

Golf Insider

IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR GAME

Get those lazy houseguests busy

Your muscles are like lazy houseguests: They just lie around, content to do nothing until you force them to get moving. And never is this propensity to be lazy more prevalent than when you move the club to the top of your swing.

Your club weighs only a few ounces, so it's easy to "get it to the top" by simply hoisting it up there with no attention to creating coil. But coil, i.e. turning your upper body more than your hips, is essential to a powerful swing.

The rule of thumb is that to maximize your power, you want to turn your shoulders at least twice as much as you rotate your hips while keeping the spine angle you started with at address.

In the first photo below, I've made an OK turn, but the ratio of my hip turn to my shoulder turn is not what it should be. I'd estimate that I've turned my hips 45 degrees and my shoulders 80 degrees — less than the 2-to-1 ratio of which I'm capable.

Everybody is a bit different in flexibility — some might be very flexible and turn their shoulders 100 degrees, while others are a little stiff and turn them only 75 degrees. Some of the tour pros, like Tiger Woods and Vijay Singh, even exceed the 2-to-1 guideline by making huge shoulder turns.

In the second photo, I've "doubled up" for a 2-to-1 ratio. You can see how much more torque I've produced in my coil as evidenced by the increased number of wrinkles in my shirt. I'll hit my irons 10 yards more and my driver 20 yards farther from this position than from the first position.

To better understand coil, do the following exercise: Take your normal setup and then stand up straight, with fully extended arms so that the club shaft is parallel to the ground. Keeping your feet flat on the ground, make a back swing and stop when your hands are over your toe line. You should feel your hips turn slightly in response to the pull of your shoulders. When you do this, you'll be able to sense the tension in your back between your shoulders and hips. That's the beginning of coil. A good coil stores energy when you make your backswing, then releases it on the forward swing, but without a proper shoulder turn, you can't coil enough to generate the power you need.



I'm cheating on my coil here, and I'll pay the price in loss of distance. The ball may go straight, but it will be short of target.



A bigger shoulder turn translates into receiving the "true value" of the club, i.e., I get the distance I plan for. Golf is a game where surprises are not good.

THE GOLF DOCTOR

Try turning both shoulders to ensure proper form

We've established that your muscles don't like to stretch, and while it may be wrong, it's much easier to just cheat on the shoulder turn and simply lift the club up to the top of your swing.

Here's a way to ensure a complete shoulder turn: Turn both shoulders. To make sure both shoulders turn properly, you'll need to keep them moving at a 90-degree angle to your spine. When you do, your target shoulder moves down under your chin while your rear shoulder moves up behind your neck.

To get the feel of how to turn your shoulders correctly, first stand upright so your shoulders form a perpendicular line with your spine, level to the ground. Then place a club across your shoulders and anchor it with your hands. This represents your shoulder line.

Next, bend from the waist into your golf posture and turn your shoulders so the club slants toward the

Woods, Mickelson to skip season finale

By STAN AUTREY
Cox News Service

Atlanta
A loud cheer could be heard Sunday at East-Lake Golf Club when it was announced that Ernie Els had qualified for the field of this week's Tour Championship.

Tournament director Todd Rhinehart told a group of 750 volunteers at a recognition day that "The Big Easy" had survived some Sunday travails and earned a spot in the PGA Tour's grand finale. The pronouncement drew plenty of whoops and hollers.

"There were a lot of happy volunteers when I made that announcement," Rhinehart said. And one happy tournament director, too.

"Ernie is a great draw, and he really tried hard to make the Tour Championship after he missed it last year with his knee surgery," Rhinehart said. "We're glad he's coming back."

Even more important, in a field without charismatic No. 1 Tiger Woods and No. 3 Phil Mickelson, Els provides more sizzle and name recognition for the average golf fan.

Els, a former No. 1-ranked player and winner of three major championships, seemed to be playing himself out of Tour Championship consideration with a front-nine 39 during the final round of the Chrysler Championship. He changed the momentum with an eagle at No. 15 and a remarkable up-and-down par from the woods at No. 18, which sealed his invitation.

"I played a very poor front nine, and that took me out of the tournament," Els said. "But I knew I had other stuff to take care of, and I wanted to take care of that."

Els finished tied for sixth, one shot behind Joe Durant, who tied for fourth with Jonathan Byrd. K.J. Choi won the Chrysler Championship and moved from No. 68 to No. 26 on the money list and into the Tour Championship for the fourth time.

Nelson's glory 'worth the wait'

Late bloomer among several inducted in Hall

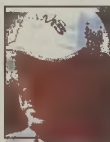
By CRAIG DOLCH
Cox News Service

West Palm Beach, Fla.
It took Larry Nelson a lot longer than most thought to realize a golfer's ultimate moment — getting inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in St. Augustine, Fla.

But Nelson is OK with that. Really, he is. Nelson, after all, was a late arrival into the game.

Nelson still remembers sitting in a foxhole in Vietnam when he was 21, listening to a soldier he admired for his toughness talking about how he couldn't wait to go back to the United States and play golf.

"All I was thinking about was having a cheeseburger and a milkshake when I got home," Nelson said. "But the idea of playing golf stuck with me. Up until then, I thought it was a sissy sport."



NELSON



BEN GRAY / Cox News Service

Ernie Els hits out of a trap during the Masters on April 9 in Augusta, Ga. Els will be returning to Georgia this week to play in the Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta.

Golfers praise course

The professionals who play more than a few artificially enhanced courses during the season are happy to finish the year at East Lake Golf Club's Botox-free classic design.

"It's an awesome golf course," said Zach Johnson, playing in his second Tour Championship. "The history speaks for itself with Mr. [Bobby] Jones. It's just a good, classic golf course. It's hard to find a negative."

The course was designed by Tom Bendelov (1904) and Donald Ross (1914). George Cobb was brought in to make changes in 1959. Reese Jones renovated East Lake in 1994 and restored it to prominence.

"It's a good golf course," Stewart Cink said. "The players like it. The layout is fantastic; it's difficult, narrow, and you've got to do it all. It's not just a putting contest. Your short game really gets a workout. It has no shortcomings as a tournament venue."

— Stan Autrey

"It's the best result we could possibly have," Rhinehart said. "K.J. has played here in the past and he's a great guy, and Ernie battled his way back to make it here."

The presence of Els means seven of the world's top-10 ranked players will be at East Lake. No. 2 Jim Furyk, No. 4 Adam Scott, No. 5 Vijay Singh, No. 6 Retief Goosen,

No. 7 Els, No. 8 Luke Donald and No. 10 Geoff Ogilvy. Woods and Mickelson chose not to play, and No. 9 Sergio Garcia didn't qualify.

The Tour Championship field includes 11 first-time participants, among them reigning U.S. Open champion Ogilvy and likely PGA rookie of the year Trevor Immelman.

There are seven members of the U.S. Ryder Cup in the event: Furyk, David Toms, Stewart Cink, Chad Campbell, Brett Wetterich, Zach Johnson and J.J. Henry. Defending champion Bart Bryant, who set a tournament scoring record last year did not qualify for this year's field.

Wetterich, second at Chrysler, was excited about coming to Atlanta.

"It's your reward for playing well all year," he said. "I finally get to experience it. I can't wait to go and play, just to get there, and hang out, and hopefully play some good golf at the same time."

Woods, a winner of his past six individual events, will skip the PGA Tour's season-ending event, taking a bit of steam from one of professional golf's flagship events.

"Playing seven out of nine weeks with an additional trip to Ireland for Ryder Cup practice was taxing both mentally and physically and I feel like I need another week away from competitive golf," Woods wrote on his Web site. "I'm confident that this extended break will help me to recharge my batteries for the 2007 season."

Smith, one of the 13 founding members of the LPGA, won all of her 21 titles from 1954-72. She then turned her attention to teaching and giving clinics, helping to start the LPGA Teaching Division. Her nickname, "Miss Personality," illustrates how she became one of golf's greatest ambassadors.

"Golf has been so good to me," Smith told The Kansas City Star. "I've been to all 50 states, 36 countries, met five presidents. This game has been an incredible gift."

Among Picard's 26 victories were the 1938 Masters and the 1939 PGA Championship. Beyond that, he was considered one of the game's greatest teachers, credited with the development of Ben Hogan and for encouraging Sam Snead to play the Tour.

McCormack turned a handshake deal with Arnold Palmer into one of sport's biggest management companies, IMG. He was selected through the Lifetime Achievement category.

"Very few things could have pleased me more than when I found out Mark had been chosen for induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame," said Palmer, who introduced him at the ceremony.



Dr. T.J. Tomasi

Dr. T.J. Tomasi is a teaching professional at Nantuxet Golf Club on Nantuxet Island, Mass. To ask him a question about golf, e-mail him at: T.Jinsider@aol.com.

ASK THE PRO

Q: I'm about to buy a set of used clubs, and the guy says they're offset, which is (according to him) just what I need since I'm a beginner. Is offset good for me at this stage? —R.A.

A: There are two club head designs that can influence your ball flight: non-offset, where the leading edge of the clubface and the neck are in line, and offset, where the leading edge is behind the neck of the clubhead. The non-offset configuration hits the ball lower and is more anti-hook while the offset produces a higher ball flight and cuts down on your slice tendencies.

SCHEDULE

All Times EST
PGA TOUR
Tour Championship
• Site: Atlanta.
• Schedule: Thursday-Sunday.
• Course: East Lake Golf Club (7,154 yards, par 70).
• Purse: \$6.5 million. Winner's share: \$1.17 million.
• TV: ESPN (Thursday-Friday, noon-5 p.m.), ABC (Saturday, 3:30-7 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m.) and ESPN2 (Sunday, noon-1 p.m.).

LPGA TOUR/JAPAN
PGA TOUR
Mizuno Classic
• Site: Mie, Japan.
• Schedule: Friday-Sunday.
• Course: Kashikojima Country Club (6,506 yards, par 72).
• Purse: \$1.2 million. Winner's share: \$180,000.
• TV: None.

PGA EUROPEAN TOUR
• Next event: HSBC Champions, Nov. 9-12, Sheshan International Golf Club, Shanghai, China.
• Last week: Ireland's Padraig Harrington won the European Order of Merit with a second-place tie in the Volvo Masters.

NATIONWIDE TOUR
• Next event: Nationwide Tour Championship, Nov. 9-12, The Houstonian Golf and Country Club, Richmond, Texas.

• Last week: Former Georgia Tech star Bryce Molder won his first professional title, beating Boo Weekley by a stroke in the Micoosukee Championship in Miami. Molder earned \$90,000 in the final full-field Nationwide event of the 2006 season to jump from 49th to 21st on the money list with \$202,087. The top 22 at the end of the season earn PGA Tour cards.

LEADERS

WORLD RANKINGS

1. Tiger Woods	21.96
2. Jim Furyk	8.83
3. Phil Mickelson	8.22
4. Adam Scott	6.95
5. Vijay Singh	6.55
6. Retief Goosen	6.18
7. Ernie Els	6.06
8. Luke Donald	5.84
9. Sergio Garcia	5.79
10. Geoff Ogilvy	5.51
11. P. Harrington	5.05
12. Henrik Stenson	4.67
13. T. Immelman	4.58
14. David Howell	4.54
15. Paul Casey	4.22
16. Davis Love III	4.17
17. David Toms	4.15
18. C. Montgomerie	4.03
19. Chris DiMarco	3.87
20. J. Olazababal	3.81

MONEY LEADERS

Player	Money
1. Tiger Woods	\$9,941,563
2. Jim Furyk	\$6,483,316
3. Vijay Singh	\$4,387,416
4. Phil Mickelson	\$4,256,505
5. Geoff Ogilvy	\$4,228,869
6. Adam Scott	\$3,808,858
7. T. Immelman	\$3,578,189
8. Stuart Appleby	\$3,287,657
9. Luke Donald	\$2,911,408
10. B. Wetterich	\$2,904,885

LPGA TOUR

Player	Money
1. Lorena Ochoa	\$2,342,872
2. A. Sorenstam	\$1,906,126
3. Karrie Webb	\$1,889,613
4. Cristie Kerr	\$1,539,501
5. Mi Hyun Kim	\$1,308,616

CHAMPIONS TOUR

Player	Money
1. Jay Haas	\$2,420,227
2. Loren Roberts	\$2,365,395
3. Brad Bryant	\$1,692,417
4. Tom Kite	\$1,643,348
5. Gil Morgan	\$1,525,050

As a beginner, offset is probably the way to go. You'll hit it higher because the center of gravity is farther behind the shaft, and since your hands are more in front of the clubface, it gives you more time to square the clubface at impact, reducing the tendency to slice the ball.

The key then is to be properly fitted for both your woods and irons when it comes to offset.

Generally speaking, it is not a good idea to mix offset and non-offset clubs.

If you have offset irons, you should have offset woods and vice versa.