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## Elite Insider Circle Monthly Handicap Improver October 2016

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Hello Fellow Golf Enthusiast,

This is Jaacob Bowden.

### Last Month

To recap last month, we had a piece from golf expert Adam Young called “The Importance of Ground Contact”, in which he shared his thoughts on how to gain more consistency, distance, and even direction by improving the combination of low point position and swing arc height/depth.

One of the drills he likes for doing this is by hitting shots out of a fairway bunker. By simply drawing a line in the sand and hitting the shot, one can get feedback as to where the club first struck the sand as well as how deep the low point is located.

We had a Long Drive Q&A with 2007 World Long Drive Champion Mike Dobbyn. Some of the things I think that are worth pointing out about Mike’s Q&A are:

- He uses equipment that helps optimize his launch conditions for maximum distance



- He hits shot shapes that he feels work best for the conditions of that day
- He spends time improving his body through a variety of training aids and gym training to hit the ball further
- He advocates practice, good ball striking, swinging fearlessly, getting your swing and body analyzed, building golf clubs to your personal ideal specifications, and learning to love working out.

I wrote briefly about my experience at this year's PGA TOUR tournament The Barclays in which I noted the importance of power to success at Bethpage Black...and golf in general.

I filled you in on my trip to Colorado to visit Tom Wishon in which we discussed our Sterling Irons® single length irons project. It was a great trip and we made some decisions about the upcoming direction of the project...including adding a 19-degree 4-iron in to the set.

As of the time of this writing, we should have them in stock for you in early December. That's coming up soon!

The LW and left-handed sets will come after that in the early to mid part of 2017.

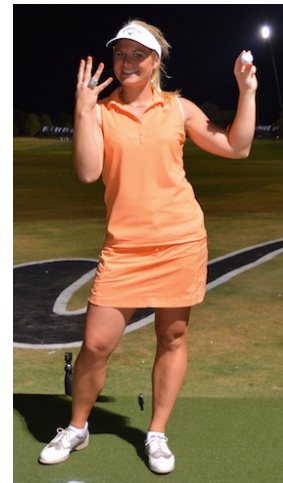
I went over my latest "What's in the Bag". If you missed it, you can have a look on my personal website at <http://www.jacobbowden.com/WhatsInTheBag.html>.

Lastly, we included a CD interview of my interview with 4-time Women's World Long Drive Champion Sandra Carlborg.

### **This Month**

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

- We've got a Long Drive Q&A with the South African Dewald Gouws...who has finished as high as 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the World Long Drive Championships.
- Expert Adam Young has something for us entitled "Feedback". He'll tell us how we can bridge the gap between what we feel and what is real using basic and advanced feedback.



- Equipment expert Tom Wishon has for us his first piece for us from his “semi-retirement”. Perhaps you or one of your friends hits a 3-wood or 5-wood farther than a driver. Tom will talk about why this happens.
- I’ll answer a question from our fellow Monthly Handicap Improver members.
- We’ll have our usual “Member of the Month” and golf joke.

As part of your Monthly Handicap Improver Insider Circle, as a follow-up to his written Long Drive Q&A, we’ve included a CD of my audio interview with 2007 World Long Drive Champion Mike Dobbyn.

### **The 2016 World Long Drive Championships**

Earlier in the month from October 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, the World Long Drive Championships were held at the WinStar World Resort & Casino in Oklahoma.



Tom Peppard won the Masters Division.

Phillis Meti won the Ladies Division (Sandra Carlborg from above finished in the Final 4).

The Final 16 of the Open Division ended up being:

- Will Hogue
- Paul Howell
- Justin Moose
- Maurice Allen
- Mitch Dobbyn
- Steve Monroe
- Joe Miller
- Glenn Wilson
- Tim Burke
- Justin James
- Trent Scruggs
- Jeff Flagg
- Tommy Hugg
- Justin Young
- Ryan Steenberg
- Jason Eslinger

We've had previous Long Drive Q&As with Will, Justin, Maurice, Ryan and Joe. Look back in the archives in your member area to read them.

In the upcoming months, we'll try to see if we can get you Q&As for the others as well. In particular, we are especially interested in Glenn Wilson. Although Glenn did not win, he was posting the fastest swing speeds on the telecast in the low 150s and he set new ball speed records for the finals as well.

England's Joe Miller ended up winning against a tough competitor in Ryan Steenberg. With his 2<sup>nd</sup> title, he moves in to rare company of guys with multiple Open Division titles like Jason Zuback, Sean Fister, Jamie Sadlowski, and Tim Burke.

Prior to winning, Joe posted some workout numbers on Instagram saying he did a 650 lb deadlift, 800 lb squat, and 495 lb bench press...which just supports our notion that as a generalization, long drive guys tend to be very strong.

Also on Instagram, several weeks ago Joe posted a 158 mph club head speed on his Flightscope launch monitor. He only averaged 145 mph in the Final 16 and peaked at 149 mph, but this is definitely fast enough to win.



A close look at the numbers showed once again that the faster one swings, the better chance of advancing.

The average long drive competitor swings 135 mph, the average Final 8 competitor swings tends to be between 139 to 143 mph, and the average winner is about 146 mph.

More information about the event is available at <http://www.worldlongdrive.com>.





### The 2016 Speedgolf World Championships

Not only was October long drive month, it was also Speedgolf month. The World Championships were held outside Chicago in Glenview at The Glen Club on October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

I personally hadn't competed since 2013 when I tied the championship record for golf score with a Par-72 in 55 minutes at Bandon Dunes in Oregon. I withdrew from the 2014 event due to our move back from Europe to the US and I also didn't compete in 2015.

As an incentive to lose some extra weight I had put on during those 3 years off, I decided to compete and managed to shed about 7 pounds and improve my running in the weeks leading up to the tournament. I was hoping to post a good golf score but I got a little greedy off the tee trying to cut off doglegs and 4 double bogeys lead to a 78.



*Swing Man Golf's Jaacob Bowden snaps a selfie with 2-time Speedgolf World Champion Rob Hogan and the Pace of Change's Podcast Co-Host Dude Spellings.*

I'm thinking about competing again next year. For me to be competitive and be in a position to win, I'd need to lose another 10 pounds to get back to my speedgolf weight. I'd have to build up my running base again. I'd also like to get my swing speed back up. In 2015, I had a season peak of 133 mph with averages in the low 120s, but with my busy schedule and the launch of Sterling Irons®, I didn't work out as much as I'd ideally like in 2016 and my fastest speed this year was 116 mph with on-course averages mostly between 105-110 mph.

We'll see how it goes.

Anyway, Gretchen Johnson repeated as the Ladies Champion shooting an amazing Par-72 in only 57 minutes.

Rob Hogan was the event favorite finishing 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in every speedgolf event he's ever competed in since the end of 2012. Rob finished in a tie for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 52-year old amateur Jamie Young who also shot Par-72 in 50 minutes...followed by a 77 in 51 minutes.

I believe that brings the total number of golfers to shoot par in under an hour at the World Championships to five...myself, Christopher Smith, Scott Dawley, and now Gretchen and Jamie. Perhaps next year someone will break par!

More information about Speedgolf and the World Championships is available at <http://www.speedgolfinternational.com>.

Okay...let's get going!

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## Long Drive Q&A with Dewald Gouws

Age: 29

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 215lbs

Driver Specs:

3degree Mutant 2.0

HOF Platinum and Force (XXX)



Sponsors:

Mutant Golf  
BARBASOL (bag)  
Titleist (standard clubs)  
Druh Belts

Special Accomplishments:

2008 WLDC Runner up

What is your longest drive in competition?

465 yards

What were the conditions of the drive?

Pretoria South Africa, Remax tournament, 3-5mph downwind and off the left. Kikuyu fairway.

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

148 mph (2008 SA champs)

What lead you to choose your particular equipment specifications?

Mutant Golf gave me a few heads to try and they felt great. Looks like a playing driver with square features so I can read the face better. I've been a HOF fan for a long time, great shafts.

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

Depending on conditions it will differ. I naturally hit a draw but if the situation calls for a different shot I can change. I hit the ball



pretty high so most times hitting a draw helps with some run. If the wind is blowing from the left however it's useless to try and fight the wind with a draw and that's when I'll make an adjustment.

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

I don't use any training aid that much. I'm also not one of the fastest swing speeds out there so my training on the range will be 90% irons. Since I played a lot of tournament golf when I was younger I like focusing more on rhythm and tempo to help me gain yards which hitting a lot of irons definitely helps with.

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

I'm addicted to weight training which doesn't always help with my golf swing. Stretching (especially glutes and hamstrings) and core work luckily does help with my swing I've noticed so I'll make sure to spend some time on that.

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

The best advice I've ever received is you're hitting a golf ball and you need a golf swing to hit a golf ball. So working on better technique mixed with better flexibility will give you better distance without you trying to force it out there.



Where can people contact you or learn more about you?

Twitter: @dgouws



## Why Do My Fairway Woods Go the Same Distance or Even Shorter Than my Driver?

By Tom Wishon

If this is a question you have asked yourself, first of all, don't feel bad and do not think something is wrong with your game or your swing. If you find you hit your 3-wood or both the 3 and 5-woods as far or even farther than your driver, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Not by a longshot!



In fact, based on my many years of experience in clubfitting research, the majority of golfers find that they hit at least one of their fairway woods as far if not farther than they hit their driver.

Why?

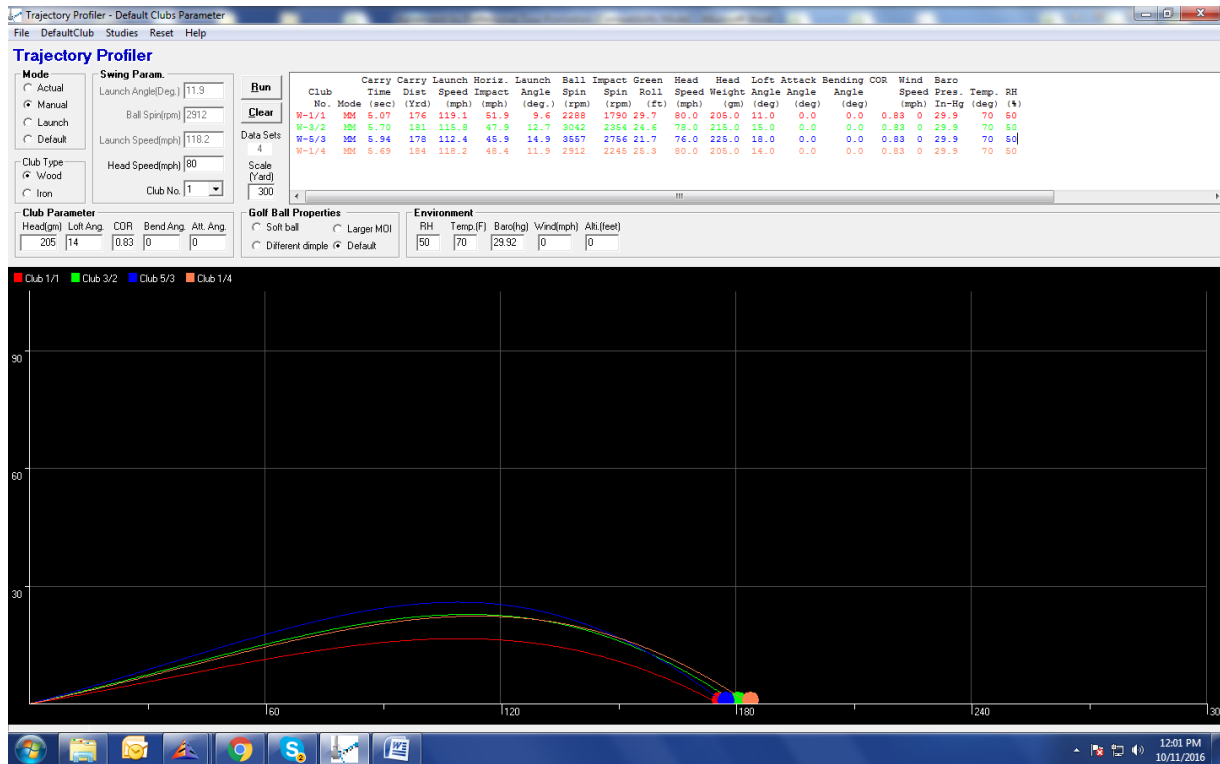
And what can be done about it?

Let's get something straight.

Hitting your 3-wood or 5-wood about the same distance or even a little longer than your driver is a very strong indication that your driver does not match to your Clubhead Speed and your Angle of Attack into the ball. In short, you're not using enough loft on your driver to optimize your clubhead speed and angle of attack into the most distance possible for YOUR swing (Note: clubhead speed is obvious whereas angle of attack is not). The A of A is the angle at which the clubhead travels on the downswing to hit the ball. This can be Downward (often indicated with a negative number), Level or Upward (shown with a positive number).

Rather than just talk about it, let's take a look at some examples as illustrated by a computer modeling of shots hit with golf clubs by regular golfers.

In the first screen image and data, we'll take a look at a golfer with a driver clubhead speed of 80mph. This represents a typical senior male golfer or a woman with above average clubhead speed.



The **Red line** represents a shot hit by a 11\* loft driver of 44” swung at 80 mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

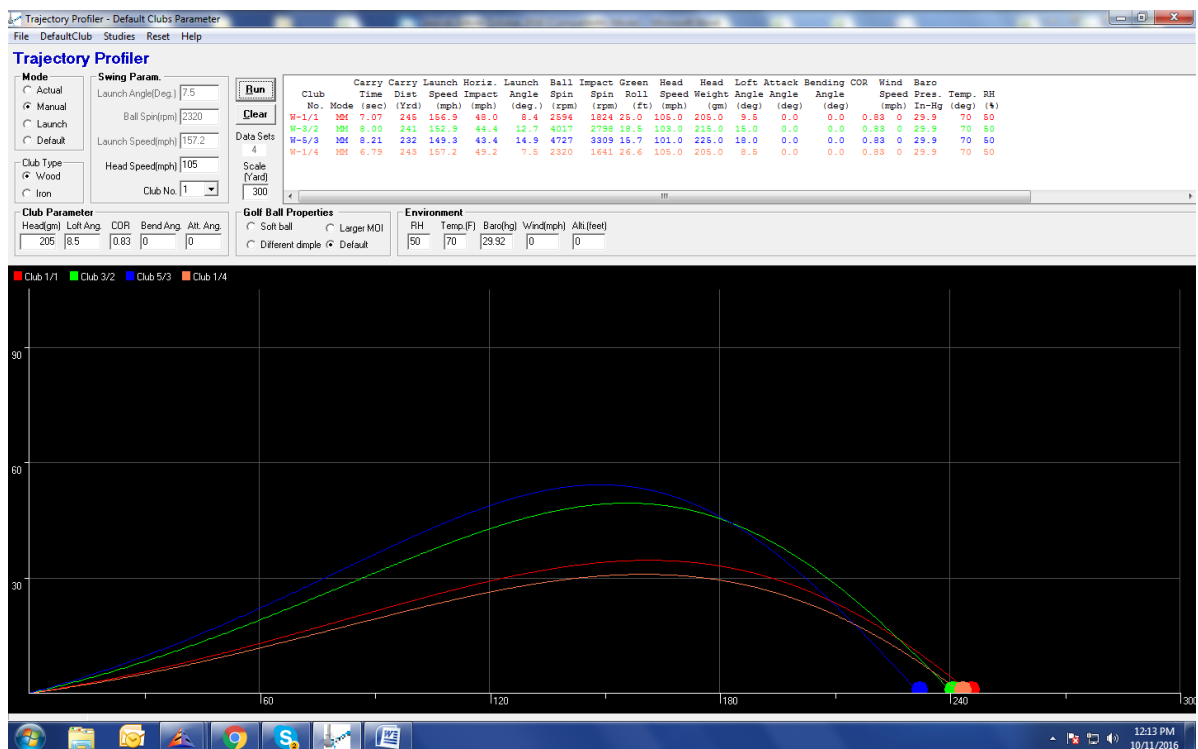
The **Green line** is a shot hit by a 15\* loft #3 wood of 42.5” swung at 78mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

The **Blue line** is a shot hit by a 18\* loft #5 wood of 41.5” swung at 76mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

As you can see the carry distance for the 11\* loft driver is 7 yards shorter than the carry distance for the 15\* Loft 3-wood. The carry distance for the 5-wood is 4 yards longer than the carry distance for the 11\* loft driver.

But now look at the shot as depicted with the **Orange Line**. This represents a shot hit with a 14\* loft driver at 44” length, at the same 80 mph clubhead speed with a level Angle of Attack. As you can see, the higher loft does add distance to carry the ball longer than with the fairway woods.

Next, let’s take a look at a golfer with a higher clubhead speed of 105mph with the driver.



The **Red line** represents a shot hit by a 9.5\* loft driver of 44” swung at 105 mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

The **Green line** is a shot hit by a 15\* loft 3-wood of 42.5” swung at 103 mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

The **Blue line** is a shot hit by a 18\* loft 5-wood of 41.5” swung at 101 mph with a level Angle of Attack into the ball.

As you can see the carry distance for the 9.5\* loft driver is longer than the carry distance for the 15\* Loft 3-wood. The carry distance for the 5-wood is shorter than the carry distance for the driver and for the 3 wood. Next look at the shot as depicted with the **Orange Line**. This represents a shot hit with an 8.5\* loft driver at 44” length, at the same 105 mph clubhead speed with a level Angle of Attack. As you can see, the lower loft actually reduces the carry distance of the driver, thus showing that this golfer with a 105 mph driver speed and level angle of attack is optimized for maximum distance when using a 9.5\* loft driver.

Remember, the physics of golf club performance dictates that less loft in the irons can hit the ball farther for all golfers. But when it comes to the driver, the loft has to be properly fit to each golfer’s combination of clubhead speed and the angle of attack. And the best way to get that done is to work with a competent, experienced independent clubfitter.

To find an experienced clubfitter with whom you may work to be properly fit, you can take a moment to head to this search locator tool - <http://wishongolf.com/find-a-clubfitter/> - input your location and the clubfitters closest to you will be displayed.

Good luck and may there be more distance to be had for you in this great game!

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## Feedback

By Adam Young

Anyone who has successfully made a change in their golf swing understands that what they feel they are doing and what they are actually doing can be worlds apart.



This can cause havoc when making a change, because we can often believe that we are doing what we are supposed to. I have seen countless people (in fact, very close to 50% of people) completely mis-read where they have struck on the face - thinking they have hit the toe of the club when they have actually hit the shank.

Imagine the problem these people have when they now try to fix the issue. This is why golfers often get worse when practicing more - because they haven't a clue what is actually happening.

So, what can we do about this?

## Feedback

In my teaching, one of the most powerful tools I use is simply giving the student **quality feedback**.

In fact, I see so many golfers improve instantly, purely as a result of the feedback, without any intervention having to be made by myself. As an example, this week I had a single figure handicap player complaining of inconsistency and poor feeling at impact. As I started my info gathering part of the session by looking at his strike (using a dry erase marker pen), he quickly noticed that he was striking everything out of the toe of the club.



Within minutes, he was able to self-adjust and shift the pattern more towards the sweet spot. Trackman showed us that he gained 10 yards of carry distance, as well as tightening the dispersion in all dimensions.

Why wasn't he able to do this on his own?

Simple - he didn't know what was happening.

## **Bridging the gap**

The beautiful thing about being a human is that, as long as we know...

- What we want
- If we are doing it or not

...our brains can do a hell of a lot of good stuff to close down the gap.



Some people fall at the first hurdle - they don't know what it is that they need to do to create a good shot. Others fall at the second - they don't know if they are doing it. Feedback is the way we bridge the gap between feel and real and make improvements quicker.

Let's face it, how quickly would you learn to play darts if you were blindfolded? Knowing what just happened is vital to improve.

## **Forms of feedback**

On the market today, there are countless forms of quality feedback we can use.

### **Basic**

- Marker pen/face spray/face tape for strike location
- A tee or a coin on the ground to look at divot/grass brushing location
- Video phones with analyzer apps
- Good quality training aids (there are a lot of crappy ones on the market too)
- Even the ball flight itself is a great form of feedback if you know what you are looking for and you can interpret the information.

I also do a lot of practice drills in a fairway bunker with my students, as it tells us a lot about how the club is swinging in all dimensions (low point, arc depth etc).

### **Advanced feedback**

If you have the opportunity, there are some great bits of kit out there that many teaching professionals now use (myself included) to get a more accurate diagnosis of your swing/game.

For example, I use Trackman, which can give you almost anything you need to know about ball flight and club data, including things such as:



- Swing path
- Launch angle
- Spin rates
- Strike quality
- Carry/total distances

...and much much more.

In fact, I used data on spin and launch angle to optimize my own swing and pick up 56 yards of distance with my driver.

## Best form of feedback

The best form of feedback you can get is to visit your professional instructor.

They have the thousands of hours of teaching experience, knowledge, and know-how to give you the correct medication for your issues. Whereas you see the tip of the iceberg, or the symptoms of an issue (such as a chicken wing), your pro can instantly see the underlying causes and link it back in a cause - effect chain reaction. This allows the pro to get to the root of the issue, rather than trying to treat the symptom (which may cause more harm than good).

## 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.

To learn more about what forms of feedback to use to improve, how to train effectively and create a pro-quality plan of action for you game, visit <http://tinyurl.com/adamyounggolf>.

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## Your Questions Answered

### Member Question:

*Dear Jaacob, should I do the basic training first before doing the advanced? I have time to hit the gym and focus on this for the next 30-60 days so I was wondering how much to train with you to build an advanced training program. Thanks, Hendrik H, California, 43 years old, +1 handicap*

### Jaacob's Answer:

Yeah, I would say start with the basic training and see how you feel. Sometimes it's more than enough of a workout for those that aren't used to it. But if you feel like it's pretty easy, go ahead and start adding more advanced training components. Where you start and how much you take on will depend on the person and level of conditioning.

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## Member of the Month

“All you doubters regarding these Sterling Irons® single length irons. If you want to improve your golf game you need consistency. That’s what these clubs do. Every swing is the same. I need consistency because I’m legally blind. I’ve been golfing with my Sterling Irons® for almost 4 months now. I used to shoot a 110 to 115. I am now under a 100 consistently. Just last week I shot a 93, 94, and a 96.

ALSO, me and my golf coach/friend took 1<sup>st</sup> place in our tournament. Your product is the BEST”

–Britton Munoz

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## Finishing Up With Fun



A golfer goes in to the pro shop and looks around frowning. Finally, the pro asks him what he wants.

“I can’t find any green golf balls,” the golfer replies.

The pro looks all over the shop, and through all the catalogs, and finally calls the manufacturers and determines that sure enough, there are no green golf balls.

As the golfer walks out the door in disgust, the pro asks him, "Before you go, could you tell me why you want green golf balls?"

Well obviously, because they would be so much easier to find in the sand traps!"

**We hope you enjoyed the Monthly Handicap Improver...feel free to contact us at [info@swingmangolf.com](mailto:info@swingmangolf.com) with questions, comments, suggestions, etc!**

Have a great month!