



Elite Insider Circle Monthly Handicap Improver June 2016



Hello Fellow Golf Enthusiast,

This is **Jaacob Bowden**.

I assume many of you watched the **US Open**. I was **rooting for Phil Mickelson** to finally get his win...alas he **did not make the cut**.

However, it was nice to see the talented **Dustin Johnson** get his **first major win** after so many heartbreaking finishes. Fortunately, the **USGA's decision to controversially penalize Dustin** after his round for an incident in which his ball moved earlier in the round

didn't affect the overall outcome.

Last Month

To **recap last month**, we had a piece from golf expert **Adam Young** about trying to play your best golf versus trying to play better than your best. Adam said to **think less and to create a consistent rhythmical routine**.

We had a **Long Drive Q&A** with the **2010 World Long Drive Champion**, England's **Joe Miller**.

Although Joe says he chose his equipment by feel and the lowest loft possible, I can tell you that part of the reason he chooses the lowest loft possible is to bring his spin rates down to a more optimal level. When you can swing over 150 mph, it creates a lot of spin. While you may not swing that fast, the **important take-away is to fit your driver to achieve the ball flight you desire.**

Joe mentioned he **tries to hit the ball as straight as possible**. Many people think that a draw/hook goes the farthest between a fade/cut/slice, a straight ball, and a draw/hook. However, **you can optimize ball flight with any shot shape** (5-time Open division World Long Drive Champion Jason Zuback hit a fade to win many of his championships) and since **you get the best energy transfer from club to ball from the straight ball**

(hint: it's not as glancing of a blow to the ball)...Joe is very smart to generally try to hit it straight in a sport where every yard counts.

Joe also **hits the gym hard** and, unlike most golfers, **works on his club head speed**. Joe's level of training may not fit in to your busy schedule. That being said, if you **work on your club head speed just a little bit a couple times a week**, it can make a **big difference to your distance and potential handicap**.



I answered 6 golf and training questions from the membership in “Your Questions Answered”.

We also included a CD interview with **Paul Wilson**, who is the **4th most popular golf instructor** on the Internet, was **Revolution Golf's original instructor**, and is the founder of **Ignition Golf**. Paul's philosophy is to **make golf instruction as simple as possible** to make it easier for everyone's super busy lives.



This Month

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

- We've got a **Long Drive Q&A** with **2013 Ladies World Long Drive Champion Heather LeMaster**. Heather has been clocked on **Trackman at 118 mph of club head speed** in both 2013 and 2015. Most **male amateurs average around 93 mph**. We'll see what she has to say about distance.
- **Expert Adam Young** provided something for us entitled **reGear Effect**. Basically, he'll be talking about **what happens at impact** and what we can learn from it.
- **Equipment icon Tom Wishon** has something for us about **why 3-Woods or 5-Woods can sometimes go as far (or even farther!) than the driver**. This happens to more people than you may think. Maybe it doesn't happen to you, but perhaps you've seen it happen to a friend. Tom will tell us more about that.
- 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...Doug Emma**. Doug is a **club fitting specialist at True Spec Golf at the Manhattan location**.

Extras

In other golf news, as you probably know, **Tom Wishon and I spent 2.5 years designing a set of single length irons called Sterling Irons®**. We started offering the clubs a couple months ago at <http://www.sterlingirons.com> and June has been a very busy month as far as reviews and other things like that go.



I wanted to share those with you.

First of all, the **United States Patent and Trademark Office registered our trademark** in the US. I don't know if any of you have ever been through that process, but it can be very lengthy and challenging to get a trademark as such. To actually get through it successfully is quite an accomplishment. Anyway, we can now use the circle r with the name like this: Sterling Irons®. Yay!

Three video reviews came out.

Two of them were by Christo Garcia. You might know Christo from his very popular YouTube Channel called **My Swing Evolution** in which **he chronicles his journey studying and learning the swing of the great Ben Hogan.**



In Video 1, Christo unpacks his set of Sterling Irons® with a group of guys at one of his MSE training camps in which he was co-hosting with Tour Striker's Jim Waldron. They played a fun drinking game in which they tried to guess which iron they had in their hand (single length golf clubs all feel the same!). The next morning, they all went out to the range to hit the irons.

Video 1 - <https://youtu.be/QvLsJdcqHII>

Video 2 shows Christo taking his Sterling Irons® out on the course for 9 holes at Skylinks Golf Course in Long Beach, CA.

Video 2 - <https://youtu.be/MGxqveaPWYM>

The other video review was by England's **Mark Crossfield**. Mark is literally the **most popular golf instructor in the world**. Yes, that means he's more sought after than guys like Butch Harmon, David Leadbetter, Jim McLean, etc. In the video, **Mark tested the Sterling Irons® distance gapping** with a **GC2 launch monitor**.



https://youtu.be/WU_332Cj2Ng

Consistent Golf's Jeff Richmond wrote a very lengthy **text review** of Sterling Irons®.

<http://www.consistentgolf.com/sterling-single-length-iron-review/>

I was also a returning guest on a couple of shows.

The first was on **June 14th** for 40 minutes with **Bob Bigonette on Michael Breed's "A New Breed of Golf" show on Sirius XM PGA TOUR radio**. You may remember Bob as our "Member of the Month" from April. Last summer, I helped **Bob increase his club head speed by 18 mph** and he said it **resurrected his career**. So of course, we talked about **swing speed training**. We also talked about the **US Open** and briefly **Sterling Irons®**.

The second was for **20 minutes on Danielle Tucker's Golf Club Radio Show**. My segment **starts around the 20-minute mark** if you would like to listen.

<http://www.hernco.com/golfclub/ac62516.htm>

Lastly, we had many **testimonials** come in. The most interesting of which was probably **a legally blind golfer named Britton Munoz who went shooting 105-110 to 95-100**. That's 10 shots less. If that isn't a testament to single length irons...I don't know what is.

Needless to say, June has been very busy but great!

Okay, let's get going!

Long Drive Q&A with Heather LeMaster

Age: 29

Height: 5'11

Driver Specs:

49" (LDA) 7.5* Callaway Big Bertha

Sponsors:

- XXXplex Shafts
- Hirzl Gloves
- FitAid Power Drinks
- Tornado Tee



Special Accomplishments:

- 2013 World Long Drive Champion
- 2014 and 2015 Runner Up
- 4X International Long Drive Champion

What is your longest drive in competition?

331 Yards with a Krank 6* Driver

What were the conditions of the drive?

I was in Sweden, Moderate to Humid Conditions. Lower ball flight with lots of roll. In June it doesn't really get dark there so we were competing around 6pm.

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

Trackman clocked me at 118 mph in 2013 as well as in 2015

What lead you to choose your particular equipment specifications?

There are so many choices for excellent equipment whether its in long drive or golf. I choose the equipment I hit because it fits my training, ability and style which changes and improves with the opportunities and changes in our sport.

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

In 2013, I won with a high baby fade, but more often than not, a medium high draw is a more desired shot shape for me personally because I feel like I can get more roll.

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

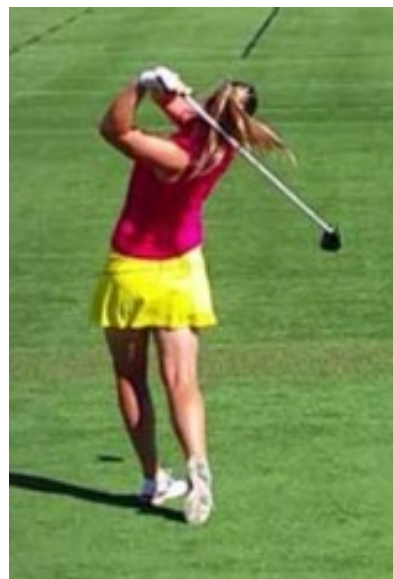
I have a personal trainer who helps me get faster using TRX and kettle bells, weight belts and rubber bands. The golf swing fan, and the Skilz whip stick.

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

I stay active, and stretched out. I use a foam roller and softball to release muscles that get knotted up.

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

For the regular golfer I would recommend getting lessons. I would recommend improving ball contact, and then working on speed. I would



recommend small and accurate swings to help improve form and build muscle memory. This in turn can help an amateur score better on the course.

Where can people contact you or learn more about you?

Check out my website at <http://www.heatherlemaster.com>. You can find out some of the events I do and participate in, major accomplishments and other interests I have outside of the golf world! See you around!

reGear Effect

By Adam Young

When a player is on my lesson tee and they hit a poor shot, I will ask them what they think happened. They often report “I twisted the club”. Sometimes, they will even report that this twisting they did happened well before impact.



However, this is incorrect.

Sweet Spots

The sweet spot is aptly named because when it is struck, it provides very little vibration/twisting and thus feels very great. However, when we miss the sweet spot, the club goes through some violent twisting at impact. This is what the player is feeling when they report themselves twisting the club. How do I know this is the case? Because I have yet to see a player report themselves twisting the club when they strike the middle of the face.

To see this twisting in action, I made a few high speed videos – below are the screen shots.



Clubface coming into impact



Clubface at impact (heel contact)



Clubface post impact, closing violently with a heel hit

And we also see the reverse pattern with a toe strike, as shown below.



Clubface preceding impact



Clubface at impact on the toe of the club



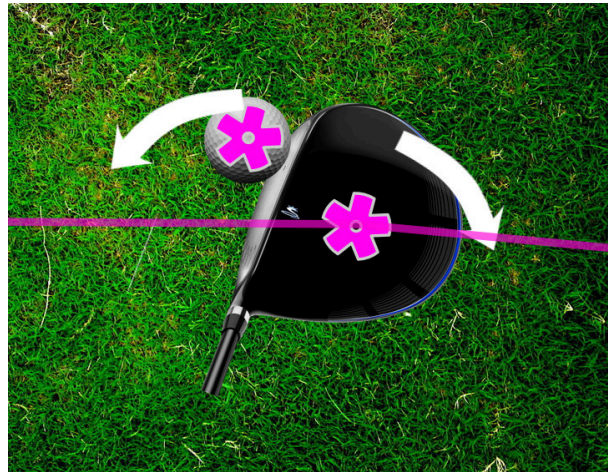
The violent opening of the clubface just after impact.

People are often very surprised to see the dramatic effects that an off-center strike has on the twisting of the club at impact. Their 'fix' is usually (sometimes unconsciously) to grip the club tighter next time, which often kills speed and flow to the golf swing.

Direction

Direction gets affected by this – but often not in the way that you would think. For example, the toe-shot in the above picture shows an opening clubface, which would signify that the ball would go to the right of the intended target. Yet, that ball started on target, but lost a lot of distance.

However, when we get to larger sized clubs, such as a hybrid or a driver, the center of mass of the club is farther back from the clubface. With an off-center hit, the club face rotates around this center of mass, and produces a counter spin on the ball. In other words, as the clubface is opening, it produces an opposite spin on the ball, sending it curving left. This is called 'gear-effect', as the ball and the clubface act like cogs during the violent twisting impact.



In the above picture, we can visualize the ball being hit on the toe of the club, the clubface opening and, subsequently, producing an anti-clockwise (hooking) spin on the ball.

In fact, when you see a pro letting go of the club after their shot, this is usually a result of the club twisting due to an off-center hit. Some hypothesize that pros mainly miss fairways because of off-center hits and not necessarily poor clubface and path control. This is where the terms toe-hook and heel-fade come from.

Driver Design

This is one of the reasons that drivers are so difficult to control these days. Modern drivers are so big that gear-effect is dramatically increased. Sure, modern drivers

are longer, and an off-center hit will still go far. But those off-center hits are now subject to more side spin sending the ball offline.

Gear effect is also one of the reasons that drivers have a bulge to their face (they are slightly convex). This is to minimize gear effect, so the ball is more likely to still curve back into the fairway.

What to do?

The best drill is one I promote to all my pupils – using athletes foot spray on the clubface. This allows you to check where you are hitting your driver face, and can allow you to make an instinctive correction.

In your practice time, spend some time trying to hit different parts of the face. This will build your skill levels, and also give you a greater feeling of the gear effect. This can allow you to have better awareness of your strike, so you can do on-course calibration if/when things go wrong, or a poor strike pattern starts sending your shots offline.

I see this as a vital part of a player's understanding. Just the other day, and elite golfer hit a toe hook. When I asked her what she thought happened, she claimed that she must have closed the face down a lot. This would have lead her to change the wrong element – her clubface and not her strike.

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 strike and other important factors creating a desired shot his book in general by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/adamyounggolf>.

Why Does My 3-Wood or 5-Wood Go as Far as My Driver?

By Tom Wishon

No matter what, if this is you and your game, do not feel bad. You've got a lot of company out there on golf courses all over the world who also experience the same thing as they struggle with the driver.

In a nutshell, when golfers hit their 3- or 5-wood as far or farther than their driver, there are two primary reasons why. And the good news is they both can be fixed very easily so you can enjoy hitting the driver instead of approaching that tee shot with genuine lack of confidence.

1. Players who hit their 3- or 5-wood as far or longer than their driver are typically using too little loft with the driver for their clubhead speed.

You know, it's a funny thing with the driver and its loft compared to the other clubs in the bag. With your irons, when you lower the loft angle of the clubhead, you typically hit the ball farther. In contrast, with the driver, you have to match the loft angle of the clubhead to the golfer's clubhead speed to get the most distance.

In general, the slower the clubhead speed, the higher the loft of the driver must be to maximize distance. But for players with higher clubhead speeds, the loft of the driver has to be lower to maximize distance.

Confusing? I agree.

Let me use an example to make things a little clearer. Let's say you are washing the family car and your kids are goofing off nearby, acting silly. So you decide to shoot them with the water hose you've been using to wash the car. Your kids get an idea of what's coming so they start to take off.

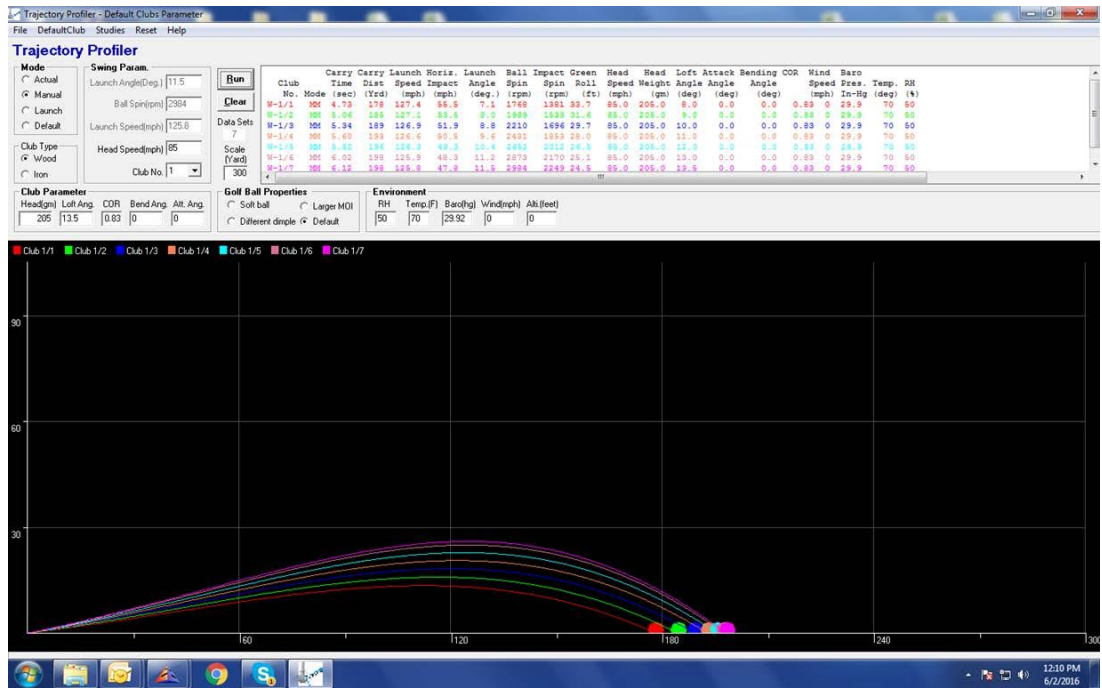
What do you have to do to shoot the water the farthest distance possible?

You have to tilt the angle of the hose more upward so the water shoots out of the nozzle at a higher "launch angle" so it can "carry farther".

But let's say the water stopped short of hitting the kids. Now you head to the faucet and you dial up the force of the water – which is in essence the same thing as if you have a higher clubhead speed with the driver. Now you don't have to tilt the hose quite as much upward to shoot the water the maximum distance. With the higher water pressure, aka higher clubhead speed, you can lower the "launch angle" of the hose to get the maximum distance.

Here's a little illustration of how this applies to drivers. This graphic shows a comparison of carry distance and shot trajectory for a clubhead speed of 85 mph with different lofts of 8*, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 13.5. As you can

see, the higher the loft up to a point, the longer the carry distance.



It's pretty much the same thing with the driver.

The slower the clubhead speed, the higher the loft – and the higher the clubhead speed, the lower the loft required to get maximum distance.

So if you find you are hitting your 15* loft #3 wood as far as your 10* driver, if you try a driver with more loft you will see your driver distance begin to get longer than your 3-wood distance.

Here's a chart to give you a basic idea. Please note that differences in your angle of attack into the ball, whether you swing more down, level or up into the ball, will have an effect on the best driver loft for you and your swing to maximize distance. That's why in all cases of fitting, it is best to be custom fit by an experienced professional clubfitter.

Comparison of Driver Clubhead Speed and Driver Loft for Most Distances

Driver Clubhead Speed	Driver Loft Recommendation
65 mph	15°
75 mph	13.5
85 mph	12

95 mph	11
105 mph	10
115 mph	8.5

2. The second reason some golfers hit their 3- or 5-wood as far or farther than their driver is because the much longer length of the driver causes them to hit the ball more off center and with far less control than the shorter length of the fairway woods.

With the driver, on average for each ½” you miss the center of the face, you will lose 5 to 7% of your total potential distance. If your driver clubhead speed is 85 mph which means your optimal carry distance is around 200 yards, for each half inch you miss the center of the face of the driver, you are losing 10 to 14 yards in carry distance. Miss the center of the face by an inch, which is possible with today’s large, 460cc volume driver heads, and that 200 yard carry distance could drop to 175 yards!

This is especially important given the fact that most drivers sold off the rack by the big golf companies are between 45-46” in length. That’s FAR too long for at least 90% of all the golfers playing the game.

Keep in mind, the average driver length on the PGA Tour has been 44.5” for quite a long time. So what does that say when the average driver length chosen by the best golfers in the world is a half inch to 1 ½” shorter than what you are told to buy when you go shopping for a driver?

TONS of golfers who have been custom fit for a driver of 43.5” to 44” have found that they end up hitting the driver farther than they hit their former longer driver chiefly because they are hitting the ball more on center more often.

Once again, this is a very compelling reason to find a good clubfitter in your area to work with for your equipment needs to help you play to the best of your ability.



Member of the Month

"I have worked hard over the three months with your program, and have increased swing speed from 95-to-105."

-Tomas R, 57 years old, 8 handicap, Oregon

Finishing Up With Fun



I'm going to have to give up golf," Fred sadly advised the club secretary. "I've become so nearsighted I keep losing balls and if I play with glasses they keep falling off."

"Listen, don't give up;" the secretary replied. "What about teaming up with old Harry Jones." "But he's in his 80s and can only just make it around the course."

"Yes, yes, he's old, but he's also farsighted and he'll be able to see where you've hit your ball. It's a way to stay on playing."

The next day Fred and old Harry played their first game together. Fred teed off first and his powerful swing took the ball sailing up the fairway.

"Did you see it?" he asked Harry. "Yes," the old-timer answered.

"Where did it go?" "I forget!" came the reply.

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!