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Improve Your Golf Game
Easily & Quickly



Play “In the Zone” with Joan

ARE YOU READY TO PLAY?

It's the first warm, sunny day of Spring. The grass on the golf course is beginning to grow. The greens have been sprayed a bright green color. The daffodils and tulips have rapidly broken through the surface of the earth and are bursting with color. The trees are radiantly blooming with colors of white, pink and lavender. You can hardly wait to get to the golf course to play after staying indoors for the winter.

But have you prepared for this day? (PMI Archived Newsletter March 2005) Are you physically and mentally prepared to go out and play well, and enjoy the day?

When I was a child, I was fortunate to have been taught how to prepare for participating in a sport. My first love of sport was skiing. Before the first

snowfall appeared, we spent 6-weekends of training every Fall. We would put on our skis, walk around in the leaves, practice all the maneuvers we would use on the snow, and do strengthening and aerobic exercises. In this way we reawakened the connection between our minds and bodies. Not only did this training prepare our bodies, but it stimulated our desire to ski and compete competitively. I remember many times sitting in class in school, dreaming of the first time back on the slopes, visualizing myself skiing.

With the advent of chair lifts and cable cars, people who wanted to ski could rent equipment, ride to the top and attempt to ski down without all this preparation. Skiing became a dangerous sport for the average person because they had no control over their skis and bodies on the slippery surface.

Every sport is the same. When you have not participated in awhile, it is necessary to refresh your mind and body by going back and reviewing the basics. In order to be successful at golf, you need to have good fundamentals. These include the grip, posture, stance, ball position, alignment, and pre-shot routine. Good posture will allow you to swing your arms freely and your feet and ankles to be active and provide good balance. When you have good posture, it will be easier to have a proper swing plane. Following are some tips for mental and physical rehearsal indoors to prepare you for the range and golf course.

Feel the Swing

Once you “know & own” your fundamentals, begin to “feel” the swing motion from the ground up through your body. The kinetic energy begins in your feet and flows upward connecting all parts in a rhythmic flow. It is important to feel relaxed in all parts of your body to achieve the flexibility so necessary for timing and clubhead speed. Your feet and ankles should be loose and relaxed as if you are swimming in warm water. This feeling will then cause a chain reaction upward into your knees, hips and upper body without any conscious thought of moving a particular part of your body.

To make solid contact with the ball requires good balance. When you have mastered your fundamentals, it is time to swing the golf club (without a ball). Check your balance by swinging with your feet close together. If you lose your balance, swing the club slowly and smoothly until you develop the feeling of good rhythm. Developing good rhythm allows you to forget about the mechanics of the swing and sense how to swing so the clubface returns to its original square position on the path through to the target.

Swinging freely without tension produces high clubhead speed, even coordination, and more distance. Tension or tightness in any part of your body will produce low clubhead speed and less distance. Feel the centrifugal force in the swing rather than using brute force. Tell yourself to swing in a long, smooth, easy, effortless motion. Feel the pause at the top of the backswing to have time

to change direction. Feel the natural release of the clubhead as it rotates back to square. Let the clubhead build up speed through the hitting area like a roller coaster going down a steep incline. Allow the clubhead to swing freely. Swing back and forth in a rhythmic motion, letting gravity do the work. When you sense this feeling of a rhythmic and coordinated swing, anchor it into your memory bank with a word like “easy” or a fist pump, or a feeling of confidence.

Visualize the Swing

If you are primarily a visual learner, videotape the tour pros on television so you can model their swings and have a visual memory of a good swing. It is important not to analyze the player’s movements. Just watch and allow the images to imprint in your mind. After you watch, close your eyes and see if you have the image in your mind’s eye. Now available on DVD is the SyberVision (www.Sybervision.com) muscular training programs using the swings of Al Geiberger and Patty Sheehan. When the weather is inclement, you can stay indoors and train your brain by watching these swings. Children learn by imitating. We can also learn by modeling these perfect in-sync swings.

Hear the Swing

Auditory learners can also learn by watching and listening to these SyberVision DVDs. You hear the unique sounds of each club striking the ball crisply. The background music is called Largo music. The beat of Largo music is the same as a relaxed heartbeat. Largo music promotes the production of endorphins in the brain, which can generate the relaxation response. Bobby Jones was an auditory thinker. He gained his confidence by sensing the rhythm and timing of his shots.

Putting

Putting is the last stop at the train station. Putting can be up to 40% of your score. (PMI Archived Newsletter, August 2000) Once you miss a putt, it has to be counted in your score. On the way to the green there are numerous options to recover from missed shots, but not on the putting green. Golfer’s nerves show up in their putting sooner than in other strokes. Now is the time to practice developing confidence in your ability to be a great putter so you don’t put pressure on your full shots to get the ball closer to the hole. Listening repeatedly to the PMI CD “*Confident Putting for Lower Scores*” (www.pmi4.com/cart) and rehearsing the feel and rhythm of your putting stroke indoors will prepare you for your return to the golf course.

Preshot Routine

The whole point of learning a preshot routine (PMI Archived Newsletter May 2005) is to make golf a reaction game. By the time you get to the ball, you

won't have to think, and can just react. A preshot routine prepares you to LET GO of thinking, and to put your swing into motion. A consistent preshot routine will produce consistent results on the golf course. Write down your routine and rehearse it in your mind indoors until you can go through it automatically without conscious thought. Using the same preparation routine for every shot:

1. keeps your muscles relaxed,
2. keeps away negative thoughts, and
3. it gives you something to focus on.

"You must be mindful but not thoughtful as you swing. You must not think or reflect; you must feel what you have to do. Our golfing self should be concerned with the movements necessary to produce a good shot. These movements are controlled by remembered feel and the only concentrating we must do is guarding this 'remembered feel' from interference."

---Percy Boomer, British Golf Pro, Author of "On Learning Golf"

Entrain Your Heart & Brain for Peak Performance

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If this monthly mental instruction newsletter has been helpful to you, please forward it to your friends so they can have more fun playing the game of golf while lowering their scores. Download previous PMI newsletter issues by logging on to the Archived Newsletter Page at www.mastermindgolf.com

If you have a question or need help with your mental game, email Joan at info@mastermindgolf.com Also, please share with us how this website information has helped you improve your performance.

