend to be less effective than the fixed internal weighting on the newest draw drivers. In some models, the amount of weight is more than double what you would typically find

for an adjustable driver in its most extreme draw setting.

The benefit of concentrating so much weight in the heel is that it creates a larger area of the face that launches shots with draw spin.

"This player has the face open at impact, and everything we do with this club in terms of CG bias is helping to solve that problem," says Todd Beach, chief technical officer of R&D for TaylorMade. "When you move the CG to the heel, no matter where you hit it, it produces more draw."

Draw-bias designs also encourage a straighter ball flight by featuring higher lofts, lighter shafts and more upright lie angles. There's even evidence that with the CG closer to the heel, draw drivers help average golfers return the face to square at impact because the CG is closer to the shaft.

The driver slice might be the most discouraging shot in golf. Among other things, it leaves you with a longer second shot, and it deals a blow to your confidence. In the absence of fundamentally changing your golf swing, draw drivers can be a way to improve your scores and attitude.

"It's the simplest fix for so many people," says Paul Wood, vice president of engineering at Ping, who estimates that at least half the players could benefit from a draw driver. "It's joyous to watch when you put a draw-bias driver in someone's hands, and the ball is going further and straighter. Honestly, I think it's the best-kept secret in golf."



HOW DRIVING DISTANCE HAS CHANGED GOLF

Player v Palmer in 1962 challenge series

By Murray Leyden

As an 8-year-old I was privileged to run Durban Country Club from tee to green while watching Gary Player and Arnold Palmer go head-to-head in the second challenge match of their 1962 exhibition series around Southern Africa. It was played on Sunday, December 2. There being no spectator ropes, and by putting my youthful energy to good use, I got up close to both players throughout the round.

Although I remember little about the match, my abiding memory of the 33-year-old Palmer, who that year had won both the Masters and Open and was regarded as the world's No 1 (well before there was any World Ranking), is of a tall, athletic Adonis with charismatic personality. To any youngster my age, most men would have appeared tall, especially alongside Player, the reigning US PGA champion. Player was then 27, and they held three of the four majors, so you can imagine how fortunate we were to have them playing in South Africa.

I vividly recall Palmer's huge black

and white shoes. He had the biggest feet I had ever seen, which my late father (Jock Leyden) described as "colossal" while sketching the American legend for my autograph book. And yes, Palmer did habitually hitch up his trousers. I remember that much.

Three months later the 1963 SA Open and Amateur Championship was played at Durban CC – the two were held back-to-back at that time at the same venue. The programme contains a fascinating hole-by-hole review of the Player-Palmer match, played in "hot and humid conditions with a slight southerly wind," typical of Durban in December.

Statistics "provided by officials in charge of the match" are described as "particularly interesting in regard to the length obtained from the tee and also the accuracy and length of the short-iron play." The distances are in yards and both players were using the small ball (1.62), not today's 1.68.

More than half-a-century later these distances, and the fact they were regarded as exceptional at the time, vividly illustrate how modern technology and today's equipment have changed the face of the game forever.

In those days the fifth at DCC was a par 5, so the course par was 73, measured at 6 523 yards (5 965 metres), about 250 metres shorter than today. Country Club, thought today to be too short for championship play because of the modern golf ball and oversize drivers, was then an excellent challenge for two of the best players in the world.

Player, who won the match by a shot (70-71), making five birdies to Palmer's four, on average hit his Tony Penna

persimmon driver 240 yards (220 metres), although he did launch one 250 at No 10. Palmer began with a 285-yard drive at the downwind first, and struck a 3-wood 250 at the third, but generally he was only 10 yards in front of Player throughout the match. Both used driver on No 6, where today's pros would mostly go with an iron or hybrid club.

On the short holes, Palmer took a 5-iron at the fourth and 15th, while on the par-5s they needed 3-woods for their seconds to reach the greens in two. Between them they only made four birdies on the par 5s. The contrast between then and now would astound today's young golfers, who routinely hit 300-metre drives and take mid-irons for their second shots into most par 5s.

Player, incidentally, used a set of Dunlop irons. These were the clubs that prompted the famous line from Ben Hogan at that time. When Player phoned Hogan to ask him for advice, Hogan's laconic reply was, "Why don't you call Mr Dunlop."

Scoring in the match was steady rather than sensational. Unlike today's players they didn't hole many putts. Player had 32 putts and Palmer 34. Very average by today's standards.



The Gary Player CC at Sun City has the highest slope in South Africa.

SLOPE: HOW IT'S GOING TO CHANGE YOUR GOLF

A 10-handicap will get 10 extra shots at Sun City!

Monday, September 3 is when golf clubs countrywide will implement the new USGA Course Rating system, including Slope.

On the night of September 2, Handicaps Network Africa will recalculate the handicaps of all golfers on the system, using the last 20 adjusted gross scores. The differentials will change, in conjunction with the new ratings and Slope.

Most golfers will have a lower handicap – to be called a handicap index – when they wake on Monday morning, and the handicap index will be fractional, not a whole number. Instead of 12, you would for example be a 12.3.

However, when you tee up for your first round after the change, you will be given a Course Handicap. That will be arrived at by matching your handicap index against the Slope, and the difference between the course rating and par of the tee you are playing from. This will be a whole number, and at your home course should be similar to your current handicap.

The formula for calculating the Course Handicap is to multiply your handicap index by the Slope of the tee from which you are playing, and divide

by 113, which is the average Slope figure. Then add the course rating, and subtract the course par.

Slope has been used worldwide for many years, but is introduced here for the first time to bring parity to golfers around the country. Golfers playing at tough championship courses who feel their handicaps are inadequate for the task will be given extra shots. And on easy courses you could find your handicap being cut.

Let's look at an extreme example of how Slope works for a male golfer who currently plays off 12, and is given a handicap index of 10.2 on September 3. If he went to the back tees at the Gary Player CC, with a course rating of 78.2 and Slope of 155 (the highest in South Africa), his handicap would be 20! Even a 2-handicap would play off 9 in the same situation. The low handicap would have to give the high handicap 11 shots in a match at Sun City, whereas only eight shots separate their handicap indexes.

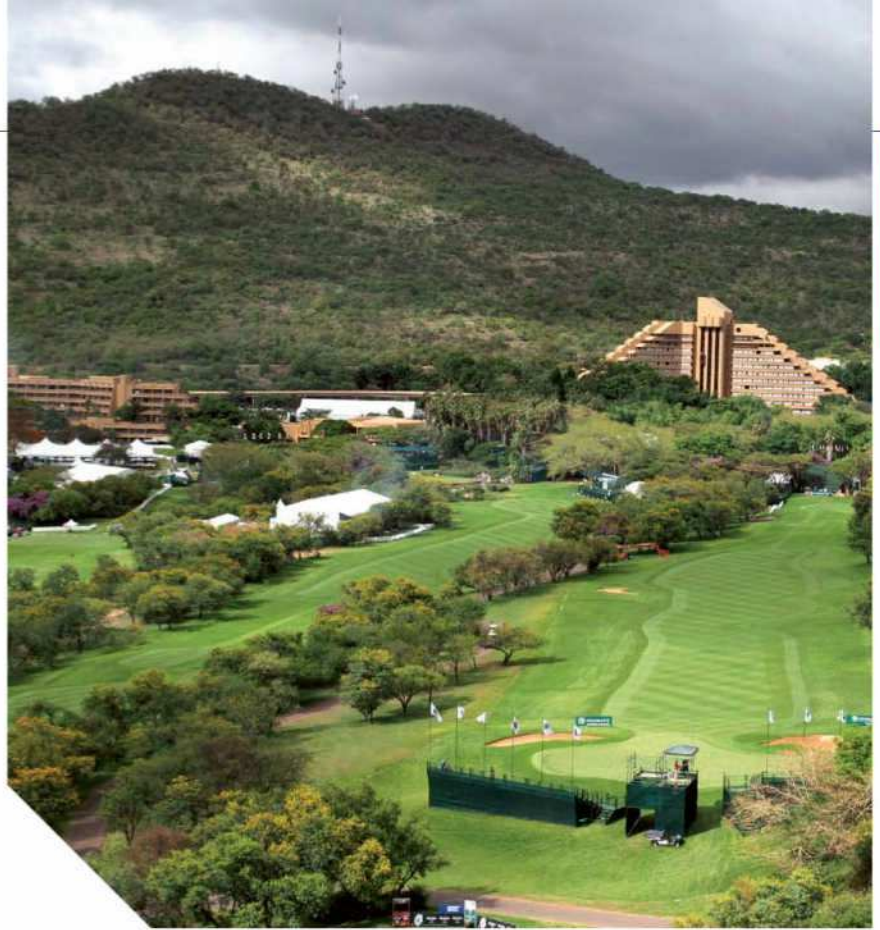
Conversely let's look at a golfer visiting a much shorter and easier course, Scottburgh on the KZN South Coast, with a rating of 68.3 and Slope of 115. The 10.2 would play off a 7 there.

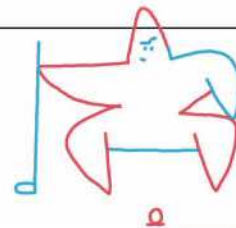
Golfers won't be expected to know and use the formula to calculate their Course Handicap. There will be a phone app to do this on the HNA system, and charts at a golf club where you can fit your handicap index for the tee you are playing. At some clubs, golfers will receive a printed paper with their Course Handicap when they register.

The reason for finally introducing this is because South Africa will be adopting the World Handicap System in January, 2020. To have one handicap system, there also has to be only one course rating system, and the USGA system was chosen because it is already used in the majority of countries.

There will no longer be men's and women's tees, but rather colour-coded tees. The Course Handicap will take into account different tee ratings, so golfers will no longer have to adjust their handicaps when competing with players off different tees.

After completing a round, golfers will enter their adjusted gross score the same way as done now, and the system will recalculate the handicap index.





UNDERCOVER TOUR PRO

The battle of dumb versus smart



An agent – not mine – once told me his secret for success was to recruit golfers who were “really smart or really stupid.” Average intelligence, he believed, had a strong correlation with average careers. Implicit in his confiding this was that he held me in the former category.

Sometimes I wish I were in the latter. I don’t believe there’s a sport where more information is thrown at the athlete than golf. To have an unthinking nature can be a huge blessing. You can just disregard all the TrackMan and ShotLink

data and go play. Of the top-125 players in the world, maybe 30 operate in this state of blissful ignorance, and there are at least four or five in the current top 20. The following is a tee-box interaction I overheard between one such player and his caddie, who’s no Mensa candidate, either.

PLAYER “How far to carry that bunker?”

CADDIE “310.”

PLAYER “But we’re up a tee box from yesterday.”

CADDIE “Oh, yeah . . . 340. No way to carry it.”

Now, my caddie and I make small arithmetic errors almost every week. It’s a matter of the sheer volume of calculations we do. But come on. This duo eventually

figured it out, but for pretty close to a minute they were 60 yards off.

Some guys don’t understand their nicknames. One golfer, a really good player, had a last name that translated simply to another word in a major world language. Years transpired before he pulled someone aside and asked why people on tour called him that. I knew another player who carried two phones. He used one for his American email address and the other for his European email because he believed it was impossible to access both accounts from one device. Sometimes you wonder how these people make it through the day.

Of course, we all commit the little blunders that come with being road-bleary. I’ve flown home to the wrong airport and had to get an Uber to pick up my car. Almost every week someone forgets their golf shoes. I know players who have shown up at tournaments only to find they forgot to enter.

I think most of the “dumb” players are smart enough to have linked up with a caddie who really knows the game. In a way, they’re brilliant for having turned their golf into a reactive, instinctual process. But if they didn’t have someone telling them where to hit it and how hard, they wouldn’t survive out here.

Overall, the PGA Tour is filled with more golfers who aced their SATs or came close. Lots of guys are just as clever as Bryson DeChambeau, or more so.

They know everything there is to know about golf and will pore through stats to break down any course and devise a game plan. As everyone knows, Phil Mickelson is extremely bright. He just tends to express his ideas in unnecessarily complicated ways, so sometimes, it can feel forced. But if you’re not wired like Mickelson or DeChambeau, and you try to imitate their cerebral approach to golf without truly possessing the bandwidth, it can be disastrous. You start overthinking every shot, and pretty soon you’ve lost what got you to the tour. It’s sad how many guys have calculated their card away.

The tour isn’t exactly overflowing with them, but there are players who are more than happy to get into a deep conversation – about the stock market, politics, philosophy – right in the middle of a tournament. Though when in doubt, I don’t stray from the classics: football, beer and how many good-looking women happen to be in the gallery that day. I think the diverse cross-section of minds on tour speaks to what a beautiful game it is.

The agent I mentioned earlier, who targets only the ends of the intelligence spectrum, has a sound theory. Most players are wary of not being in the middle. But if I were an agent, I’d scout talent differently. I’d go to college or mini-tour events and watch how players held up on the last nine holes of a tournament. That’s what really matters, and I’ve seen no link between brains and guts.

—WITH MAX ADLER

Red



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AVOIDING CONFLICT ON A GOLF ESTATE

One in six South African courses have a residential component.

South Africa's golfing landscape irrevocably changed in 1987 with the establishment of the first residential golfing estate, Selborne, on the KZN South Coast. The two biggest changes have been the influx of new courses in a relatively short space of time – roughly 75 over two decades – and the continuous improvement of course maintenance, conditioning and playability across the golf course spectrum.

Today, every sixth course in South Africa is situated on a residential estate. It is a significant number and prompted Mark Wiltshire Golf to take a closer look at this segment of the market.

Different characteristics define local golf estates. A third can be regarded as primary residential, with the balance consisting mostly of secondary residential (holiday homes). Primary residential estates tend to fit in more homes within the same amount of space than their secondary counterparts, making it more compact and condensed. Secondary residential estates often provide hotels or rental pool accommodation for visitors.

There are common denominators prevalent in the life cycle of residential golf estates. Once an estate is approved, the developer starts selling property off a master plan. A phased approach to the estate development may be adopted, or most of the infrastructure could be installed by the time the initial offering takes place.

As an estate develops and matures, home owners take on more responsibility and running costs. A tipping point is reached where the collective investment value and hence potential influence of home owners supersedes that of the developers. This usually leads to conflict between developer and home owner, as the latter demands a bigger say in the day-to-day operations, specifically golf operations, whilst the former is reluctant



to hand over power or share operational information.

What adds to the tension and divide is the eventual handover, and any loose contractual arrangements not clearly defined in the Home Owners Articles of Association, normally constituted by the developer at inception.

A major area of conflict is cost-related, notably the operational management of the golf course and facilities such as the clubhouse and other sports amenities, owned and operated by the developer.

It is rare for such operations to be profitable without the contribution of social and golf membership subscriptions and levies. To make property sales as attractive as possible, particularly during the launch, developers often fail to attach mandatory golf or social membership to ownership. This has a catastrophic effect on potential income since only 30% of home owners play golf and are likely to subscribe to membership.

This results in existing members either paying excessive subscription fees; an attempt being made to introduce a levy to all residents; or the slashing of expenditure on course maintenance and upkeep of facilities. The latter is detrimental to the condition of the course and facilities, which in turn has a negative impact on property value and developer stands. Inevitably a levy is virtually forced onto home owners. Without proper consultation and engagement with all stakeholders it tends to create a divide, mostly with a journey into the unknown for non-golfers.

A lack of transparency by developers who control golf operations never ends well. Since they carry the risk of operational losses, developers do not feel obliged to share all ops-related information with home owners. Developers often feel they subsidise the

home owners and expect them to make a bigger contribution towards the upkeep of facilities. In return, home owners who pay membership subscriptions feel they are major stakeholders and are entitled to transparency and dialogue.

We know of several instances where the relationship between developer and a Home Owners Association has become so strained that no material decisions beneficial to the estate could be made. It is regrettable to see how residential golf estates have failed to avoid certain pitfalls. There are well-publicised case studies to learn from.

It is inevitable that the long-term sustainability of a residential golf estate lies in the home owners controlling all operations. This does not necessarily imply that a developer has to sell its assets to the HOA for a nominal or negotiated fee. A long-term rental or lease provides another option. Pecanwood Golf & Country Estate is a shining example of how a developer and HOA can set differences aside and find a workable solution – the turnaround has been remarkable.

HOAs need to be careful when they take over the management of golf operations and upkeep of facilities. Home owners are entitled to a strategy and business plan that ensures sustainability.

MWG has been exposed to many of these challenges and advises developers and HOAs to engage with each other, even if through an independent non-legal third party, to avoid any costly conflict.

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Kingswood course designer Danie Obermeyer, second from left, holds the John Collier Survey award. With him are golf operation owners Liesel Niehaus and Mike Quinn (right), and head professional Robert Wiederkehr.



KINGSWOOD FIRST FOR GARDEN ROUTE

George estate is top club in annual John Collier Survey

The Kingswood Golf Estate in George is one of the most successful residential estates in the Garden Route. And it has a golf course run by a team who actively engage in the protection of the environment on the estate.

Kingswood Golf Club's achievements have thus been recognised with the 2018 John Collier Survey Award, for good governance and environmental compliance among South African golf clubs. This was the 11th annual award, and the first to be presented to a club in the Southern Cape Golf Union.

"Kingswood's achievements

demonstrate on an ongoing basis that they have identified with the World Environment Day (June 5) theme of taking ownership of their environment," says John Collier in his annual report.

Last October the estate developers, ASLA Holdings, sold Kingswood Golf Operations to the Sports Connection team of Mike Quinn and Liesel Niehaus. Quinn, a former club pro at CMR in Johannesburg, has extensive experience in the golf industry, running driving ranges and pro shops. Niehaus' expertise lies in marketing and business process. The two of them market the Swingclick training aid, a South African

invention, which won awards at the PGA Merchandise Show.

"The person who must get the credit for Kingswood winning this award is the course designer and maintenance contractor Danie Obermeyer," said Niehaus. "Danie is an enormous strength in our operations business."

Kingswood is the youngest club in the Garden Route, the course having been opened for play in 2007. The Top 100 layout has been a regular tournament venue for elite amateurs, and in 2017 hosted the SA Strokeplay Championship.

It is a considerable task for golf clubs to take part in the John Collier Survey, and the average response rate each year is about 39 percent.

Collier confirmed that the real "hard yards" towards Kingswood winning the latest award were put in by Obermeyer and former golf director Heinrich Frylinck prior to the golf club being sold. "The new owners, though, have been shrewd enough to recognise the good work that had been done earlier, and have built on it," he said.

"What impressed our reviewers most about Kingswood was the club's

balanced approach to reporting on sustainability, good governance and environmental compliance by starting with their record of decision and environmental management plan as the baseline, and building on this. An example is their management of waste, which aligns with the World Environment Day theme of beating plastic pollution."

Private ownership of a golf club is a big challenge in South Africa, where it is fairly unique, and Quinn and Niehaus immediately prioritised the business processes and structures to drive profits from the beginning.

"We changed from an outsourced club to an in-house model where we run not only the golf operations, but also the range, pro shop and restaurant," said Niehaus. "They have an enormous impact on the customer experience.

"We then looked at green fee and membership pricing. The Garden Route is competing against destinations such as Spain, Portugal and Thailand for foreign visitors, and our strategy is to keep golf affordable for both foreigners and the local market which sustains our business throughout the year.

"We have doubled the original membership base we took over in October by introducing membership packages which focus on getting golfers with inactive handicaps back into the game. We have packages

SPECIAL MENTION/PAST WINNERS

The Champagne Sports Resort in the KZN Midlands, and Waterkloof Golf Club in Pretoria received a Special Mention by Collier in his survey for their comprehensive reporting. Previous John Collier winners have been Bryanston, Pretoria CC, Kyalami, Randpark and Benoni CC in Gauteng; Metropolitan and Paarl (Western Cape), Umhlali (KZN) and Leopard Creek (Mpumalanga), who have won twice.

The par-3 12th hole at Kingswood.



for 14 and 24 rounds a year, for those golfers who can only play once or twice a month."

A new, older club pro in Robert Wiederkehr, a former Sunshine Tour

player and PGA of SA professional, has been employed at Kingswood to help create a better personal experience for members. He teaches, socialises and plays golf with them.



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BECAUSE ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

STRAIGHT SHOOTER

How to drive it in the fairway again and again

BY JORDAN SPIETH

WITH MAX ADLER



PHOTOS BY WALTER IOOSS JR



Y

YOU'RE DRIVING IT GREAT, scoring well, then somewhere in the middle of the back nine you spray a couple of tee shots. That's all it takes to ruin a round. Were they mental errors from getting tight or nervous? Only you know the answer. More likely your body just got a little tired. That's when every golfer's undesirable tendencies come out, mine included. Knowing this, I perform nearly all of my physical-training exercises from a golf stance. Having the strength in your legs and core to maintain posture throughout the swing is important with every club, but absolutely critical with the driver. It has the longest shaft, and you swing it the fastest, so even small misses can travel 30 metres off line. ▶ In this article, I'll explain my bad tendencies and the swing thoughts I use to avoid them. Additionally, to be a great driver, it's important to swing within yourself. It's easy for players on tour to know when they're getting jumpy, because there are more and more launch monitors on tournament tee boxes nowadays – and you can't help but look. My driver swing speed is 184 kilometres per hour, which gets me 293 yards of carry. I can swing harder, but then I can lose control. Carrying the ball 300, but into trouble, isn't worth much. I don't offer this to brag – there are plenty of guys on tour who bomb it way past me – but I think all golfers, especially amateurs, suffer now and then from chasing those extra kilometres per hour of swing speed. ▶ And, as any success I've had has demonstrated, consistently driving the ball in play is a weapon all its own. Here's how to do it. ▶

**'HOW DO YOU KNOW
I MADE A FULL TURN?
YOU CAN'T SEE
MY RIGHT ARM
IN THIS PHOTO.'**



LEAD WITH THE HIP

IF I GET A LITTLE TIRED, my right hip slides away from the target on the takeaway, then buckles. The ideal position is above. My right hip is pivoting – not swaying – so my backswing feels like my upper body turns over my lower body. You can tell I've made a deep shoulder turn, because you can't see my right arm. That's the directive from my coach, Cameron McCormick: "Hide the right arm, Jordan." But I don't think about that arm or my upper body during the backswing. Instead, if I can feel my right hip and glutes activated (you've probably heard Tiger talk about this; it's truly a useful concept), I know my upper body will follow and find the right position at the top of the swing.



TILT THE SHOULDERS

FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE (*left*), you can see how my right hip really turns behind and away. As I emphasised, this move with the lower body is the trigger to my backswing. But another point worth mentioning is that you can see my left shoulder is lower than my right. An image that sometimes pops into my head for the top of the swing is, if my shoulders were the wings of an airplane, the left wing would be angled down and the right wing up. And with my chest turned completely away from the target, I've created a lot of space to swing down and attack the ball from inside the target line and hit up on it. This path will produce the high, drawing ball flight I prefer.


WING DOWN

IF YOU'RE WATCHING a tournament and see me miss a tee shot way right, it's likely my right shoulder lifted in the downswing. When that happens, the club comes down steep and to the left, which is the classic over-the-top move that makes the ball peel off to the right. Returning to the airplane-wing metaphor I used for the top of the backswing, a great thought for the transition is an early change in wing positions. To start the downswing, let that right airplane wing (your back shoulder) angle down towards the ball as the left shoulder moves up. As you see (*right*), my right shoulder is way lower than my left, which promotes the clubhead to travel on a shallow, inside path. Again, that's the recipe for a draw.



FOLLOW THE FLIGHT

REMEMBER WHEN I SAID it's all about keeping your posture? The finish position is the big reveal. If I don't hold my finish – poised and still like a figurine atop a trophy – know it was a sloppy swing. The slightest wobble means I got lazy or swung too hard. I love the image below. My right shoulder and belt buckle are pointing at the target, which indicates a full and committed follow-through. And you can tell from my eyes that I'm following the shot. A great habit is to hold your finish until the ball lands. If it's difficult to stay in balance for these few seconds, you've got work to do on your core strength. But if your ball is tracking centre cut, admire it for a moment. Okay, that's long enough. Now pick up your tee.

A large, high-angle photograph of the same golfer from the back. He is wearing a yellow polo shirt, blue trousers, and a blue cap. He is holding a golf club with both hands, and his body is in a follow-through position. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

'HOLD YOUR FINISH UNTIL THE BALL LANDS. IF IT'S DIFFICULT TO KEEP YOUR BALANCE FOR THESE FEW SECONDS, YOU SWUNG TOO HARD OR GOT LAZY.'

INSIDE THE ROPES FOR JORDAN SPIETH'S CRAZY DUEL WITH MATT KUCHAR AT BIRKDALE

BY DAVE SHEDLOSKI & JOHN HUGGAN

THE BOGEY THAT WON THE OPEN





SPIETH CONFERS WITH RULES OFFICIAL DAVID BONSALE AFTER AN ERRANT FINAL-ROUND DRIVE AT THE 13TH HOLE.



IF **THE MASTERS**, as lore has it, begins on the back nine on Sunday, you could say the 2017 Open Championship began on the 13th hole of the final round at Royal Birkdale. Tied with Matt Kuchar for the lead, Jordan Spieth hit his tee shot “so far right, it was almost left,” according to NBC’s David Feherty. Adds colleague Roger Maltbie: “It went over this mountain.” The search for the ball turned frantic – “It was pandemonium,” according to one of the hundreds of spectators poking through the tall, thick grass – and for Spieth and caddie Michael Greller, thoughts of a quadruple-bogey 7 to give away the 2016 Masters came flooding back. It was in the ensuing moments, you’ll soon see, that Greller told Spieth his second artful fib of the day. ▶ To make sense of the chaos that occurred that day, Golf Digest interviewed more than two dozen of the key characters, including Spieth, Greller, Kuchar and his caddie, John Wood, and the rules officials who spent tense moments piecing together the procedure that produced the bizarre scene of Spieth hitting a shot amid equipment trailers on the adjacent practice range. (It was during that wait that Feherty told Kuchar a joke that can’t be repeated here.) ▶ A year after the Henrik Stenson-Phil Mickelson duel at Royal Troon, we got another classic. If you’ve wondered what a player and a caddie say and do to cope with excruciating turmoil, wonder no longer. These candid comments put you in the middle of an Open that will be remembered forever.

AN EARLY OMEN

HENRIK STENSON: I remember thinking about this early in the first round: There I was, the defending champion, playing with Jordan. One year before at Troon, I played the first two rounds with Zach Johnson, who won at St Andrews in 2015. So it crossed my mind, *That might be a good omen for Jordan*, especially when he got off to such a good start (a five-under-par 65 to share the lead with Kuchar and US Open winner Brooks Koepka). Of course, I’m now hoping to be drawn with Jordan again at Carnoustie. *(Laughs.)*

I played the first two rounds with Jordan at the 2015 Masters, which he went on to win, and I got the same feeling at Birkdale. He putted beautifully in that Masters; he made every putt dead centre with perfect pace. On those greens, that is remarkable. Unreal. I got the same vibe at Birkdale.

JORDAN SPIETH *(on winning the Travelers the month before the Open):* That was the first tournament I felt like, *Wow, I can*

win on the PGA Tour without fantastic putting. The second hole (at Birkdale), I hit a downhill slider for birdie, and I made it. When it goes in, you feel like the putter’s back: *Okay, that felt exactly how I wanted it to; it went in exactly like I wanted it to; I feel like I can stroke it today.*

RICH BEEM *(Sky Sports on-course announcer and 2002 PGA Championship winner):* I walked with Jordan on Thursday and Friday as well as Saturday (rounds of 65-69-65). On Friday, his round was more of a labour. Watching most people play like that, you would have doubts about them keeping it going, but he has an uncanny ability to get the ball in the hole as quickly as possible. Matt just played his game on Saturday (a 66 after Friday’s 71). But it would be wrong to say he missed a chance that day. How do you do that when the other guy shoots 65? You’re helpless against that sort of scoring. He shot 66 and lost ground.

MATT KUCHAR: I wasn’t on my best form. All I could do at the Scottish Open and



British Open was fade the ball. I could not hit a draw. It was everything I could do to hit a straight ball. But being able to hit the ball only one way, I knew where it was going – I knew it wasn’t going left. And so I pretty much just played it.

JOHN WOOD *(on Kuchar playing the final two rounds with Spieth and Greller):* I love playing with Jordan, and Michael is one of my best friends out here. It’s a fun pairing.

MATT KUCHAR: Everybody likes Jordan. If you’re older, you consider him a little brother. If you’re younger, you consider him a big brother. He’s the type of kid you want to be around.

SHAKY START TO FINAL ROUND

Spieth enters the final round at 11 under par for a three-stroke lead over Kuchar.

• • •

JORDAN SPIETH: I waited from 7.30 until 4pm for that first tee shot with the wind off the left and the out-of-bounds right.

SPIETH'S DRIVE AT THE 13TH WENT RIGHT, OVER A HUGE DUNE. AFTER TAKING AN UNPLAYABLE LIE, HE DROPPED ON THE RANGE, ENCIRCLED BY A CROWD (BELOW) FOR HIS THIRD SHOT. A SOLID PITCH AND AN EIGHT-FOOT PUTT SALVAGED A BOGEY.



SPIETH DROP
ON RANGE

That one shot was bothering me the entire day. I remember telling Michael and Cameron (swing coach Cameron McCormick), “Man, I’m not feeling great about this first shot.” I stepped up on the tee and just flushed a draw and was so pumped up. That’s what was frustrating about the break.

WAYNE RILEY (*Sky Sports announcer*): He hit a great shot, but the ball didn’t kick off the bank like he expected it to. He drew a terrible lie from a good shot. It was a foot from being perfect, but because the grass was so damp, the ball stuck instead of kicking out.

MATT KUCHAR: An unlucky break, but it was part of the risk of hitting 3wood.

ROGER MALTBIE: Jordan was out of sorts. If you listen to the broadcast, you can hear him. He’s saying, “That’s not right. That basically sucks,” whatever term he used.

MICHAEL GRELLER: Yeah, we got a kick in the gut right out of the gate on the hardest tee shot at Birkdale by a mile. So

**“THE DRIVE
(BY SPIETH AT 13)
WAS ABOUT AS
POOR AS A PRO
COULD HIT ONE.
YOU COULDN'T
HIT IT OVER THERE
IF YOU TRIED.”**

—JOHNNY MILLER

he was showing his emotions there when he saw the lie. I told him to get over it. You don’t want your guy beating himself up right out of the gate.

DAVID BONSALE (*referee with Spieth and Kuchar during the final round*): He could only hack it forward. He then hit a so-so pitch to 20-odd feet. And his putt wasn’t great, either. (The bogey cut Spieth’s lead to two strokes.)

NICK FALDO (*NBC/Golf Channel announcer*): Jordan looked like he was going to lose after the fourth hole (Spieth’s third bogey of the day, giving Kuchar a share of the lead). He just looked bloody lost.

JOHNNY MILLER (*NBC/Golf Channel announcer*): He might have thought that he was in trouble of maybe blowing it like he did the Masters.

JORDAN SPIETH: Thoughts creep in.

CAMERON MCCORMICK: I guess there was a bit of psychological tug of war: *Am I really going to do this again? That’s what happened at Augusta.* But he said to himself, *I’m not going to go down this path again.*

• • •
Spieth birdies the fifth hole and then makes a terrific par at the sixth to Kuchar’s bogey to build the lead to two.

• • •
MATT KUCHAR: I birdied 9, and he missed a short putt, three-putted. So caught him, excited to make the turn, had a real shot at the claret jug.

JORDAN SPIETH: The wheels were kind of coming off with the putter on the front nine. You know, *Oh, boy, am I really going to have to go through the constant questioning that I did back then* (hitting two balls in the water at Augusta National’s 12th hole, turning a one-stroke lead into a three-shot deficit) *and the frustrations from it? Am I going to be looked at as somebody who’s a closer, or has that changed now off of a couple events?* It was difficult to mask, so I was verbal with Michael about it, wondering if anything that he could say could get me really positive. He was like, “It’s a totally different situation. You’re in a great position. We’re going to pretty much go about our business, we’re going to play the golf course, so let’s set a goal for the back nine and forget about everything.”

• • •
Spieth and Kuchar parred the first three holes of the back nine, remaining tied for the lead. Then things began to get really interesting.

CHAOS AT THE 13TH HOLE

ROGER BATHURST (member of the R&A rules committee): I was the assistant referee with the last group. That basically means I was the forward man, seeing where the tee shots finish. If there's no problem, you walk on to the second shots. By and large, you don't have a great deal to do. However, the 13th at Birkdale (a 499-yard par 4) was different.

RICH BEEM: I watched Jordan play the 13th hole on each of the first three days, and I can tell you he never once tried to hit the fairway. Every day he was aiming for the rough on the right. I asked Michael Greller about that, and he confirmed it. "The bunkers were all in play for us," Michael said. "We knew that if we just got a decent break with the lie in the rough, that was the place to be."

DAVID BONSALE: Kuchar hit a good drive on 13 into the correct spot. Jordan was trying to do the same thing.

CAMERON MCCORMICK: The conditions were really difficult. The wind shifted; it changed the shot. It was a triple witching hour.

JORDAN SPIETH: The rain had come down a little bit, so that changed the shot that I wanted to hit. When you get water on the clubface or the ball, the ball tends to not spin, and it'll squirt right off the tee. I lined up down the trouble on the left side, and I bailed out a little on it. Whether it was a combination of the wind going that way, the water on the face, and I didn't trust the shot, they all led to a foul ball that just kept moving right on the wind. My reaction when I looked up was, *Oh, wow, I don't even know what's over there.*

MATT KUCHAR: Gone. That's miles right to where we expected it to be.

JOHN WOOD: When you're watching guys hit, especially pros, you have a window where you expect the ball to be. I looked up, and I didn't see it.

ROGER MALTBIE: I said, "Oh, this is *way* right – I mean, this is *waay* right – this is a

hundred yards right of the centre of the fairway." It was almost a flinch.

JOHNNY MILLER: The drive was about as poor as a pro could hit one. You couldn't hit it over there if you tried.

DAVID BONSALE: I was standing right behind Jordan. I saw the ball come down, and it looked like it hit someone. Then I lost sight of it. Jordan dropped his club and put his head in his hands.

JORDAN SPIETH: Thinking, *Oh, boy, this could be 6.*

DAVID BONSALE: I was then focused on whether he should be playing a provisional.

JORDAN SPIETH: I was like, "Is that going to be okay, Michael?" He's like, "I'm not sure."

MICHAEL GRELLER: We're about 50 yards off the tee box, and the walking scorer with us says, "They can't find the ball. What would you like to do?" Jordan said, "Well, we're going to find it – just keep walking." My first thought was, *Somebody's going to pick it up.* There were hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of spectators there. It was just absolute chaos.

JORDAN SPIETH: I'm thinking, *Wow, all I had to do is make 4. Now I've got a difficult 6 going back to the tee if we can't find it.*

JOHN WOOD: Where they were looking, the people in the heavy stuff, I'm thinking, *Boy, that would be a miracle if they find it.*

NICK FALDO: We all were sitting there and thinking, *Well, that's it – that's going to cost*

him the Open.

ROGER MALTBIE: At that point, you figure he's toast. Kooch is such a consistent player, there's just no scenario I can see where the wheels are going to come off. But they clearly have come off of Jordan.

JR JONES (R&A rules official and NBC/Golf Channel rules contributor): I got on the radio to David Bonsall and told him I had seen the ball come to ground and that it was surrounded – or so I thought.

DAVID BONSALE: Jordan looked at me, and I told him that.

ROGER BATHURST: I went across the fairway and into some very thick, scrubby rough. There was a huge amount of confusion. No one had seen a ball land. I spent some time asking if anyone had seen anything. But nothing.

MARK BATES (spectator): They were all on the fairway side of the dune – well to the left of where it was eventually found.

ROGER BATHURST: Eventually I asked some spectators on top of this huge sand bank – it's probably 50 to 60 feet high – and, after a bit of interrogation, they gave up that the ball had hit someone on the head (drawing the circle of spectators) and had flown way over the other side of the sand bank. I have no idea why they didn't volunteer that information. It was very odd, because they could see everyone scrambling around looking for the ball.

DAVID BONSALE: We had walked forward maybe 120 yards when JR came back on the radio to say they now didn't think they had found the ball. When I told Jordan, he asked if he should go back and play a provisional. But I told him we had come too far. So we wandered over to the right-hand side. We were well shy of the ridge in some really bad rough. People were finding balls all over the place. Jordan went leaping in there, with Michael following slightly reluctantly. I was saying to Michael, I didn't think we were anywhere near where the ball was. He agreed. But the spectators seemed to think we were. Jordan actually looked at three balls that were not his. I was saying to David Rickman (R&A rules official in the rules headquarters) on the radio that I hadn't started my stopwatch because I didn't think we were anywhere near the right place. He told me to carry on.

JORDAN SPIETH: The more people, the more frustrated I'm getting. That's what made it a little more difficult to think quickly and clearly. But I don't remember it feel-

SPIETH, GRELLER AND BONSALE DISCUSS OPTIONS ABOUT WHERE TO DROP ONCE SPIETH'S BALL HAS BEEN FOUND ON 13.



ing chaotic. I remember feeling, *Okay, the only way to save shots here is to not overreact and to make as smart a decision as you possibly can.*

MARK BATES: The guy who had been hit was actually on top of the dune. The ball hit him on the head and went right of the dune. When I arrived, there were people saying they had seen the ball land in the area on the fairway side of the dune, which was nonsense – that was 50 yards from where the ball ended up. It was all really strange. I saw the bloke who had been hit. His head was cut and bleeding. He was on top of the hill Jordan eventually hit over. It was pandemonium.

Jordan was asking everyone to get out of the way. He wasn't panicked, but he was definitely getting frustrated with all the people. There was a television cameraman there. He was obviously in communication with his director and was being directed to where the ball actually was. It was only two minutes before there was a shout from the other side of the dune. Someone had to have seen the ball ricochet off the guy's head. Jordan's ball finished up at the bottom of the dune on the other side from the fairway.

JORDAN SPIETH: Someone had seen it roll and found it. And then it was, *Wow, I found it; that's great. Now let's see where it is and let's weigh the options from here and figure out a way to not lose two shots.*

MICHAEL GRELLER: I don't know how long it was, 28 minutes or whatever. From a mental standpoint, I think for both of us, everything went very slowly, which was pretty neat because usually things go 100 miles an hour in that situation. I think what happened at the '16 Masters played a massive role in how we handled that situation on 13, because it was a similar shock. We have a history of being in a moment like that, which is pretty unbelievable, but we were able to apply that into that moment instead of compounding it.

It was just very matter-of-fact. I remember thinking, *You're going to find this, get this back in play, make a 5, hopefully worst-case 6, we're down one or two with five holes to go in a major with somebody we respect greatly, one of our favourite guys, Matt Kuchar.* But with all due respect, Matt hadn't won a major. There are two par 5s left, Jordan had a little more length, and one or two shots is nothing to make up in that scenario. So that was where the thinking went versus, *Oh, boy, here we go*

again.

What people forget in that '16 Masters is that Jordan didn't back down (after the 7 at No 12). He made a great birdie on 13, almost birdied 14, birdies 15 and stakes one on 16 with a seven-footer (missed) for a chance to get within one of somebody who had a phenomenal round (Danny Willett with a 67). So he knew how to go on offence after something crazy happened. That's exactly what he did at Birkdale.

ROGER BATHURST: The ball was lying on a very steep upslope, maybe 70 degrees and in a pretty poor place. There was no sense of panic, which was amazing for a guy who was potentially making a real mess of the Open.

MICHAEL GRELLER: By the time I had got to the ball, Jordan had already decided it was unplayable, which was significant because he's not afraid to take on a shot. He knew that quickly that he couldn't play it.

JORDAN SPIETH: Michael said, "How's it look?" I said, "I might be able to get a wedge on it, but it's not going to go very far." Then he goes, "What about going back to the tee?" I said, "Hold on, let's look at the unplayable drops." So I'm looking around within two club-lengths in any direction. There were some spots where I could have dropped it, but the likelihood is, it would have bounced backward against a bush, and then I wouldn't have had a swing from there. So I didn't like any of those options. That's when we went up to the top of the hill.

Within 30 seconds, I'm looking back and I'm thinking, *Okay, if I keep on going back and back and back, I can still reach the green.* I couldn't reach the green from the other side of the trailers – the hills were too high, and they were too close to me. I could have probably got a 7-iron out, but it would have gotten to 60 yards (from the green), probably. I thought there was the potential for me to hit the ball on or around the green to give me a better chance of getting up and down.

That ran through my head, and I thought, *Is the driving range in play?*

ROGER BATHURST: I told him that, to the best of my knowledge, it was. But I would check with the referee when he arrived.

JORDAN SPIETH: Michael then reiterated, "Are you sure? Because you can re-tee and have a putt at 5 and make 6." I just . . . I hate that. I'm like, "There's got to be another way; there's got to be a better way."

I don't want to lose two shots. One shot can be made up quickly. Two shots means the ball's in his (Kuchar's) hands. So yeah, I didn't like the word "6" that kept coming out of his mouth.

KUCCHAR'S LONG WAIT

WAYNE RILEY: As we wondered what was going on with Spieth, I looked at Kuchar, and I could tell he was thinking, *I could have this.*

JOHN PARAMOR (*European Tour rules official*): Kuchar was standing around

“ I TOLD MATT AND JOHN A JOKE. I CAN'T REPEAT IT. IT JUST STARTS OUT, 'FLANAGAN GOES TO A PROCTOLOGIST.' IT'S A BEAUTY. IT MIGHT HAVE COST MATT KUCCHAR THE OPEN.”

— DAVID FEHERTY

not really knowing what to do. I told him this was likely to take a bit of time, so if he wanted to hit, he should just go ahead. So he did.

MATT KUCCHAR: I hit a fantastic shot (with an 8-iron), 20 feet away. So I'm thrilled. I've got a great birdie opportunity here.

JOHN WOOD: And then the waiting game was on at that point. We were telling stories and talking. Just – gosh, we talked about sports. We talked about the book I was reading. Talked to the official a bit, trying to get an idea of what was going on.

DAVID FEHERTY: I told Matt and John a

joke. I can't repeat it. It just starts out, "Flanagan goes to a proctologist." It's a beauty. It might have cost Matt Kuchar the Open.

MATT KUCHAR: We had a laugh. We were going to be there for a while, knowing we've had these issues ourselves.

JOHN WOOD: There's a strokes gained/putting stat, and I always joke with Webb Simpson that there should be a strokes gained/attitude, and Webb and Matt are the best on tour. They aren't going to let anything bother or fluster them. What can you do? They (Spieth and the officials) are just trying to get it right.

“ I THINK WHAT HAPPENED AT THE '16 MASTERS PLAYED A MASSIVE ROLE IN HOW WE HANDLED THAT SITUATION ON 13, BECAUSE IT WAS A SIMILAR SHOCK. ”
— MICHAEL GRELLER

MATT KUCHAR: We could see on a big screen a little bit of what was going on. And now I get word that Jordan has found his ball. He's got to take an unplayable.

SPIETH'S SOLUTION

JOHN PARAMOR: I heard the match referee in my earpiece. He was asking David Rickman if the practice ground was out-of-bounds. David then confirmed that it was not, neither for the club nor for the Open. Taking the range out-of-bounds was never even considered. That wasn't a conscious decision; I don't think any-

one thought anyone would ever go there. Besides, why would you invent a boundary? I know we put one in on the 10th hole, but that was for a very good reason (because players were considering hitting shots from the ninth tee to the 10th fairway, which would have put spectators in danger).

DAVID BONSALE: I told David (Rickman) that going straight back, it looked as if we might head straight into some equipment trucks on the practice ground. I told David I thought all the trucks should be treated as one single temporary immovable obstruction (TIO). That seemed reasonable to him. I then told him there was a metal fence around the trucks that should be treated as "movable." Again, he agreed. Initially, Jordan was asking me if he could drop back on a line, keeping the point where the ball was between him and the hole. I told him that was fine.

I then asked the marshalls to get the crowd out of the way, moving them so that we could go back to the practice ground. That was fine until we discovered a buggy in the way. It was sitting there abandoned with no keys in it. And it was right on the line Jordan had to follow to make his drop. If Jordan had wanted to drop back short of the trucks, he would be doing so right where the buggy was. I told David we would need to get it moved, but if we couldn't, it would have to be an immovable obstruction. He agreed.

MATT KUCHAR: As luck would have it, being on the driving range, you at least get a proper lie. There are some unplayables where you get to a better, more playable lie, but not a good lie.

DAVID BONSALE: I told Jordan he could drop on the practice ground, but the line he would have to take goes right through the middle of a TaylorMade truck. So off we went. He had picked up the ball by this time. At first, we went way behind the trucks. We've agreed that he's going to take an unplayable, then have interference from the trucks. So we would have to then figure out his nearest point of relief on the practice-ground side. That sounds complicated, but everyone was staying pretty cool and calm. We just had to work it out, step by step.

TOMMY ROY (NBC/Golf Channel producer): Here's the amazing thing about the whole scenario with the drop. We had a wire cam that was over on the practice area, so it went the distance from the chipping

green all the way down the right side of the driving range. It was about a 200-yard run. Its purpose was to show players on the range, and it was primarily used by the Golf Channel for pre-game shows and in some pre-tournament coverage. But by happenstance, it was total luck that this unfolds on 13 next to the range, and that this camera was there and had the perfect view of setting up the drop and the next shot for Jordan.

We could have shown a whole bunch of golf shots while Jordan was trying to figure out his options on the drop, but I learned a long time ago – and my boss, Dick Ebersol, really reinforced it – that when you have something unique going on, it's okay to stay. Everything on the line, and it was so crazy watching what Jordan was going to do.

PETER JACOBSEN (NBC/Golf Channel announcer): At Troon, Mickelson and Stenson looked like they were playing in a club-championship match and everyone else was in the sixth flight of the member-guest. You couldn't take your eyes off those two guys. Then we get another showdown the next year. And you can't take your eyes off them, either.

DAVID BONSALE: Jordan went back maybe 30 yards beyond the trucks. He asked if he could drop there. He wanted to be back far enough that he could hit over everything. I told him he could. Then he walks forward to the last truck and asked if he could drop there. Again, I told him he could. And that, of course, would then allow him relief to the side of the trucks.

At that point, I asked him to hold on. I wanted to check that his nearest point of relief was indeed on the practice-ground side of the trucks. I then dived in among the trucks and determined that, the more forward he went, the more certain I was that he had to drop on the practice-ground side. That was where we needed to be. Jordan then asked if he could drop right in the middle of the trucks. I said he could.

Just as we were about to do that, I got on the radio to David Rickman. I told him what we were proposing to do – make the drop, then take relief from the trucks to the right, on the practice ground. Was he okay that I didn't actually make the player drop the ball? He told me, in the circumstances, that was the right course of action – the reason being, I didn't want the ball to roll under one of the trucks

and have the leader in the Open scrambling on his hands and knees trying to get his ball back. Besides, we knew what we were going to do. Having dropped the ball, we were certainly going to pick it up and drop again to the right of the trucks. There was no point in him making that first drop. Just as we were about to do all of that, John Paramor appeared.

JOHN PARAMOR: I'm sure Jordan was pleased to see me after I gave him a penalty for slow play in Abu Dhabi the year before. (Laughs.) He remembered me. Jordan and the rules officials were in the penned area off the driving range, inside the metal barriers looking at an area where Jordan thought he might like to drop his ball. The referee told him no, they had to work out where the ball should be dropped applying the unplay-



able rule, then go from there. Jordan said, "I think it will end up here." The first thing I wanted to do was make sure Jordan was going to drop on the nearest side of the trucks. So I asked Jordan, "Is this where you are trying to get the ball?" He said it was. I then told him we had to first drop under "unplayable," but I had to check to see what the nearest side was.

On the side of the Titleist truck was a flagpole with a flag sticking up (from the wind). The further back he came, the further to the right his relief option would have been. Which meant that the nearest point was to the left. Which was not what he wanted. So I told him he actually had to go closer to the hole than the point he was looking at. He said he wanted to be back where he was so that he could get over the sand hill easier. He wanted more margin for error. I told him I was sorry, but if he wanted to use the nearest point of relief on the right side, he had to go closer. I then found that point. I then told him we weren't actually going to

drop the ball, applying the unplayable rule – that would have meant asking him to climb on top of the Titleist truck and drop there. I wasn't going to do that. (Laughs.)

ROGER BATHURST: That would have been a bit undignified.

JOHN PARAMOR: I wanted to expedite play, so I told him to drop to the side, at the nearest point to the truck. That would have left the truck's flag in the way. So he got relief from that, too. And at that point he dropped within one club-length. If we had gone a stage further, he could have also taken relief from the metal barriers around the range. But that would have taken him to the left, where he didn't want to go. So we only dealt with taking relief from the equipment trucks and the associated flag. Jordan was clear that was the best deal he was going to get.

JR JONES: In the studio at the time, Johnny (Miller) was asking if he had considered going back to the tee – Rule 28-a.

JOHNNY MILLER (on the air): Well, I hope he can pull this off, but in my mind, he should have gone back to the tee for sure.

JR JONES: Doing what he was doing, one errant shot was going to cost Jordan the championship.

JOHNNY MILLER (after the Open): He's got a blind shot with gorse on both sides, and if he'd have hit that shot left or right from over by those trucks, he might still be playing that hole.

HOW TO MAKE A BEAUTIFUL BOGEY

MICHAEL GRELLER: While Jordan was going through all the back and forth with the officials, it gave me time to really dial in that number (yardage). No, there was no sixth-grade maths that I applied there (Greller is a former grade-school maths teacher), it was more basic caddie logic. Long is absolutely no good – you're in the gorse bushes dropping again. Short was a better miss. So when Jordan said, "I think it's 270 front," my alarms went off because I thought it was about 240, 230. That's a pretty significant difference. Again, I knew long was out of play. So at that point it became a tug of war: *Can I convince him to hit the 3-iron versus a 3-wood?*

The last thing that put me over the edge was, he said, "I think it's about 75 yards to the top of the dune," and he wanted me to climb up to give him an idea of where he was hitting it. So I actually counted my paces up that dune.

Granted, it wasn't spot-on accurate, but it was about 50 yards. I remember thinking, *He's already giving it too much just in this first little chunk*, so it made me that much more confident that it was a little bit shorter than he thought. I fudged on the line a little. I stood a little more left of where I thought the pin was, because left was better than right. So when he hit that shot, he thinks he's hit it short right, and it ended up being right on line.

PETER JACOBSEN: It looked like he hit that 3-iron fat. You could see shoulders slumped. Like, *What am I doing?*

JORDAN SPIETH: (on his third shot, after taking the penalty for the drop): I hit it a little off the toe,

“AFTER I MADE THE EAGLE (AT THE 15TH HOLE), I THOUGHT, HIT THE GREEN IN REGULATION ON THE NEXT HOLE; THEY MIGHT GO IN FROM ANYWHERE NOW.”

— JORDAN SPIETH

and it was going probably five, six yards right of where I was looking.

DAVID BONSALE: I picked up his 3-wood, and he was off like a gazelle up the hill.

JOHNNY MILLER: He ran all the way up and down that deep dune, and I almost think doing that reset his body and his brain. Doing that was like a shock to his system and got him going. It snapped him out of whatever funk he was in.

DAVID FEHERTY: There's always one shot that turns out to be the tipping point, that turns someone around. And he says to himself, *I'm tired of playing like this. I think I'll play like that instead.* So when he hit that shot over the Alps, he'd had enough.

MATT KUCHAR: For a minute it looked like it was going to be really bad, like it was going to be in the hay rather than the green. But it kind of

skips right through a bunker.

JOHN WOOD: We saw it land, and we thought it would be a difficult up and down, but for Jordan, I think he gets that ball up and down six out of 10 times.

MATT KUCHAR: Still a really tricky shot. He had a massive mound to work over and around.

JOHN WOOD: Jordan didn't even go to his ball, he went straight to Matt on the green.

MATT KUCHAR: He says, "Hey, sorry about that." I said, "Hey, no big deal. Completely understand."

JORDAN SPIETH: He's so great. I think he could see I was legitimately very

“TO HAVE A ONE-SHOT LEAD WITH FIVE TO PLAY, AND BIRDIE TWO OUT OF THE NEXT FOUR, AND YOU'RE DOWN TWO? THAT DOESN'T USUALLY HAPPEN.”

— JOHN WOOD

concerned, because I knew if I were in his shoes, that would have been very frustrating.

DAVID FEHERTY: I don't think the wait hurt Matt, necessarily, but it seemed to help Jordan. He turned it around physically and emotionally, but it started in his head. Somehow, he let go of whatever was bothering him.

WAYNE RILEY: Spieth's ball was on a downslope, and he had to chip over the corner of a bunker. He could easily have chunked it into the bunker. He could have knifed it to where Kuchar was in two. The crowd went perfectly silent as he hit it, so I heard the *clip*. He clipped it

with no divot. It was the most gorgeous sound.

MICHAEL GRELLER: I think that's the greatest up-and-down of his career. Up the slope, down the slope, then had to make an eight-footer to save bogey.

JORDAN SPIETH: I wasn't even thinking it was for bogey or anything, it was more, *This is to get up and down*.

MICHAEL GRELLER: When he made that putt, I remember thinking, *This is going to be the most fun that you're ever going to have caddieing*. I knew that this was going to be just an absolute blast to the finish line — a total peace, and just buckle up. And I sensed it in him. I could just feel it in how he was breathing, the words that he said.

PETER JACOBSEN: Felt like a 12 or a 13, but he walks off with a 5 (to fall one stroke behind Kuchar, who two-putted for par). This is what separates great players like Jordan Spieth and Nicklaus and Tiger, Palmer, Faldo, Trevino from everyone else — they take a bad situation like that and turn it into a positive.

NICK FALDO: A 5 wasn't very harmful — it was a tough hole, and he might have made a 5 from the fairway, for all we know.

MATT KUCHAR: I thought for sure I was going to have a two-shot lead, but as it played out, I had a one-shot lead. I still thought, *Jordan is not playing very well. I've got a one-shot lead. I might not be at my best, but I'm playing consistent enough golf to be able to make a steady push from here on in*.

DAVID BONSALL: As they walked off the 13th green, I was standing at the back of the television tower. Jordan and Michael were noticeably pumped up. "We're only one down," one of them said. And, as Jordan passed, he shook my hand and said, "Thank you for all your help with that." That shows tremendous composure for such a young man. Then he goes on to play five of the best holes you will ever see.

WAYNE RILEY: All of a sudden, Spieth seemed to press his belly button and say, "I'm a different person now." It was like what Tiger used to do. Spieth reached another gear, but he was grinding through the lower gears for a long time before he got there.

By the time Spieth holed for a bogey, I had walked off to the 14th tee. There were two toilets at the top of the hill for players. There was a wooden fence around them. Kuchar was walking in as I was walking out. It was just the two of

us. He actually looked at me and asked, "How you doing?" I told him I was all right. But I was thinking, *How the hell are you doing?* It was a bizarre moment. I couldn't tell if he was just nervous or not nervous at all. He could easily have been excused for walking straight by me and totally blanking. But he asked me a question as if we were passing in the street. Pretty weird. His inherent niceness came through, more than him being in any kind of zone.

JOHN PARAMOR: I told David Rickman that I proposed to speak to both players, tell them I wasn't going to put them on



the clock but that they had lost time, so anything they could do to make that up would be much appreciated. I did that as they walked off the 14th tee. Jordan actually went for a quick bathroom break, so I told Matt first. His caddie at first thought I was going to tell him they were being timed. They were actually 22 minutes over the guideline when they finished the 13th. They took 17 minutes longer than they were supposed to on the hole. About 12 to 14 minutes of that were taken up by the time between Jordan finding his ball and hitting his next shot.

ROGER MALTBIE: So we're at the next hole, the 3 par.

MATT KUCHAR: That back pin on 14 is tough to attack. You typically know long over greens is not a good place to be.

JORDAN SPIETH: Kooch had hit a shot and kind of bailed out a little. I thought, *Okay, I'm 1 down. If my opportunities are inside of him, this is match play to a T at this point. If I'm closer than he is, then I'm going to have more chances to win holes, and that's probably going to lead to winning more holes*.

MICHAEL GRELLER: Jordan hit a 6-iron 195 and immediately picked the tee up. When he does that, you know it's all over it.

MATT KUCHAR: And he nearly makes it.

PETER JACOBSEN: He goes from making a bogey at 13 to almost making a hole-in-one (the birdie giving Spieth a share of the lead). That's a reset you would not expect. Probably 99 percent of golf pros could not get it back together like that.

MATT KUCHAR: Remarkable. Absolutely a testament to the player he is, to the mentality he has. It just completely switched. So now we're even with four to go. Still a great spot to be.

ROGER MALTBIE: The next hole, the 5 par, Jordan gets it up on the green (in two).

MATT KUCHAR: I hit a good drive, then a good 3-wood into a greenside bunker. I



SPIETH CHIPS HIS FOURTH SHOT AT 13, AND THEN KNOCKS IN THE PUTT FOR THE MOST UNLIKELY BOGEY.

figure my chance of getting up and down is pretty good out of this bunker. I go ahead and hit it up there to two feet and figure we'll be square with three to go. But he hoops it from 50 (for eagle to take a one-stroke lead).

NICK FALDO: Astonishing. You are either four feet short or three feet to the right on that putt, and he holes it.

ROGER MALTBIE: I told Feherty walking up to the next hole, did not use it on the air, but I said, "You know, it's a little-known fact that God had two sons; it just took the other one a little longer to come back."

MATT KUCHAR: And you go, *Well, I wasn't expecting that, but, all right, I'm 1 down with three to go.* Still excited about my chances. So stuff happens.

MICHAEL GRELLER: It kind of took me by surprise when I saw Jordan point at the ball and say, "Go get that!" I must have

skipped to the hole to grab it, I was so excited. You can see me in the background – I laughed out loud when that putt went in. You know, Jordan has a history of making big-time putts of length.

JORDAN SPIETH: They did a great job with the facilities at Birkdale, and they had a full gym with TVs that were constantly playing old Open Championships. In the old days, the caddies would just grab the ball out of the hole. I don't know why that stuck in the back of my head. It would have come across better if I was like, "Hey, please go get that," but instead it was "Go get that!" and with a real serious look on my face.

After I made the eagle, I thought, *Hit the green in regulation on the next hole; they might go in from anywhere now.* . . . Those three-footers (earlier in the day) were 10-footers to me. And all of a sudden, the lid came off, and the 30-footers were two-footers to me. I don't know why I can't make it a little more boring sometimes.

ROGER MALTBIE: And then Jordan goes to 16, and he knocks that one in from 20 or 30 feet (for another birdie). Amazing.

JORDAN SPIETH: My biggest regret from that day was, I don't think I celebrated accordingly on 15 and 16 on the putts. I felt like they deserved fist pumps, screams. I didn't do either on either one. These are like perfect Tiger uppercut situations, and I'm not taking advantage.

CAMERON MCCORMICK: He said the putt on 16 was more difficult than the putt he had to hit on 15, and the reason for that, it was going uphill and back downhill. It was a putt where a player says, *If I hit it too hard, because of the slope, it will go the downhill side and keep going across the hole.*

MATT KUCHAR: So I'm 2 down with two to go, still in this thing, even though Jordan has put on this amazing run. You kind of understand, if you play long enough, you have to expect your opponent to pull out the miraculous. And you're playing the best players in the world. You really expect these guys to do something great.

ROGER MALTBIE: We get to 17, another 5 par.

JORDAN SPIETH: I hit a drive a little right, and I could have laid (the second shot) way back or I could have gone over the bunkers and short of the other cross bunker. Another decision where Michael's trained: He steps in and says, "We don't need to do this. Kooch is over in the left rough. He's already laid up. You can lay back and go ahead and hit the green from there. Worst

case, make a 5. This (going for the green in two) brings in trouble."

I said, "This lie and this distance, this is a safer shot in my opinion that gets me in a better position." And it went way further than I thought it was going to go, because if I hit that left at all, it was in those horrible pot bunkers 70 yards from the hole with no chance – probably 90 yards from the hole from there to the back pin. But when I hit it and it carried that bunker, it was on a great line, and it was 100 percent that second shot that set up that entire hole. It was probably the most underrated shot of that day – there or the birdie I made on

“MY KIDS, TEARS WERE STREAMING DOWN. . . . THERE WAS A BIT OF A CRUSHING FEELING AS A PARENT, KNOWING I WASN'T ABLE TO COME THROUGH AND BE THE HERO.”

—MATT KUCHAR

5 that at least got me on the board. But that one set me up where I could just pitch it up the green.

MATT KUCHAR: I hit a wedge (third shot) to probably 20 feet. And he's just short of the green in two with a long pitch shot, not an easy pitch. You could tell right when he hit it, it was perfect. It lands on the lower tier, skips up to the second tier, and goes six feet past. And that's a 10 out of 10.

JORDAN SPIETH: It had been raining a little bit, so there's that dew on the ground that allows the ball to skid. It makes that shot a lot easier.



MATT KUCHAR: So here I'm knowing that to have a chance, I've got to make it. I go ahead and make it and think, *This has got to be a little more pressure on Jordan.*

ROGER MALTBIE: And you go, *Okay, now, we could go to 18, which is a hell of a hole with a oneshot lead.* But Jordan pours it right on top of him (maintaining the two-stroke lead).

MATT KUCHAR: He does what Jordan does.

MICHAEL GRELLER: He called that the best stroke he had of the week, just put a perfect stroke on it, right in the gut.

ROGER MALTBIE: You've got to be kidding me – he's five under par (for four holes) after falling off the map. He somehow flipped the whole thing around. Unbelievable.

JOHN WOOD: To have a one-shot lead with five to play, and birdie two out of the next four, and you're down two? That doesn't usually happen.

DAVID FEHERTY: I said on the telecast that Kuchar has to wait for Jordan to fall asleep and then hit him with a 2-by-4.

JR JONES: Johnny Miller must have seen just about everything there is to see in golf, but he was out of his chair.

TOMMY ROY: We had a building that's like a broadcast centre, like we have at the Olympics. It was absolutely rocking on those final few holes. Everyone was going nuts.

JOHNNY MILLER: The fact he birdied the tough 14th, the par 3 that nobody was birdieing, and then he eagles 15, birdies 16 and 17 ... that might be the top-three best finishes down the stretch in a major (with Nicklaus' back-nine 30 in his 1986 Masters victory at age 46 and Tom Watson's 65-65 to beat Nicklaus' 65-66 in the final two rounds of the 1977 Open at Turnberry).

JOHN WOOD (after being asked if Spieth's performance was the best stretch of holes he'd ever seen): That would imply that I saw it. I quit watching once he made the eagle putt. I know when Jordan gets hot from

MATT KUCHAR IS JOINED BY HIS WIFE, SYBI, AND SONS CAMERON AND CARSON AFTER THE FINAL ROUND; KUCHAR AND SPIETH INSPECT THE CLARET JUG; SPIETH WELCOMES THE TROPHY FOR HIS THIRD MAJOR-CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY.

this distance, it can get ugly for his competitor, and sure enough, it did.

MICHAEL GRELLER: I felt like at the start of that round he needed a lot of encouragement, just needed somebody to breathe confidence into him, so I was able to do that. And then, towards the end of the round, after 13, it was just stay out of the way – I mean literally. It was the easiest caddie job I've ever had, those last five holes. I mean, I did nothing. Smile, laugh and fist pump. All the work from a caddie perspective went into the first 13 holes on that round.

DAVID FEHERTY: I have never seen anyone fix themselves like that since Tiger Woods in the Masters (in 1997, when Woods shot 40-30 in the opening round before winning by 12 shots). I was surprised Jordan could walk up to the tee at 18 with the size of his balls.

A DAD'S LAMENT

MATT KUCHAR: Two down with one to go is not an enviable spot, but I think if I can make birdie, 18 is bogeyable for him. Not out of it.

JOHN WOOD: I don't think a two-shot swing is a miracle on the last hole in a major. Jordan hit an iron off the tee, in the left side of the fairway. So he's clean. For us to have a chance, he has to make a bogey from there. So we took an aggressive play off the tee, tried to hit driver and didn't end up in a great spot. If it goes a few more yards, it's in a great spot in the fairway with wedge in our hand. But it got caught up in the fescue. So we're just trying to figure out how to make a 3 at that point and see if Jordan

would make a 5.

MATT KUCHAR: Jordan has hit it on the front of the green, but he's 45 feet, 50 feet away. If I make a birdie, I've still got a chance. And I hit it in the bunker, and I thought, *Not the worst place. I've made bunker shots before.* Then I got up and saw it was plugged. I knew my chances had pretty much gone away. And that was the first time I thought, *Shoot, it's not going to happen.* Fully crushed.

Kuchar then gets a surprise: His wife, Sybi, and young sons Cameron and Carson appear after flying in to see the finish.

MATT KUCHAR: It was amazing. I didn't know they were there until I shook Jordan's hand and was walking off the green. My kids, tears were streaming down, faces all red. You always want to bring joy to your kids' lives. Making a child smile is a great thing. I never want to see them cry, and being the one they're crying about. There was a bit of a crushing feeling as a parent, knowing I wasn't able to come through and be the hero, the dad that you want to be. I think dads fit a bit of a Superman role in your kids' eyes. When you're of a certain age, your dad is your protector, he comes through for you, makes you proud. And to not come through, it was tough.

I certainly wanted to do it for myself, but to have the kids there to see it, that makes it every bit more special. It's still a tough one that it didn't happen, but I definitely hold my head high. And in that dad role, I try to use a lot of situations as learning situations. The thing about sports is that you have to learn to figure out how to deal with defeat. You won't win every time. And I was trying to make sure the kids understood that. Life's a lot of times about how you continue moving on from those. You have ones that you win and ones that you don't. And sometimes somebody gets the best of you.

JORDAN SPIETH: I walked up and saw his family hugging him. . . . I see that, and I thought to myself, *Man, put this in perspective.* . . . I was very emotional (after losing the 2016 Masters), and my dad was the guy who came up and was able to calm me.

WAYNE RILEY: At the end I was standing close to Justin Thomas and Rickie Fowler. I was maybe five feet from them. They both looked really happy for their friend. But in different ways. I could see happiness in Rickie for his friend – but an envy in his eyes. You could see him wondering, *When am I going to do this?* Justin didn't have that look.



A CADDIE'S CONFESSION

After the claret-jug ceremony, Spieth met with the media. "We're going to skip the first 12 holes, right?" he said, prompting laughter. Asked if he has an unusually strong grasp of the rules, Spieth drew more laughs: "No, I've just hit it in a lot of places before."

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MICHAEL GRELLER: Jordan told me to come fly back with him that night with a bunch of the guys, so that was fun to get my first taste out of the claret jug.

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, it does a good job of holding liquid.

JORDAN SPIETH: The last few years we've got a group of NetJets guys together to get a plane back. If you get enough guys, you end up splitting it. It's cheaper than flying first-class on a commercial flight because we use up only a couple hours and NetJets hooks us up. In 2015, Zach wins, and he's on the flight. So we obviously have to wait, but then the deal was, if anyone wins, they have to cover the whole flight. So we got a free flight from Zach. We all got together to do it again — I had to pay for the flight.

I think I slept for two hours after I got back to Dallas before I woke up, texted Michael because he had come with me to my house. He was going to go back to Seattle later that day. I said, "Can you sleep?" He said no. I said, "Do you want to watch it?"

MICHAEL GRELLER: I've never done that with him in any post victory, watched the final round. I've never even watched one myself; I just don't do it. So it was neat to share stories back and forth.

JORDAN SPIETH: It was interesting seeing it from the public perspective versus less than 24 hours, having experienced it. We could remember everything we were saying to each other. We could hear what they were saying on the telecast, and it was just kind of funny to compare.

MICHAEL GRELLER: I confessed to him that I'd told a little lie (in addition to fudging on the line at the 13th hole). I'd told him a story on No 4, the par 3, when he was just lacking the confidence that he normally has. I reminded him that a couple of weeks earlier, he'd been golfing with and hanging out with Michael Jordan, Michael Phelps, Russell Wilson, a couple other guys. I said, "You know, these guys see that same confidence in you that they have, and they're the greatest in their sport." I said, "You're too young to remember this, but in '98, when MJ hit this iconic shot over Bryon Russell

(for the clinching shot in the NBA Finals), everybody remembers that shot, but nobody remembers the six shots he missed before that." I said, "He wasn't afraid to take the dagger at the end of the game, and he nailed it."

I was trying to draw an analogy to "Hey, no one's going to remember these first few holes, they're going to remember how you finish." This was walking off No 4. I confessed to him when we were watching the replay, "I've got to be honest with you, Jordan, I have no clue if MJ missed the six shots before that — it just sounded really good!"

“MY KIDS, TEARS WERE STREAMING DOWN. . . . THERE WAS A BIT OF A CRUSHING FEELING AS A PARENT, KNOWING I WASN'T ABLE TO COME THROUGH AND BE THE HERO.”

— MATT KUCHAR

He said, "That's funny you said that, because when you were telling that story, I was thinking, *If I'm Scottie Pippen, I'm really pissed off that he's jacking up shots at the end of the game.*"

JORDAN SPIETH: Unfortunately, I've proven that if I'm anywhere near the lead or in the lead, there's likely to be some kind of a very entertaining situation that takes place. Whether good or bad for me, it's entertaining for the people. I guess that's a good thing, as long as you come out on top more than you fail.

He had the look of someone who knew this was going to happen for him. And of course it has. Rickie is starting to try too hard and not letting it happen. Now it's going to be interesting to see how Justin and Jordan push each other in the majors. Rickie could go either way. He's hoping it's going to happen rather than knowing it is going to happen. Which is a shame. He has everything it takes to make it happen.

JOHN WOOD: As much as I love Jordan and Michael, I didn't want to go back out and see the ceremony at that point — it was going to hurt too much.

MATT KUCHAR: I figure every great player has had a runner-up or multiple runner-up finishes in majors and had guys snag a major championship away. I feel like my career has been a lot of stepping stones. I did okay as a junior and in college. And then moved on to amateur and did okay, and won some nice events on the PGA Tour, and then won some bigger events on the PGA Tour. Hoping the next step is a major championship. And now to be fully in contention at a major championship, maybe that's kind of the next step before I do end up coming through and winning one.

ROGER MALTBIE: When we all get back to the TV compound after it's over, we're looking at each other: "Did you ever see anything like that?" "Never seen anything like that in my life. Never." Nobody could see it possibly happening, but it did. And it was the damndest thing you ever saw. Golf history is rife with stories about comebacks and falling apart and this and that, but nothing that I can recall to this extreme had I ever seen.

WAYNE RILEY: I went to the range the next morning and stood next to Jordan's divot. All you could see from there was sky. He was so far off line. And the shot he hit was brilliant. The risk was incredible. It could have gone anywhere, never to be seen again. But to get it to where he did was amazing.

WHAT FRESH HELL AWAITS AT CARNOUSTIE'S FINISH?

FEEL THE BURN

► Welcome back to Carnoustie's Barry Burn. Emphasis on *burn*.
► When the Open Championship returns to Scotland from July 19–22, every competitor will have to negotiate the snaking ribbon of water that has bitten winners and losers alike. ► The last time the Open was played here, in 2007, Pádraig Harrington hit two balls into the narrow burn on the 499-yard (456-metre), par-4 72nd hole – and he won, but only after a dramatic up-and-down for a double-bogey 6 that forced a playoff with Sergio Garcia.
► Eight years earlier, Jean Van de Velde blew a three-shot lead with a triple-bogey-7 tragicomedy at 18 and lost a playoff. ► Today, Carnoustie is actually 19 yards shorter than it was in 2007, in part to make room for a grandstand behind the first tee, but at 7 402 yards and par 71, it lives up to its other name: Carnasty.

PAST CHAMPIONS AT CARNOUSTIE ANGUS, SCOTLAND

2007	Pádraig Harrington*	277
1999	Paul Lawrie*	290
1975	Tom Watson*	279
1968	Gary Player	289
1953	Ben Hogan	282
1937	Henry Cotto	290
1931	Tommy Armour	296

* won playoff

FUTURE OPEN VENUES

2019	Royal Portrush
2020	Royal St. George's
2021	Old Course at St. Andrews





DARREN CARROLL/GETTY IMAGES

2007 LEADERBOARD

Padraig Harrington.....	69-73-68-67—277
Sergio Garcia.....	65-71-68-73—277
Andres Romero.....	71-70-70-67—278
Ernie Els.....	72-70-68-69—279
Richard Green.....	72-73-70-64—279

PLAYOFF ON HOLES

1, 16, 17 AND 18

Harrington.....	3-3-4-5—15
Garcia.....	5-3-4-4—16

OTHERS OF NOTE

T-12 Justin Rose.....	75-70-67-70—282
T-12 Tiger Woods.....	69-74-69-70—282
T-42 Rory McIlroy.....(AM)	68-76-73-72
Charl Schwartzel.....	75-75 (missed cut)
Phil Mickelson.....	71-77 (missed cut)

BEST SA PERFORMANCE SINCE 2000

2000 St Andrews.....	Ernie Els T-2
2001 Royal Lytham.....	Ernie Els T-3
2002 Muirfield.....	Ernie Els WIN
2003 St George's.....	Retief Goosen T-10
2004 Royal Troon.....	Ernie Els 2
2005 St Andrews.....	Retief Goosen T-5
2006 Hoylake.....	Ernie Els 3
2007 Carnoustie.....	Ernie Els T-4
2008 Royal Birkdale.....	Ernie Els T-7
2009 Turnberry.....	Retief Goosen T-5
2010 St Andrews.....	Louis Oosthuizen WIN
2011 St George's.....	George Coetzee 15
2012 Royal Lytham.....	Ernie Els WIN
2013 Muirfield.....	Charl Schwartzel T-15
2014 Hoylake.....	Charl Schwartzel T-7
2015 St Andrews.....	Louis Oosthuizen T-2
2016 Royal Troon.....	Charl Schwartzel T-18
2017 Royal Birkdale.....	Branden Grace T-6

SCORECARD

HOLE	YARDS	PAR
1	396	4
2	461	4
3	350	4
4	415	4
5	412	4
6	580	5
7	410	4
8	187	3
9	474	4
OUT	3 685	36
10	465	4
11	382	4
12	503	4
13	175	3
14	513	5
15	472	4
16	248	3
17	460	4
18	499	4
IN	3 717	35
TOTAL	7 402	71

REVISITING THE HOGAN MYSTIQUE AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN

BY JOHN BARTON

THE STRONG, SILENT TYPE

ONE NIGHT, in 1922, Chester Hogan, a rural Texas blacksmith, was arguing with his wife. Then he went into another room, pulled a .38 revolver from his bag, and shot himself. According to some accounts, his 9-year-old son, Ben, was in the room with him. What did Ben Hogan witness – did he see the suicide? What was the impact of the trauma? Of growing up without a father? Of knowing that the man who made him, whom he idolised, came to the irrevocable decision that life was not worth living?

Child victims of a parent's suicide often are susceptible to depression, social maladjustment and post-traumatic stress disorder. More pressing for the Hogans was the fact that they were plunged into poverty. Young Ben went to work. To help the family make ends meet, he sold newspapers. Then one day, at age 11, he hiked seven miles to Glen Garden Country Club after he'd heard you could make money carrying golfers' bags.

Golf adopted Hogan. His clubs became his hammer, the practice tee his anvil. He forged something beautiful. Ben Hogan became *Hogan*.

Hogan's story has a mythic quality. Not as naturally gifted as Sam Snead or Byron Nelson, Hogan rose to the top of the game through grit and sheer bloody-mindedness. For years, he fought a round-wrecking hook that he described as being like "a rattlesnake in your pocket." He didn't win a tournament until he was 27. With his career interrupted by World War Two – Hogan served in the Army Air Forces – he didn't win his first major championship until he was 34. Three years later, a head-on collision with a Greyhound bus nearly killed him. With his legs shattered,

doctors wondered if he'd ever walk again; the next year, Hogan won the US Open.

In 1953, Hogan won the Masters by five strokes and the US Open by six. Then he made his only appearance in the Open Championship, at Carnoustie, where he silently dissected one of the game's most brutal, unforgiving links, improving his score each day to win by four strokes. It was both the pinnacle and exclamation mark of an extraordinary career. Wracked with pain, Hogan entered just six tournaments that year. He won five of

them. He returned from Carnoustie to a ticker-tape parade on Broadway. After that he retreated to Texas and largely stayed there. The limelight always had made him squint.

For many, *Hogan* is an icon of what it means to be a golfer and a man. Clean-shaven, immaculately dressed, scrupulously honest. Modest. Hard-working. Disciplined. Stoical. A lone wolf, battling nature and the elements, internal ones as well as external.

Golf prides itself on its life lessons. The game comes with a set of rules, a tribe



"BEN WAS A GREAT MYSTERY TO A LOT OF PEOPLE, MAYBE EVEN TO HIMSELF." —BYRON NELSON.



“MANY MEN WHO HAVE DONE EVERYTHING THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO DO WIND UP ON THE THERAPIST’S COUCH IN MIDLIFE.”

and village elders. From role models like Hogan, boys can learn to be men (something many aren't learning at home: one in three American kids, like the teenage Hogan, don't live with their dad). They learn that the game is hard, and rewards are few. Good bounces can come disguised as bad bounces, and vice versa. Play the ball as it lies. No one saw you inadvertently break a rule? Call a penalty on yourself. Take dead aim. Don't complain; don't explain. Got a problem? Fix it. “Dig it out of the dirt.”

Yet Hogan was famously taciturn and cold. He eschewed small talk or, more accurately, talk. He hated giving interviews. He could stop a young autograph hunter in his tracks with an icy stare. As a kid, Hogan hovered like a disapproving *eminent grise* over my fledgling attempts to become a grown-up. He seemed like every hard-ass teacher I'd ever had at school, every disapproving ex-military British golf-club secretary who ever upbraided me and my friends for some absurdly petty transgression, every unnamed Victorian ancestor who peered unsmilingly out from old photograph albums. I read in one of Jack Nicklaus' autobiographies that he liked Hogan because he wasn't effusive, and in Nicklaus' view, effusiveness was bad. My ensuing monosyllabic attempt to be uneffusive was short-lived.

Childless by choice, Hogan supposedly built a house with only one bedroom to foreclose any possibility of overnight visitors. (Even if

this story is apocryphal, it's revealing that it's so often told.) He famously failed to notice when his playing partner Claude Harmon aced the 12th at the Masters one year. As they walked off the green, Hogan said, “You know, that's the first time I ever birdied that hole, Claude.” Was he dissociated – or just rude?

In a 2015 interview, Arnold Palmer recalled Hogan's lifelong frostiness, never once addressing Palmer by name. “It did bother me,” he said. “And I wasn't ever quite sure why he didn't. But 'til the day he passed, I never remember him calling my name.”

“Ben was a great mystery to a lot of people, maybe even to himself,” Byron Nelson told Hogan biographer James Dodson. “For some reason, I don't know why, he wanted it that way. He wouldn't let people in.”

The Austrian psychoanalyst Alfred Adler argued that men often overcompensate for their fear of vulnerability with a lurch towards stereotypical male aggression and competition. What fellow analyst Carl Jung called the anima, the feminine, is denied; the animus is embraced. (To be whole, Jung said, both must be integrated.) The boy-man is pure animus – animosity – shorn of anything that might be considered anima – the animating effects of emotion, creativity, compassion, collaboration.

Adler called this the “masculine protest” and regarded it as an evil force in history, underlying, for instance, the rise in fascism in the 20th century. To be taken seriously as a leader one must appear



AFTER WINNING THE 1953 MASTERS, US OPEN AND OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP (AT CARNOUSTIE, LEFT), HOGAN RECEIVED A TICKER-TAPE PARADE IN NEW YORK CITY.

devoutly unempathetic, unfeeling, uncompromising, unflinching. When men get together – in locker rooms, strip clubs, prison movies – often a kind of competitive manliness ensues. The buddies trip degenerates into a PG-version of “Fight Club.” The most macho are the most afraid.

One year, when the Open was at Royal Lytham, I went with some other male sportswriters to the nearby seaside resort town of Blackpool, home to the biggest roller coaster in the United Kingdom. We queued, paid our money and were subsequently lurched, plunged and whizzed around the terrifying track. “That was awful,” one of us said as we disembarked, jelly-legged. “I know,” said another. We realised that none of us had wanted to go on the infernal coaster, but no one had wanted to be the first to

bail. No one was man enough to say no.

Hogan's masculine protest was a silent howl. His detachment and withdrawal are understandable. Less understandable is how these qualities have become a desirable part of the blueprint of manhood. Men are three times more likely than women to have an addiction and take their own life, and their average lifespan is five years shorter than that of women.

Golf's lessons are mostly good ones. But it can also teach boys a certain kind of boring, conservative conformity based on restraint, intolerance of difference, reserve in personal relations. Golfers are lone rangers in matching khaki pants.

We tell our sons to man up. There's no crying in baseball, or anywhere else. Boys are raised to feel nothing (except anger, which is manly); to say little; to be expendable cogs in a loveless machine. We create numb, inarticulate loners: John Wayne, Charles Bronson, Clint Eastwood. Travis Bickle, Timothy McVeigh, Ted Kaczynski. The guy who works in IT. We create absent fathers. We ride off into the sunset.

Many men who have done everything they were supposed to do wind up on the therapist's couch in midlife because they feel like dead men walking. Success stories on paper, in person they are ghosts. Cupid's arrow passes right through.

It was the night before Valentine's Day that Chester Hogan took his own life. He shot himself in the heart. **G**

JOHN BARTON is a London-based counsellor and psychotherapist. He spent many years as an editor for *Golf Digest*.

THE OPEN HAS A HISTORY OF STREAKERS. MARK ROBERTS IS LEGENDARY FOR IT

WITH ALAN PITTMAN

MAN ON THE RUN

MARK ROBERTS, a house painter in Liverpool, England, is the father of three children and a grandfather to three more. By all accounts, a normal guy – except that he loves taking his clothes off at sporting events to make people laugh. In 25 years, Roberts has streaked 563 times in 23 countries, including three Open Championships and three Ryder Cups. After John Daly putted out to win the 1995 Open at St Andrews, Roberts flashed across the 18th green bare-ass naked with a plastic set of clubs slung over his shoulder and “19th hole” written on his back with an arrow pointing to his crack. (A good streaker knows the importance of clever signage.) At 53, Roberts has no plans to retire. Here he answers our questions on the art of streaking.

FANS LOVE A STREAKER, BUT WHAT ABOUT SECURITY? The police have treated me pretty well over the years. Most of the time they’re laughing their heads off as they chase me.

•••
DO YOU USUALLY GO TO JAIL? If they want to charge me, they’ll keep me for a few hours and then release me with a court date. But half the time they only hold me until the sporting event is over.

•••
TELL ME A HORROR STORY. The worst I’ve been treated was at a dog show in England. I jumped onto the stage with a cat mask covering me privates to wind up the dogs. Security took me to a room and beat me up for 15 minutes until the police arrived. I collapsed in pain. I mean, it was crazy. It’s just a freakin’ dog show

WHAT IS THE FIRST RULE OF STREAKER ETIQUETTE? Don’t interrupt play. You don’t want

to put a player off or change the course of a game. The purpose of streaking is to provide the thousands of people there a moment of comedy.

•••
ANY TIPS FOR THE ASPIRING STREAKER? Be prepared to get arrested, and know the repercussions. I’ve met a lot of people who’ve streaked for a one-minute, once-in-a-lifetime bit of fun and have no regrets. But I also know a guy who streaked in front of the Queen’s car during a parade. He got taken down hard by Special Branch, lost his job and got a huge fine. It’s always got to be in good fun. That’s the art of streaking.

•••
HOW IMPORTANT IS A GOOD LAWYER? Very. I’ve had the same lawyer for about 20 years, and he loves it. Every time I’m thinking about calling it quits, he says, “Mark, you’re not going to retire, are you?” We have so much fun in court – his creative legal arguments, the deadpan way he delivers our case to the judge – the entire courtroom is always in laughter.

•••
WHAT’S THE MOST YOU’VE BEEN FINED? I got \$1 000 for streaking at Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston and was happy to pay it. The prosecution tried to give me six months in a Texas jail. *Wow*. Thankfully, I only got fined.

•••
AT THE 2006 RYDER CUP AT THE K CLUB, YOU STREAKED BEFORE PLAY HAD FINISHED. WHAT HAPPENED? I could only see half the 18th green from where I was. Someone said it was over, so I went, but the American (JJ Henry) is lining up his putt. I’m

stark naked with “hole in one” written on me back with a ball wedged between me ass cheeks. It was so quiet. I looked around, and thought, *Oh, man, I’m so sorry*. I walked back towards the crowd and two guards came at me, and I thought, *The hell with this*, so I ran across the green and did a flying belly flop into the lake.

•••
SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU WERE THE CLASS CLOWN. Yes, the class idiot, the one who tried to make people laugh. The headmaster was always getting his cane. I’ve got fired from jobs and thrown out of college for joking around too much. It’s just part of my character.

•••
HOW DID YOU GET STARTED? I was at the Rugby Sevens in Hong Kong. I did it on a dare. Two of the biggest teams in rugby are playing. I run on the field, pick up the ball and go the length of the field. I look back, and 65 000 people are standing and screaming their heads off. I run all the way back to where I was sitting. Girls are kissing me. Guys are pouring beer over me head. The police come to escort me out, and the whole stadium chants: “Leave him alone!” I found in that moment that I could make thousands of people laugh for just doing something silly and a courage within I didn’t know I had.

•••
WHAT DOES YOUR FAMILY THINK OF YOUR HOBBY? They support me. I have so much fantastic love for my children. There’s nothing negative about what I do. It’s been a crazy ride. I’m just enjoying life.



IMAGES FROM GARY'S CARNOUSTIE TRIUMPH IN 1968

BLACK KNIGHT'S YEAR

50 years ago Gary Player won the Open at Carnoustie, overcoming the twin challenge of what was then the longest major championship course, and going head-to-head with his great rival Jack Nicklaus in the final round. At the age of 32 it was the fifth of his nine major titles.

Victory in a closely contested final round was clinched by one of the great 3-wood shots in Open history, boldly struck into the wind at the par-5 14th where he had to carry the treacherous pair of bunkers known as the "Spectacles" fronting the green. The ball rolled up close to the hole for a tap-in eagle three.

Player, who competed in 46 Opens between 1956 and 2001, winning three times (nine other top-10s), will be honoured for his significant milestone by The R&A and other golfing bodies during the week of this year's championship.

The black-and-white photos of Player at Carnoustie, from the archives of the Gary Player Group, typify the image many



GARY PLAYER SHARES THE CLARET JUG WITH THE GALLERY (TOP), WITH CADDIE ALFIE FYLES (BOTTOM), AND HOLING OUT ON THE 18TH GREEN (OPPOSITE PAGE).





remember of him, the Black Knight in his all black outfit, with white shoes and a flat tweed cap identical to that worn by Ben Hogan when he won at Carnoustie in 1953. Note the lack of grandstands around the 18th green as Player concentrates over his final putt. This was an era before the “modern” Open began to evolve into the great global championship it is today.

Player's caddie at Carnoustie was one of the best in the business, the Englishman Alfie Fyles, who grew up in a Southport, Lancashire family where caddying was their life. His brother Albert won an Open with Tom Weiskopf.

Player moved on to using the American Rabbit Dyer in the 1970s, and when the Open returned to Carnoustie in 1975 Fyles was recommended by IMG to one of their promising young players, Tom Watson. Watson took him on and Fyles claimed another Open success. Without Fyles at Royal Birkdale in 1976, Watson missed the 54-hole cut. They were reunited at Turnberry in 1977, where Watson won his epic Duel in the Sun against Nicklaus. They were also together for Watson's three other victories, at Muirfield (1980), Royal Troon (1982) and Birkdale (1983).

97TH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP CARNOUSTIE, JULY 10-13, 1968

LEADERBOARD

Gary Player	74-71-71-73	289
Bob Charles	72-72-71-76	291
Jack Nicklaus	76-69-73-73	291
Billy Casper	72-68-74-78	292
Maurice Bembridge	71-75-73-74	293

HIGHEST WINNING TOTALS IN OPEN SINCE WORLD WAR TWO

293	Fred Daly	Hoylake	1947
290	Sam Snead	St Andrews	1946
290	Paul Lawrie	Carnoustie	1999
289	Gary Player	Carnoustie	1968
287	Bobby Locke	Royal Lytham	1952

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MOST KIDS I KNOW love hitting bunker shots. They think there's something really cool about making this big swing, splashing the sand everywhere, and getting the ball to magically float onto the green.

When adults step into a bunker, I don't see the same joy. I do see tension, fear and anxiousness – but it doesn't have to be that way. You can make bunker play fun again if you follow the technique of a player I coach, PGA Tour pro J.B. Holmes. Like a lot of the game's best players, J.B. has zero fear of bunker shots. He knows it's actually one of the easiest shots in golf if you remember these steps.

—WITH RON KASPRISKE

1 Evaluate the lie. Is the sand firm or soft? Is the ball sitting up or slightly buried? If it's sitting up and the sand is soft, skip to step No. 2. If it's firm sand and/or the ball is sitting down, address it with the clubface of your wedge square to the target. This will help you dig into the firm sand a little, so the leading edge doesn't skip off the surface and blade the ball into the lip of the bunker.

2 For decent lies, address the ball with the face open (think more skyward). This allows the club to glide through the sand under the ball. You want 60 percent of your weight supported by your lead foot with your sternum aligned with the ball. Also, check your shoulders. If your lead shoulder is too high, you risk poor contact. You should be able to touch your left knee with your left hand.

3 As you take the club back, keep the majority of your weight on your front foot, and leave the clubface open by letting your lead wrist cup a little. As you swing to the top, keep your left shoulder at the height it was at address. Don't let it rise.

4 The downswing is simple. Your goal is to make sure the clubhead is moving faster than the handle. J.B. focuses on that. If the handle is moving faster, you'll dig too deeply into the sand or shift to your back foot to try to avoid digging. Either way, you probably won't like the outcome. Instead, keep your weight forward, left shoulder down, head stationary, and let the clubhead pass the hands as it enters the sand about an inch or two behind the ball. Then smile at the result.

MATT KILLEN, a *Golf Digest* Best Young Teacher, works with Holmes, Justin Thomas, Bud Cauley and Blayne Barber on the PGA Tour.

HAVE

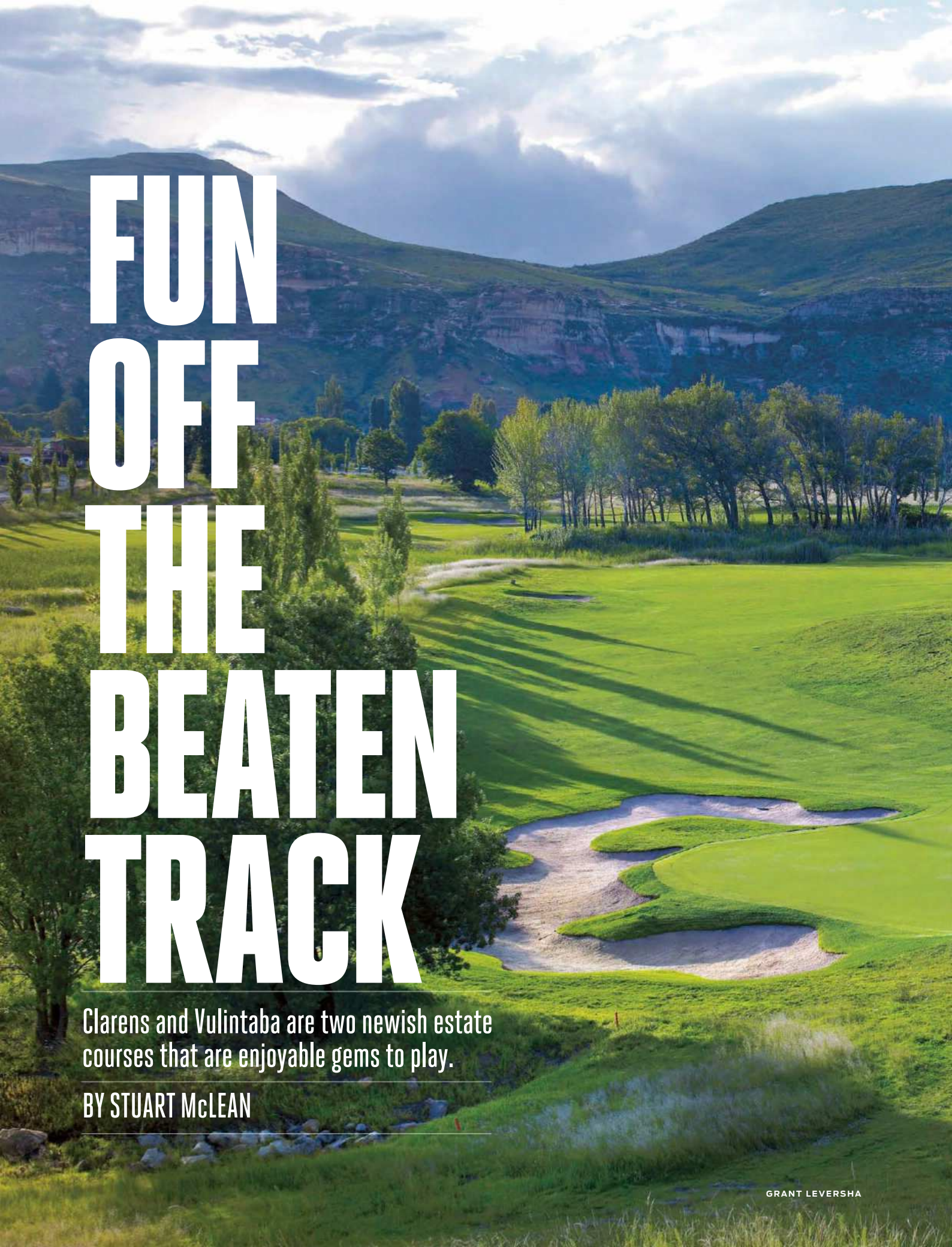
MAKE BUNKER SHOTS

ABLAST

F U N A G A I N

B Y M A T T K I L L E N





FUN OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Clarens and Vulintaba are two newish estate courses that are enjoyable gems to play.

BY STUART McLEAN



Clarens is a Golf Data design, opened in 2008, with several interesting holes, such as the par-4 16th.

Vulintaba lies in the folds of the Drakensberg near Newcastle. This is the par-5 third hole.



They are two of the more remote golf estates in South Africa, and two of the newest. Vulintaba and Clarens are also home to two of the most enjoyable courses to play, both providing fun experiences for golfers seeking a different kind of getaway. Even though they have been around for almost 10 years, they could still be described as genuinely undiscovered gems that haven't yet come to the attention of travelling golfers. Neither of them have found a place in the Golf Digest Top 100, but have the potential to be included in the future. ▶ Clarens in the scenic Eastern Free State is a well-known arty destination for weekend breaks and weddings, about 3½ hours drive from Gauteng, where visitors usually outnumber the locals at busy times of the year – it has a sizeable Protea hotel near the main square to go with all the guest houses. Not many of those visitors come for golf, though, which is a shame considering the town has a modern 18-hole course within walking distance of all the other activities. While Clarens can be extremely busy, and where you can spend a week trying out all the coffee shops and restaurants, Vulintaba is where you go to escape the crowds. ▶

If you had a helicopter, Vulintaba Country Estate is relatively close to Clarens, but the topography of the area doesn't allow for short cuts by car. It took me more than three hours by various national roads to reach this isolated country estate in the Drakensberg, taking a convoluted route through the Free State towards the town of Newcastle in Northern KZN. There is a more direct route across a rugged mountain pass from Harrismith, but my rental car wasn't going to survive that.

Once in Newcastle, Vulintaba is a further 20 kilometres along a lonely tar road, venturing into the foothills of the Berg, and the estate has a

69-room hotel which makes it a perfect overnight stay, being pretty much the midway point between Gauteng and Durban. From my hotel room you couldn't find a more beautiful outlook, as the estate lies in a magnificent amphitheatre.

Vulintaba has only 9 holes, yet clever use of alternate tees makes playing 18 a must. The course plays differently on each loop.

The first thing I noticed outside the pro shop at Vulintaba were all the bicycle racks. My contact person was Francois Wessels, who is not the golf director or golf manager, but rather the estate's Activities Manager.

"Golf is just one of the activities

we have available for guests at Vulintaba," he says. "With our enormous property we have some fantastic trails for mountain bikers and hikers, and also 4x4 enthusiasts. We are staging cycle events, most recently the Vulintaba Extreme, which has mountain biking the one day, and a road race the next."

This was not my first visit to the estate. I had been present at the launch of the course in 2009, only then it had been called Dunblane. A Peter Matkovich design, he had only built 9 holes, but the expectation was that it would be increased to 18. There was certainly plenty of space for another 9.



The par-4 ninth hole at Clarens.



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However, a change of estate ownership to the Newcastle-based Ni-Da Group saw the 18-hole scenario scrapped, as well as a change of name. The late Douw van der Merwe of DDV Design was brought in to alter some of the holes and build alternate tees. The Matkovich course had concluded with a par 4 and par 3, and Van der Merwe turned that stretch into a 550-metre par 5 closing hole. A new par 3 was built as the sixth hole. The changes are good ones, and the alternate tees are adventurously situated on the fourth and seventh, providing two short par 4s to go alongside two long ones.

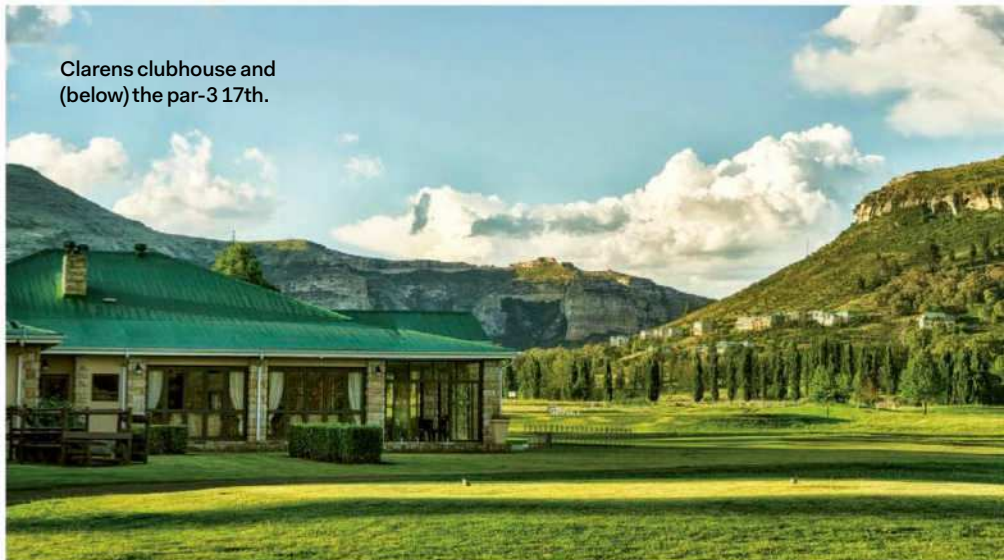
From the back tees Vulintaba plays 6 629 metres, with a rating of 74, so this is a big track. My overlasting impression, though, was of a wonderful course in a fabulous setting – there's no housing or a single tree on it, so the terrain is strikingly pristine. It reminded me of the prairie grass setting of the acclaimed Sand Hills course in Nebraska designed by Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore, and it's a unique look for South Africa. When the wind is blowing the grass it takes on a links-style appearance.

The holes are uniformly excellent, varied and challenging, none more so than the uphill par-5 third to the highest point of the layout. That climb does set you up, though, for a thrilling tee shot from an elevated tee at the magnificent

'Quirky but fun'

The golf course at The Clarens does have a good many more elevated tee shots than Vulintaba, which is not surprising considering the hilly terrain of the town. Overlooked by the distinctive peak of Mount Horeb, the views at every turn are equally magnificent.

I was there at the invitation of the club's young greenkeeper, Dylan Botha, who believes the course needs to become better known. I wholeheartedly agree. Clarens should be doing a lot



Clarens clubhouse and (below) the par-3 17th.



more rounds by now.

We played the hilly front nine together, before handing me over to the club's leading lady golfer Janice Brownlee for the second nine as he had to dash off on another engagement. Weekends are a busy time for Clarens residents, and club members play their competitions in midweek. Janice came to Clarens 25 years ago to run the Maluti Mountain Lodge, and is one of the stalwarts of the area, the unofficial "mayoress" of the town according to Dylan. Her Highlander restaurant is a popular venue which I recommend.

Clarens used to have a basic 9-hole layout similar to other Eastern Free State towns, until Pinnacle Point Holdings saw the potential of developing a golf estate using part

of the existing course, and had Golf Data design and build a low-budget 18-holer in 2008. Sean Quinn, who is now working for Nicklaus Design in the Far East, came up with what he calls a "quirky but fun" design. The quirkiness is what's most appealing about the course, which measures just 5 991 metres from the tips, and for me played shorter than that due to the firmness of the fairways at the end of summer.

The Clarens Golf & Leisure Estate took off painfully slowly because of the economy at the time of its launch, a sorry time for new golf estates, and for six years there was no development as sales dried up. The course was kept going with a skeleton staff. Investec eventually found a buyer for Clarens, and in the last few years the market has

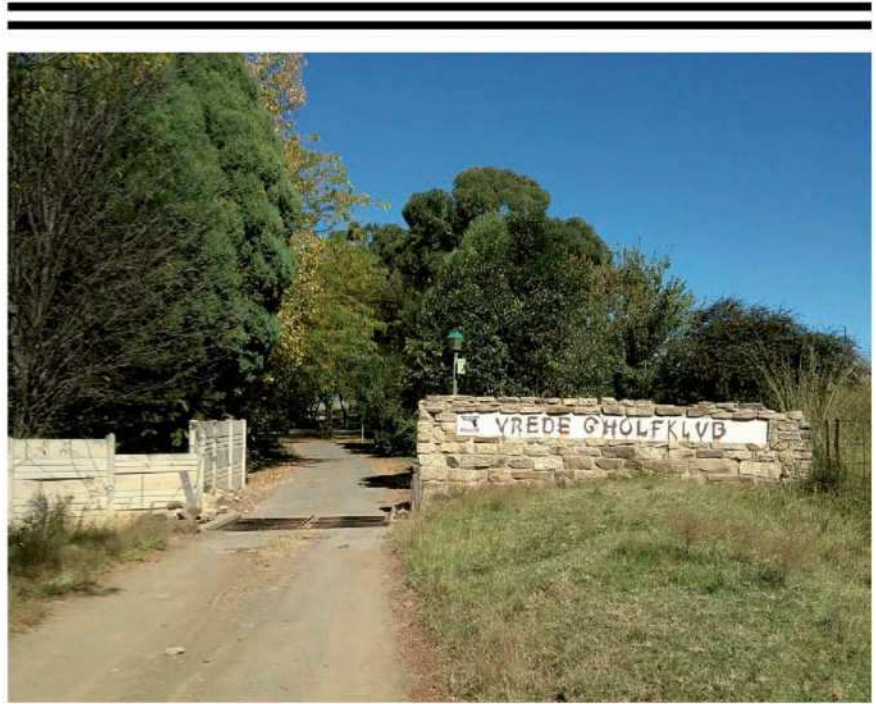
turned favourably, to the extent where there are now 90 houses on the estate.

Clarens, too, like Vulintaba, is very much a summer golfing venue. The courses are then at their best, before the winter frosts strike. Winter days can be beautiful, but temperatures do plummet in this part of the country.

The course at Clarens begins with four short par 4s, although the nature of the land as you venture on to a ridge above the clubhouse means they each play differently. Small shapely greens have to be treated with respect. Missing those at the uphill third and then the fourth across a ravine can lead to trouble. There was a wonderful drive to be played on the par-5 eighth over the top of a tall stand of gum trees.

The two nines at Clarens, or rather the loop of 11 holes closer to the attractive green-roofed clubhouse, and the seven holes over the Golden Gate road within the golf estate itself, are quite contrasting. The best holes are on the back nine, from the fearsome No 11 to No 17, and they also happen to be tighter and tougher. The 17th is a memorable par 3 played from a high tee built on a rocky koppie.

The golf course is closed on a Monday, and the clubhouse is separate from the golf estate, on the Fouriesburg road, so you avoid going through estate security to get to it.



UNEXPECTED STOP AT VREDE

Clarens was my first port of call, and my route to Vulintaba took me in a northerly direction to Bethlehem, Warden and Vrede, where the road moved south-east to Memel and Newcastle. The town of Vrede is bypassed by the main R34, but out of the corner of my eye I spotted what looked to be a golf course in the vast expanse of veld around me. It seemed unlikely, but on investigating I discovered a remarkable old golf club which dates back to 1928. I learned that by locating a sizeable clubhouse with a resident manager who offered me a drink. It was a pleasant place to pause for a while, and take in the scenery of a treed and undulating 9-hole layout. The clubhouse stands on a high bluff above the closing hole, with views towards a large resort dam in the distance. - **STUART McLEAN**



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Terms and Conditions: The winner will be randomly selected via electronic draw. The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Prizes are not transferable and may not be converted into cash. Entrants must have a South African residential address. Entry into this competition constitutes acceptance of the rules. Employees of New Media Publishing, sponsors, media partners and their immediate families and advertising agencies may not enter. Winners will be notified by the sponsor via telephone or email and will forfeit prize if unreachable. Names of confirmed winners will appear on facebook.com/GolfDigestSA. The competition closes on 23 July 2018. No late entries will be accepted. By entering this competition, the winner indemnifies the organisers and all parties involved in this competition against all claims that may arise from the utilisation of the prize. By entering the competition you agree to receive further communication and direct marketing material from the sponsor/New Media Publishing. Each entry is entitled to win only one prize in a period of three calendar months. SMSs are charged at R1.50 per SMS across all networks. The lucky winner can invite three other golfers to make up a fourball staying 4 nights at Pezula Golf Villas (self-catering). Prize excludes transport costs & travel to various destinations.



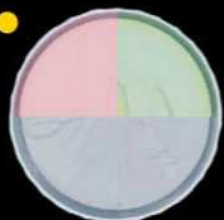
HOT LIST: GOLF BALLS

An expanding universe of possibilities

When we asked golfers to evaluate golf balls for this year's Hot List our overarching guidance was: "Rate these balls based on how much you would want to play them compared to your current ball." Turns out they found an expanding universe of golf balls highly acceptable for full shots, and many that felt soft on full and partial swings. But as we got closer to the green, certain balls separated themselves with higher spin on chips and pitches. In most cases these balls had a urethane cover (see page 73) and tended to be more expensive. Does that mean you have to make compromises with less-expensive models? Probably, but depending on your skill level, those compromises might not matter as much. (For example, a more expensive ball that spins a lot on chips might not be the wisest choice if you're losing a sleeve or two a round.) So decide which part of your game – full shots, short game, feel, price – is most important in terms of what you're looking for in a golf ball. Then review the 24 entries on this year's Hot List. The results might open your mind to a new world.

Balls with urethane covers spin a lot more on short shots.

► R50 AND OVER ► R35 TO R50 ► UNDER R35

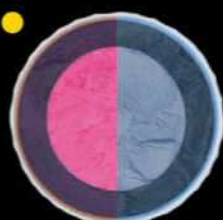


BRIDGESTONE TOUR B X/XS/RX/RXS

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★

FEEL ★★★★★½

R50 The only tour ball with four options is divided two ways: Better players should stick with the firmer, lower-driver-spin X or softer-feeling XS. All others who struggle with mis-hits should choose between the RX (less driver side-spin) or the RXS, the softest of all four.



CALLAWAY CHROME SOFT/X

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★½

FEEL ★★★★★

R50 What can microscopic and super-strong graphene do to improve a golf ball? Callaway uses it to strengthen a thin outer core that boosts distance and short-game spin. That leaves room for a large, soft core that reduces driver spin. The X is firmer for faster swingers.

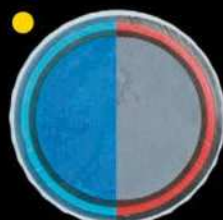


SRIXON Z-STAR/XV

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★½

FEEL ★★★★★

R50 These tour balls focus on distance with the longer clubs. The Z-Star's soft, single core spins less on tee shots, and the XV's harder outer core has more velocity for golfers with fast swing speeds. A special cover coating enhances friction on shorter shots.



TAYLORMADE TP5/TP5X

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★½

FEEL ★★★½

R60 These five-layer balls get their greenside control from a soft urethane cover, but it's the inner layers that are the most intriguing. The firm mantles surrounding the core help produce higher flight and lower spin on shots hit with long and middle irons for optimal distance.

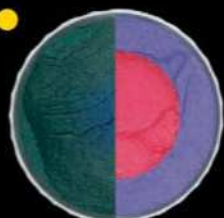


TITLEIST AVX

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★½
INNOVATION ★★★★★

FEEL ★★★½

R65 This three-piece design has the lowest compression for a Titleist multilayer, tour-calibre ball. It has soft feel and high-energy for distance off the driver, long and middle irons. There's also a new urethane cover material for long and middle irons that also comes in yellow.

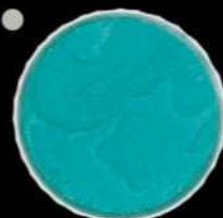


TITLEIST PRO V1/X

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★½

FEEL ★★★★★

R65 These flagship tour favourites were slightly redesigned last year. The Pro V1's traditional softer-feeling core has been reformulated to boost distance, and the Pro V1x's dimple pattern has been reworked for higher and more consistent downrange flight.



VOLVIK VIVID SOFT

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★

FEEL ★★★★★

R58 Known for its colour options, Volvik expands its line of urethane-covered balls to include a matte-finish in yellow, pink, green and white. Beyond the aesthetics, this model is for golfers with slow-to-average swing speeds looking for higher flight and greenside control.



WILSON STAFF FG TOUR

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★

FEEL ★★★★★

R50 Wilson has developed a reputation for soft-compression golf balls for slower swingers, but this model has a construction meant for golfers with fast swing speeds. The two firm, resilient mantles help boost distance off the driver, and the urethane cover offers short-shot spin.



BRIDGESTONE E6 SOFT

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★½
INNOVATION ★★★★★½

FEEL ★★★★★½

R35 Traditionally, distance balls meant sacrificing feel. But this perennial three-piece favourite lets a firmer outside work with a low-compression inside. The result is what average golfers need: high launch, soft feel, less spin for distance and less dispersion on all shots.



WILSON STAFF DUO URETHANE

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★½
INNOVATION ★★★★★½

FEEL ★★★★★

R35 The ultra-soft compression rating (55) might make some two-piece balls jealous, but Wilson didn't stop there. To ensure golfers don't suffer off the tee, there's a resilient mantle to boost distance. Finally, a urethane cover provides short-game spin, durability and optimal feel.

BALLS LISTED ALPHABETICALLY IN PRICE CATEGORIES ● GOLD ● SILVER



SRIXON AD333 TOUR

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R35 Its soft core is designed to provide golfers with average swing speeds more control because the ball is easier to compress for less spin on full shots. The soft urethane cover features a new version of Srixon's high-friction coating for maximum spin on the shortest shots.



TAYLORMADE PROJECT (A)

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL ***** ½

R40 The update to this average-golfer-friendly, urethane-cover ball includes ideas taken from the company's tour-played TP5. This includes a firm mantle layer for more energy transfer and better greenside spin, and the same dimple pattern to power a higher flight.



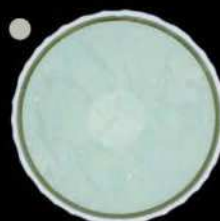
TITLEIST TOUR SOFT

PERFORMANCE ***** ½

INNOVATION *****

FEEL ***** ½

R45 The extra-large core for this two-piece model fuels distance on all shots, but it does so with low compression for less spin, higher flight and soft feel. That large core means the ionomer cover is unusually thin to provide shot-stopping control on full wedge shots.



CALLAWAY SUPERHOT

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL ***** ½

R35 If you think the Superhot's 15-ball pack and multiple colours scream distance, you'd be right. The three-piece ball's core and mantle layer provide the energy, and the hexagonal dimples enhance the aerodynamics. All that said, the soft cover helps with spin and feel.



SRIXON SOFT FEEL

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R25 The core is soft but resilient. A thin cover adds feel.



TITLEIST VELOCITY

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R35 The update to this popular distance-focused two-piece design features a lower-compression core for a softer feel and a firmer cover for more initial speed and higher flight on full shots. Colour options include pink, orange and two kinds of white.



VOLVIK VIVID LITE

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R46 The latest in Volvik's colour-filled lineup of matte-finished balls features a dual core interior. The firmer centre and softer outer core work together to increase energy transfer (more distance) for middle- to high-handicap players while providing a soft feel.



WILSON STAFF DUO SOFT SPIN

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION ***** ½

FEEL *****

R30 This softer-feeling distance ball uses an ultra-low compression core. How low? It's so soft it measures as a negative number. That leads to low spin off the driver for a straighter flight. Meanwhile, the soft mantle and firm cover help short-iron shots spin more.



CALLAWAY SUPERSOFT

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R28 It features Callaway's lowest compression to reduce spin.



SRIXON AD333

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL ***** ½

R28 A cover coating adds friction for more spin on wedge shots.

ABOUT URETHANE

► A multilayer golf ball with a urethane cover can provide a distinct advantage. That's why it's the only kind of ball tour players use. In our Hot List player testing, evaluation scores were universally higher for balls with urethane covers than balls with non-urethane (ionomer) covers. Balls with urethane covers spun more on short shots. We tested 54 balls with good players hitting 50-metre shots

and had a GCQuad launch monitor to measure the results. In some cases, balls with urethane covers spun as much as 69 percent more. On average, the difference was more than 1 000 revolutions per minute. That means more stopping power on chips and pitches. Some balls with ionomer covers reached urethane-cover spin, but they weren't as consistent. But playing short



shots with maximum spin might not be that important to you. According to a Golf Datatech survey, only 7 percent of golfers said spin was a priority. Then again, you might not know what you're missing.



WILSON STAFF DUO SOFT

PERFORMANCE ***** ½

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R25 The soft core and mid-firm cover offer distance and low spin.



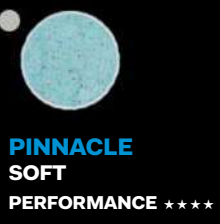
TAYLORMADE PROJECT (S)

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION ***** ½

FEEL ***** ½

R25 A soft, flexible mantle layer keys distance and better feel.



PINNACLE SOFT

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL *****

R20 How soft? It's the lowest-compression Pinnacle core ever.



TITLEIST DT TRUSOFT

PERFORMANCE *****

INNOVATION *****

FEEL ***** ½

R30 The large core and flexible cover optimise spin on all shots.



▶ You want the best things in golf; we want the best things in golf. Here you'll find the best of the best of the Golf Digest Editors' Choice Awards. ▶ We all love gear, and this year's winners offer everything from bags and training aids to the latest technology in swing and game analysers. ▶ We've also got you covered on health and fitness, and beyond that, apps, drones and even "recovery sleepwear," which is now a thing. ▶ Online, there's plenty more: a total of 297 winners in 42 categories, including resorts, teaching academies, club shippers, cruises and fashion, plus food and drink to get you through your round. We'll even teach you the keys to a good golf cigar. Get it all by visiting golfdigest.com/best-in-golf.

CLUB TRANSPORT

▶ Second only to the regular tee time, the golf cart is probably the most reliable part of the game. But transporting your clubs is far more than a choice between electric or petrol. Those wishing to ride want goodies such as USB ports to power up their phones, quality speakers to play music, and GPS systems to

help with distances. This is in addition to standard-issue elements that make up a good golf cart, namely a suspension system that doesn't make you feel like you're riding over moguls, a steering wheel you don't have to wrestle, and comfy seats. We also want well-positioned holders for divot mix and a windshield that's easy to put up or take down. For petrol carts, a quiet ride with no noisy, smelly

backfires is a must. Our choices in Club Transport check all those boxes and a few others.

- ▶ **electric carts**
Club Car Tempo Connect with Shark Experience
- ▶ **petrol carts**
Yamaha Drive2 QuieTech EFI
- ▶ **luxury carts**
Streetrod Vintage/Lux
- ▶ **alternative**
Phat Scooter Phatty HD/
Sport HD



OUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE GOLF LIFESTYLE



► Here's an alternative: Streetrod's LUX model is fully customisable.



► Galvin Green's Alon jacket is soft – no more swishing sounds during your swing.

RAINGEAR

► Galvin Green reigns in raingear. Each design is intelligently crafted to ensure the technology doesn't add weight, hinder the swing or create further discomfort. Typically this category offers a heavy-duty and a lightweight option, but this year the Galvin Green Alon jacket offered the ultimate combination of rain coverage and wearability. The shell of the Alon jacket is tightly knit so it's softer and quieter. Underneath, the Gore-Tex membrane provides total waterproofing and wind protection. The C-Knit backer inside, a new Gore-Tex technology, makes it lightweight and breathable while minimizing friction. The Axel pant uses the same Gore-Tex fabric with C-Knit backer, so they'll slide over garments with ease. They're designed to release excess heat and moisture from the inside

while blocking any additional water from the outside. These pieces are made to last, so don't let the prices scare you off.

► **full-zip jacket** Galvin Green Alon (Gore-Tex C-Knit)

► **pant** Galvin Green Axel (Gore-Tex C-Knit)

EYEWEAR

► Not just any pair of golf eyewear will suffice. Most quality shades have the standard UVA/UVB protection, comfortable face grips and a stylish design, but they lack golf-specific lens colour and shape. Brown- or amber-tinted lenses offer better visual acuity on the course, and longer, frameless styles provide uninhibited views as you swing. Oakley's Prizm lens technology remains the best in golf. The newest iteration, Prizm Dark, is optimised



for especially sunny days. The light filtering is more precise for stronger visual contrast. Newcomer Electric knows how to make a stylish pair of sunglasses that will stand the test of the sunniest rounds. The Knoxville Pro frame is made with Grilamid, a material known for its extremely high bending strength. It adds durability without any extra weight. They're anti-slip, comfortable and frameless for a barely-there feel. The OHM grey lens' focus is superior clarity and depth, but they're also great for daily use.

► **golf performance**

Oakley Prizm Dark (Targetline Frame)

► **sport/casual**

Electric Knoxville Pro (Matte Black with OHM Grey Lens)

BAGS

► Golf bags used to be so easy to understand – it was a cart or carry bag, and that was pretty much it. Today, there are a number of sub-categories designed to address the needs of pretty much any golfer. One thing our 13 Editors' Choice bags (spread over six categories)

have in common, however, is practicality for the segment of golfer they were intended for. A new category this year: **Waterproof.**

► **lightweight/ultra-lightweight** Callaway Hyper-Lite Zero (2018)
Sun Mountain 2.5+

► **carry**

Ogio Cirrus (2018)
Ping Hooper (2018)
Sun Mountain 4.5LS
Supercharged

► **cart** Sun Mountain C-130
Supercharged

► **hybrid**

Callaway Fusion 14
Datrek Go Lite

► **standless/sunday**

Jones Golf Utility Rover

► **waterproof**

Callaway Hyper Dry Cart
Ping Hooper Monsoon
Sun Mountain H2NO Lite
Titleist 4UP StaDry

PUSHCARTS

► If you're unfamiliar with the Big Max brand, it's likely because you didn't grow up playing golf in Europe. The Blade IP, its newest pushcart, features the fourth generation of Big Max's flatfold technology. Aptly named, because you'll see that these pushcarts really do fold down flat, to a slim 13 centimetres high. Sun Mountain's newest pushcart was built for ease of use – the opening and closing of just one latch is required to fold and unfold the Pathfinder 3. Bungee cords are positioned to secure your bag to the cart, and the supports that the bungees are attached to are adjustable so you can fit a wide range of different-size bags.

► Big Max Blade IP

► Sun Mountain Pathfinder 3



► Oakley's Prizm Dark filters light for stronger visual contrast.

RECOVERY SLEEPWEAR

► It's not news that sleep is a crucial part of any training regimen, but Under Armour is taking that idea a step further with a line of recovery sleepwear. The pyjamas have a special raised print inside that uses your natural body heat to essentially create a non-sweaty sauna overnight. Far Infrared heat is reflected off the pattern to relieve inflammation, ease pain and promote better sleep. Know that Patriots quarterback Tom Brady helped develop this line and swears by it. We'll admit it's pricey, but a single Infrared sauna session typically starts at around the same price, and these won't make you feel like you're drowning in sweat. The pieces are available in a henley, T-shirt, short and jogger.

► Under Armour Athlete Recovery Sleepwear

DRONES

► DJI is the dominant force in the drone market for a reason. Its birds are well-executed and user-friendly, and the Phantom 4 Pro is the latest and best iteration of the company's mainstream drone. It'll fly for a half-hour approaching 80kph, and you can send it more than six kilometres away. The 4k video it produces from the onboard camera looks like something you'd see in a documentary. The Spark is the Phantom's smaller cousin, just over one third the size. It'll fly for about 15 minutes to a range of about 1.6km and reaches 50kph with obstacle avoidance and automatic stabilisation for its 1080p video camera and a high-definition video link that lets you watch from your smartphone.

► enthusiast DJI Phantom 4 Pro
► hobbyist DJI Spark



► The DJI Phantom 4 Pro can approach 80 kilometres per hour.

TRAINING AIDS

► The Impact Snap gives feedback for good (and bad) swing motions and can make changes in three or four swings. The Orange Whip Wedge uses a super-flexible shaft and heavy head to encourage a better sequence of motion in the downswing. PuttOUT Golf's trainer is

a ramp that sits above the green. The ramp returns the ball the distance it would have gone past the hole, and it rewards a perfectly weighted putt by snaring the ball in a tiny depression midway up the ramp.

- Impact Snap
- Orange Whip Wedge
- PuttOUT

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED ON THE BEST THINGS IN GOLF, INCLUDING EQUIPMENT, TRAVEL, FITNESS, FASHION & MORE.

GAME ANALYSERS

► It's time to embrace real game analysis that used to be reserved for players on the PGA Tour. Coupled with scoring, GPS capabilities and gaming options, we suggest you add Arccos 360 or Game Golf Pro to your game. Both systems require you to put small sensors into the ends of your grips. What is setting this technology on a game-changing path is artificial-intelligence features like Arccos Caddie and the just-released Game Golf Smart Caddie. Using your historical playing data and an ever-expanding universe of other player and course statistics, your phone becomes the smartest caddie that has ever existed, giving you club selection and strategy guides for every hole. The sensors

in these devices continue to get smaller and lighter, and the need for carrying a phone in your pocket isn't even required for Game Golf Pro. Meanwhile, Arccos 360 uses a high-frequency transmission instead of Bluetooth to communicate with your phone, so your battery life will be better throughout the round. These systems automatically track each shot and keep your score, and the tens of thousands course databases give you distances from anywhere on the course. Both systems give you a score for each part of your game: driving, approach, short game and putting. These devices also give your teacher access to assess your progress and dial in your lessons.

► Arccos 360 with Arccos Caddie
► Game Golf Pro with Smart Caddie



► Arccos 360 with Arccos Caddie picks clubs and offers strategy tips.

► PuttOUT's ramp returns the ball the distance the putt would have gone past the hole.

HOME TRIUMPH FOR NORTH WEST AT COUNTRY DISTRICTS



North West team, back from left, Leon Bevan (manager), Christo Harms, RJ van Rensburg, Albert Britz, Aldre Terblance and Johan Krugel (captain). Front, Rigaardt Albertse, Oliver Goldhill, and Herman Anderson.

North West got their revenge on KwaZulu-Natal to win the SA Country Districts crown at home course Potchefstroom Country Club. North West edged the defending champions 7-5 on the final day to complete a 100 percent record, and make up for narrowly losing the Dewar Challenge Shield on a games countout last year at San Lameer.

North West have had six outstanding

years in the A section of the tournament, winning three times (2013 Upington, 2016 Nelspruit, 2018), all under the charge of manager Leon Bevan, and being runners-up the other three years. This year they beat Free State 7-5, Mpumalanga 7-5 and Limpopo 10-2, with Mpumalanga relegated to the B section.

Four of the NW players finished top of the MVP list, led by Herman Anderson with 7½ points out of eight,

Christo Harms (7), Johan Krugel and Oliver Goldhill (6). Anderson and Krugel each won all four of their singles. The other team members were Ray Janse van Rensburg, Rigaardt Albertse, Albert Britz and Aldre Terblanche.

Chris Thorpe and Thomas Lovett were the top performers for KZN with 6 points, while Graham Fabricius (5) won all four of his singles. KZN were runners-up with five points from Free State's 4.

Mpumalanga's team once again included the legendary Eddie Daniel, now 62 and a veteran of more than 30 Country Districts. He earned 4 points. Also playing was son Gary Daniel.

Northern Cape were the surprise winners of the B section, winning all four of their matches to gain promotion for the first time in their brief history as a separate union from Free State. For a union having just 1 800 golfers, they beat EP 9-3, Border 10-2, Southern Cape 7-5 and Boland 7½-4½ in their final day title clash.

Unbeaten foursomes partners Allan Toy (Sishen) and NJ van der Walt (Hartswater) led the MVP list with 7½ points, and their team-mates were Andries Kori (6), Nico Jacobs (5½), Geoffrey van der Merwe (5), Drikus Gous (4½), Basil Nortje and Deon Kruis (4).

JUNIORS DOMINATE ONCE AGAIN IN CHALLENGE CUP AT IRENE

GolfRSA Juniors retained the Challenge Cup at Irene CC, their fourth victory in six years. They won all five of their matches to finish four points clear of University Sport and the GolfRSA Presidents team. Three of the eight players were from Southern Cape, and three from Ekurhuleni, one each from North West and Central Gauteng.

Junior team members dominated the MVP list, with Martin Vorster winning all five of his singles and earning

9 out of 10 points overall, followed by Reece Haikney and Bradley de Beer with 8, Ben van Wyk 7½, Christiaan Burke and Casey Jarvis 7, Kian Rose 6½, and Yurav Premllal 6. Jarvis won all five of his singles.

Altin van der Merwe shone for USSA, Jordan Duminy for the Presidents team, Neswill Croy for Western Province B, Kelso Hannay for Gauteng North B, and Cole Stevens for Central Gauteng B.



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Gauteng North team members, from left, Lenanda van der Watt, Danielle du Toit and Larissa du Preez, with WGSA vice-president Sarah Braude.

DAISIES MAKE A SPLASH AT WATERKLOOF

There was a victory splash for Gauteng North teammates Danielle du Toit, Lenanda van der Watt and Larissa du Preez in the SA Women's Team Championship. The three held hands and jumped into the water hazard at Waterkloof's 18th to celebrate winning the title for the Daisies.

The three local Pretoria girls went wire-to-wire in the 72-hole championship, leading after each

round, to post a total of three-over 579 and triumph by seven shots from Ekurhuleni. Du Toit, from Pretoria CC, birdied the last hole to share individual honours on 291 with Serengeti's Caitlyn Macnab, a member of the Ekurhuleni team along with Casandra Hall (297) and Sarah Bouch (300).

"After the third round we made a pact to jump in the pond like the ANA Inspiration winner jumps into Poppy's Pond," said Du Toit, 19, ranked No 4 in South Africa. "It felt great to tap in the last putt for the win, but making that jump with Lenanda and Larissa was the best feeling ever.

I hope Waterkloof names that pond after the Daisies."

Du Preez, 22, had one of her best performances to finish third individual on 295, and Akasia clubmate Van der Watt, 20, finished in the top 10. It had been five years since the Daisies last won the Swiss Team Trophy, at Maccauvillei in 2013, when their A and B teams finished 1-2. They won four years in a row from 2010 to 2013.

The Daisies got off to a superb start, with Du Toit shooting 67 and Du Preez 71 the first round to give them a 5-shot lead over Ekurhuleni. The Gauteng A and B teams finished third and fourth overall ahead of Western Province.

Kajal Mistry was fourth individual on 296, one ahead of Hall and 13-year-old Kiera Floyd, who led Ekurhuleni B to victory in the Challenge Trophy.



Taking a victory leap into the 18th hole pond at Waterkloof Golf Club.

CHRISTO WINS IN IRELAND



Christo Lamprecht, 17, became the youngest and first foreign winner in the 76-year history of the East of Ireland Amateur. The GolfRSA national squad member shot 66-68-69-71 for a 14-under total of 274 at County Louth north of Dublin. Lamprecht (Pinnacle Point), the youngest SA Amateur champion in 2017, is a member of the Louis57 Academy, and Louis Oosthuizen won the Irish Amateur in 2002.

Wilco Nienaber (Bloemfontein) lost a playoff in the Brabazon Trophy (English Strokeplay) at Frilford Heath near Oxford, trying to emulate Kyle McClatchie's victory in the same tournament in 2017. Nienaber carded 67-71-65-69 for 16-under 272. Other South African winners of the Brabazon have been Charl Schwartzel (2002), Craig Rivett (1989), Richard Kaplan (1986) and Neville Sundelson (1974).

LE ROUX IS NEW SENIOR NO 1

Francois le Roux (De Zalze) has replaced Steve Williams at No 1 on the national senior rankings. **Johann Nel** (Ruimsig), who turned 50 in April, won in his first outing on the senior circuit in the Vaal Senior Open, shooting 72-71 at Maccauvillei, by three from Craig Kamps (Bryanston). Fancourt Links member **Stanley de Beer** won the Fancourt Senior Open with 71-74, by one from Johan Marais, Jock Wellington and Bruno van Eck, while **Donny Smith** (Mossel Bay) claimed the Southern Cape Senior Open with 72-70 at George, by one from Williams (Modderfontein 69-74). **Ruan Botha** (Randpark) won the Southern Cape Mid-Am with 70-68 at Mossel Bay, by three from Gerlou Roux (Bellville 71-70).



THE NEW KID

When Tom Watson ruled the Open

TOM WATSON, Carnoustie Golf Links, July 13, 1975. He's just off the course, having won the first of his five Open Championships, this one by a stroke over Jack Newton in an 18-hole playoff. The unruly hair, wing-collar shirt and tweed driving cap convey a golf-first purity. In his face, there's pride and satisfaction. The golf he'd played was a coming-out party for the Watson imprimatur he became known for. It included a 20-footer for birdie, struck frightfully firm, to tie on the final hole of regulation. In the playoff, he chipped in for eagle on the 14th to take the lead by a stroke. At 25, Watson already had a game that was powerful, creative and adaptable to any condition. Other Watson signatures took hold that week. He played briskly, chased after bad bounces, grinned throughout a cold Sunday downpour and insisted that Newton join him in clutching the claret jug. Golf never had a better sportsman, and only a few played it better. —GUY YOCOM

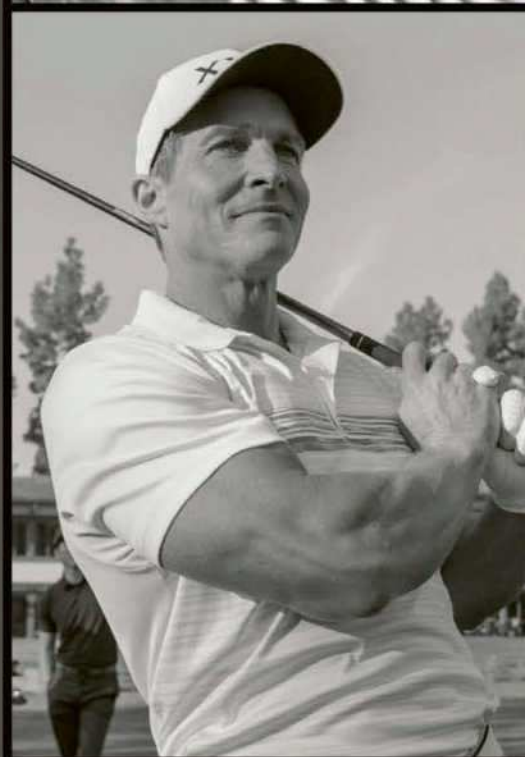
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