



Elite Insider Circle Monthly Handicap Improver May 2016



Hello Fellow Golf Enthusiast,

This is **Jaacob Bowden**.

Last Month

To **recap last month**, we had a very lengthy piece from **putting expert Geoff Mangum** about **arm hang** and whether you should hang your arms naturally or setup or crook your arms in some fixed shape with muscle tension.

If you want to **read the details**, I would certainly encourage you to do so by **logging in to the member area** and reviewing Geoff's writing.

However, **the gist of it** is that an **arms-only ballistic stroke** involves a **milder action and less disturbing forces to control** than a tucked-up arms position...and it's **also better than a shoulder stroke**.

We also included a **CD** of my **interview** with **expert Adam Young**. Of course, Adam is also one of our regular contributing experts. In the interview, we talked about **nutrition, being fit for the golf course, weight loss, perfect practice vs randomized practice, why doing the wrong things might help, differential**

practice, and how to build specific skills.

This Month

This month, here's what's coming up for you.

- We've got an article from **Adam Young** about **improving our golf abilities**.
- We have a **Long Drive Q&A** with **2010 World Long Drive Champion Joe Miller**. Joe has been the **most prolific European long driver** in history and he's swung a driver on Flightscope at an incredible **156 mph**.
- I'll take some time to answer some of our **member questions**.
- We'll have our usual **"Member of the Month"** and golf joke.

As part of your Monthly Handicap Improver Insider Circle, **we've included a CD of my extended audio interview with...Las Vegas-based Canadian golf professional Paul Wilson**.



Paul is **Revolution Golf's original instructor**, he's the **4th most sought out golf instructor** on the internet, and he is the **founder of Ignition Golf**. In the interview, we talk about how **Paul's full swing instruction is based on the Iron Byron**. Paul also believes in **making golf instruction as simple as possible** to make it easier for everyone's super busy lives. As such, he tells us his **primary tips** for the major areas of golf that include **full swing, pitching, chipping, bunker play, and putting**.

On a side note, the **testimonials** for Tom Wishon's and my **Sterling Irons** single length irons are rolling in. Check them out at <http://www.sterlingirons.com>.



Okay, let's get going!



Long Drive Q&A with Joe Miller

Age: 31

Height: 6 4"

Driver Specs:

3* XX Fuji JM shaft

Sponsors:

- Callaway
- BMW Tomintoul
- Flightscope
- Perry Ellis

Special Accomplishments:

- 2010 World Long Drive Champion
- Over 30 European wins
- Haven't lost in Europe for 3 years straight (19 wins in a row)

What is your longest drive in competition?

474 yards

What were the conditions of the drive?

Into the wind, uphill, minus 10 degrees ;-)

What lead you to choose your particular equipment specifications?

Pure feel, and the lowest loft possible

Do you favor a particular shot shape to hit it long?

Dead straight



What are the fastest swing speeds you've recorded on a Swing Speed Radar and/or Trackman?

156 mph FlightScope
153 mph Trackman

Do you use any training aids to work on your speed and power?

No

Do you do any other types of training to drive it further?

Bodybuilding,
strength training,
power lifting



Is there any particular bit of advice you would give the regular amateur for him or her to hit the ball longer?

First would be to hit the gym hard and get your diet on point to build muscle and strength.

Second would be to start having regular lessons from a good PGA pro that knows about long drive.

Where can people contact you?

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/joemillerldc>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/joemillerldc>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/joemillerldc>

Better or Best?

By Adam Young

Improvement can come in a couple of forms – either you can try to play your best golf, or you can try to play better than your best.

Let me explain.

When most golfers take a lesson, they are not really trying to learn something new. It is hard for us as humans to see beyond what we are already capable of. For that reason, most golfers simply want to get back to “their best” games.

Playing your best requires a very different strategy – it requires that we simply access the motor skills that we ***already own***. It is not about pushing the boundaries further or creating new patterns of behaviour. It is much more about firing those neural networks we have hidden inside of us.

So, the big question is, how do we improve our ability to access what we own?



Forget about it

One of the most paradoxical parts to playing our best is that, the more we think about it, the worse it will get (often). You hear tournament winners consistently state how they couldn't remember the last round they played.

When we turn off our conscious mind (or lower the levels of thought), this lowers the interference with our learned skills. Similar to how you can write your signature with astounding accuracy and consistency without thought, the more you try to make that signature 'perfect' by controlling it, the less consistent it will be.

How do we lower our levels of conscious thought?

I have three strategies.

1. Creating rhythms in our routines
2. Creating consistent routines
3. Believing in non-thought

1) Rhythms

Think about what relaxes us – music, repetitive motions etc. It's why babies get rocked to sleep, and why sex helps us get out of our own heads.

Use this to your advantage – create a rhythm not only in your swing, but in your entire routine. This can help focus and relax your conscious mind, so that your subconsciously learned behaviours can come through.

2) Consistency

We are all after consistent play, yet we rarely keep things consistent ourselves. Look at the routines of the best players and they can be incredibly consistent from one shot to the next. Yet amateurs are all over the place – one practice swing one time, three the next. Then they stand over the ball for different amounts of time.

As a clear example, what happens when someone calls you through a group?

You speed up your routine and end up duffing it all the way to the hole. Conversely, when we have an important shot, we often slow things down

and take one more practice swing. Well, this is changing your routine, and hence your results change.

Try to keep your routine the same throughout different pressures or situations. It will stand you in good stead.

3) Believing in non-thought

Another part that I always struggled with was the belief that you can play great golf without thinking about it. Without this belief, we might be forever trapped in our analytical ways.

For me, the breakthrough came in understanding and looking through all the research on brain science and sporting performance. I saw common trends and it started to sink in.

I also experienced non-thought when I designed my own routine where I had to count from 1 to 10 during setting up to the ball – swinging back on 9 and hitting on 10. This allowed me to consciously ‘distract’ my mind from conscious interference, and had the long term benefit of realizing that I could hit great shots, even when my mind wasn’t engaged in the act of swinging the club ‘perfectly’.

I discuss this routine, as well as other forms of thought process in The Practice Manual – The Ultimate Guide for Golfers, which you can learn more about below.

So remember, in order to play your best golf, think less about it, create a rhythmical routine, and make your routine as consistent as you want your shots to be.



About Adam

Adam Young is author of “The Practice Manual – The Ultimate Guide for Golfers”, a best seller on Amazon.com in both the US, UK, Canada, Germany, and France...and has been featured as a must-have book on Golf Channel.

You can learn more about skill and his book in general by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/adamyounggolf>.

Your Questions Answered

Member Question:

Hello Jaacob,

In the past (10 years ago) I wasn't short, but now at 60+ it is not the same. But, playing with the same friend, for 30 years, he is a member of the team France in senior competition. If he hits a 7-iron, I know that I have a 6 to play.

But when he drives, he is 60 yards longer?!

My swing speed with an 8-iron is 80-88mph and with the driver it is 94 mph.

How do you explain?

Jaacob's Answer:

It's a bit difficult to tell for sure without seeing both you and your friend swing in person, but if your friend were only 1 club longer with his irons but is 60 yards longer with the driver, I would initially suspect either that you swing slower in general and de-loft your irons to lower the flight to get more distance...and/or that his driver launch conditions are better than yours. That is, for his swing speed, he launches his drives at a more optimal launch angle and spin rate.

Using the same driver, you could easily experience a 40-50 yard difference in driving distance by hitting down on the drives 5 degrees versus hitting up on the drives 5 degrees.

At 94 mph of club head speed, I would target you for about a 16 degree launch angle with 2600 spin rate for maximum carry distance....and around 13 degrees and 2000 spin rate for maximum total distance.

If it's not from de-lofting your irons, see if you can find a launch monitor near you, hit 10 drives, get your average numbers, and then you can make adjustments if necessary from there.

Member Question:

Hi Jaacob,

I'm looking at purchasing the SSR.

Quick question, what percentage goes with the tempo option and how strongly is it recommended for increasing one's length off the tee?

- Jeff W, Florida, 52 years old, 25 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

If you think you'll do tempo work on your swing, the red one would be good. You can use it to work on your stretch reflex for swing speed training as well, although I don't have info about that yet on the site. Most people just do the blue SSR.

It is very highly recommended. In fact, all of my Tour player clients have an SSR.

Golfers that have one typically get better results because you can get the immediate speed feedback on each and every training swing (regardless of whether or not you are hitting balls) with both your clubs and/or training aids. Plus, it packs up nicely in your golf bag. It's a great training aid.

You can get one here:

<http://www.swingmangolf.com/golf-swing-speed-radar.php>

Member Question:

Jaacob –

Another quick question...

As I have been working on speed and technique, I've realized I am fairly flexible. I get a good shoulder turn.

However, I think I've realized that too much hip turn has been slowing my speed a bit. When I consciously restrict my right hip from going back very much at all while also turning shoulders as much as I can, that increases my x-factor between shoulders and hip turn and I do seem to get higher swing speeds.

Do you find many of your students that need to do that – consciously restrict the hip turn, or is that odd?

It's almost of a feeling of trying to turn my lower abdomen and hips counter clockwise while the upper spine/shoulders turn clockwise - all while trying to maintain proper golf posture.

If so, are there any special techniques or drills other than maybe mirror drills and simply grooving what it feels like at the top of the backswing to keep lower abdomen and hips facing more forward, while just turning the spine higher up at the shoulders?

-Dan T, Utah, 46 years old, 5 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

I think it depends on the person.

With me personally, I'm slower if I try to restrict hip turn or go for more x-factor. But I wouldn't argue with you if you say that you are faster doing the reverse. ;-)

If it is working for you, I'd say keep up with it.

Again, that's one of the neat things about having that swing speed radar for swing speed training. You can use it as a tool to see which body motions, swing thoughts, etc., produce the most speed and get you hitting the ball the best.

Drills-wise, doing some mirror work like you mentioned would be fine...or maybe doing it in slow motion without a ball to find the feeling, using that feeling to hit a ball, and then going back and forth over and over until you can get it translated to your swing with a ball.

Member Question:

At the top of the swing, if my left wrist is in palmer flexion and my right wrist in dorsal flexion the face of the club tends to be a little shut on top... is this correct for the Mike Austin swing?

Please let me know your thoughts. Thanks.

– Hendrik H, California, 43 years old, +1 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

In a conventional swing, from the down-the-line view at the point in the back swing where the club is parallel to the ground, the leading edge of the club face would be parallel to the back of the left hand for a right-hander. The golf world has come to call this "square", although I can't figure out why because it's actually open relative to the swing path.

So yeah, a "closed" clubface is something you'll typically see at the top of the back swing with Austin swings or oftentimes with golfers who have a strong grip at setup (for example, PGA TOUR Player Ryan Palmer).

Dustin Johnson has a slightly strong grip and also has his left wrist bowed, or in palmar flexion, at the top of his backswing. I think he does quite alright in golf. ;-)



Member Question:

Hi Jaacob,

Where can I buy those bands for the isometric training as in your video?

Thanks.

-Hendrik H, California, 43 years old, +1 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

The bands that I usually recommend for my amateur and Tour player clients for swing speed training are here:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/bodylasticsbands>

They travel and pack up well, you can track the strength gains (the bands are numbered), and they provide plenty of resistance.

The Max Tension XT system is usually enough resistance for most people. Depending on where you want to train, you might also get an extra Door Anchor (so you don't have to keep opening the door to switch the band height) and an Anywhere Anchor (if you want to use a pole, tree, etc).

Below is a picture from when I was having a session with Senior Tour player Andre Bossert. We were using a tree for the bands because there wasn't really anything else nearby that we could attach the bands to.



Despite what you may think, training at the Tour level isn't always as glamorous as it may seem.

Member Question:

Jaacob,

While using the Mike Austin method of "throwing" whilst retracting the left hip on the drive, I am hitting a lot of wild pulls to the left (about 40 % of my drives).

I am thinking this might be a timing issue leading me to come over the top. I am trying not "drop and slot" the ball in the downswing - according to the Mike Austin method.

When it works - it works great - so I have faith - just trying to eliminate these destructive pulls.

Your advice greatly appreciated.

All the best,

Charles D, UK, 8 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

I actually had a related problem.

I had been doing a bit of swing speed training on a parking lot with a towel on the ground to keep from scraping my driver on the concrete. Inadvertently, I got in to the habit of rising up slightly on the downswing...that caused me to start hitting some drives a little low on the face. This didn't really affect the direction of my tee shots on the course, but I was giving up some distance.

To break that habit, I went to the range and made the sole focus of my practice to be hitting my drives in the center of the clubface, or even slightly above. I hit a set number of balls and recorded how many were low and how many were solid. I forget the percent, but whatever it was I came back the next practice with the target of improving my percentage. Within 3-4 practices of doing this, I finally went through a set without hitting any low on the driver face. I also had a similar goal on the course during that time. Each drive I focused on hitting it in the center or above.

So perhaps you could try something similar for your pulls. Set up to a known target and just focus on improving your percentages. Perhaps you

can do it in just one practice. Maybe it will take several, for example 40% -> 25% -> 12% -> 0%. But as long as you keep focusing on it and you track your results, you should see some improvement.

It may also help to visualize the swing you want to make as well. I like to do it in the shower but any quiet place will be fine. Think about your back swing and then in slow motion think about what you are doing on the downswing during the good swings and during the pulls. Perhaps your throw is getting ahead of your pivot. Maybe you need to feel like you're throwing more out to the right on the down swing. But whatever it is, get a really clear picture of the difference between the two in your mind. Then once you know the difference, make it clear to yourself in your mind which one you want to do. A little mental work like that should help expedite the process.



Member of the Month

This month our Members of the Month is Greg DuCharme. Greg is an instructor at the Michael Breed Golf Academy at Trump Golf Links at Ferry Point in Bronx, NY.

Using Swing Man Golf's swing speed training, Greg increased his maximum swing speed by 23 mph over 10 weeks.

Congratulations Greg!

Finishing Up With Fun



Fred was moderately successful golfer, but as he got older he was increasingly hampered by incredible headaches. His golf, personal hygiene and love life started to suffer, he managed to push on, but when his game turned really sour he sought medical help. After being referred from one specialist to another, he finally came across a doctor who solved the problem.

"The good news is I can cure your headaches, the bad news is that it will require castration. You have a very rare condition which causes your testicles to press up against the base of your spine. The pressure creates one hell of a headache. The only way to relieve the pressure and allow your swing to work again is to remove the testicles."

Fred was shocked and depressed. He wondered if he has anything to live for, but then figured at least he could play reasonable golf again. He decided he had no choice but to go under the knife.

When he left the hospital, his mind was clear, but he felt like he was missing an important part of himself. As he walked down the street, he realised that he felt like a different person. He could make a new beginning, swing free, and live a new life. He went to the club for a drink and as he walked past the Pro shop thought, "That's what I need: a new outfit."

He entered the shop and told the salesman, "I'd like some new golf slacks."

The salesman eyed him briefly and said, "Let's see...size 44 long."

Fred laughed, "That's right, how did you know?"

"It's my job."

Fred tried on the slacks, they fitted perfectly. As Fred admired himself in the mirror, the salesman asked, "How about a new shirt, I've got some great new stuff in stock."

Fred thought for a moment and then said, "Sure."

The salesman eyed Fred and said, "Let's see...34 sleeve and...16 and and half neck"

Fred was surprised, "That's right, how did you know?"

"It's my job."

Fred tried on the shirt, and it fit perfectly.

As Fred adjusted the collar in the mirror, the salesman asked, "How about new shoes, we just got new stock with soft spikes"

Fred was on a roll and agreed. The salesman said, "Let's see...9 and a half...wide."

Fred was astonished, "That's right, how did you know?"

"It's my job."

Fred tried on the shoes and they fit perfectly. Fred walked comfortably around the shop and the salesman asked, "How about a new hat?"

Without hesitating, Fred said, "Sure."

The salesman eyed Fred's head and said, "Let's see. . .7 5/8."

Fred was really impressed, "That's right, how did you know?"

"It's my job."

The hat fit perfectly. Fred was feeling great, when the salesman asked, "How about some new underwear, got some great new imported stock."

Fred thought for a second and said, "Sure."

The salesman stepped back, eyed Fred's waist and said, "Let's see...size 36."

Fred laughed, "No, I've worn size 34 since I was 18 years old."

The salesman shook his head, "You can't wear a size 34 - every time you swing it would press your testicles up against the base of your spine and give you one hell of a headache."

We hope you enjoyed the Monthly Handicap Improver...

Feel free to contact us at info@swingmangolf.com with questions/comments/suggestions/etc!

Have a great month!