



# How many clubs do you take to the course??

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ELITECOACHING.COM GOLF ACADEMY

# DESIRE

All top players carry 14 clubs on the course, each designed for different uses to then be used in the many different situations that can be encountered during a round of golf.

But if the question was re-phrased to “How many mental clubs do you take to the course?”, the answer for a lot of players is very different.

### What are “mental clubs?”

They are the different tools at your disposal when faced with different mental situations on the course. Just like when you need a different club when you play a 250 metre drive as opposed to a soft lob shot, golfers’ need different mental skills (“clubs”) to help them overcome the mental challenges that players face within a round of golf. To give an example of just a few mental “clubs” that a golfer need to take with him (and there are too many to list here in this newsletter);

- Thought awareness and control
- Disassociation – processing poor shots
- Concentration skills – learning to switch the focus on and off
- Self talk – hiring a good inner caddy

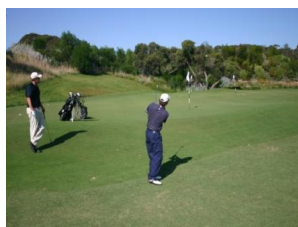
- Controlling emotional and physiological state – getting and staying in the zone

Plus many more....

### How do I learn these?

The first stage to a mental training program is assessment and profiling to find out the needs of that particular player. The next stage is learning and education process, first away from the course. This is where our Golfing Education Programs help.

A lot of good amateurs and young professionals spend the winter (which is an invaluable time to develop all areas of the game for the forthcoming season) either doing very little, or at best going to a warmer climate such as Spain or Florida, and practicing on their own or with a friend. In our opinion this is not the most effective way to develop your game.



Just take the example of a young 20 year old trainee lawyer - in order for him to become a lawyer he has a structured training Program (usually first at University), which eventually leads him to having all the necessary skills to work as a lawyer. It would be a lot more difficult if the 20 year old was told, “Just go to the library on your own for the next 5 years and study yourself”. But in effect, this is what happens to a lot of young golfers.

At the elitecoaching.com Golf Academy we offer a Program where young ambitious golfers’ have the opportunity to learn the necessary skills in order to be a top golfer— Technical, Mental, Management and Physical conditioning.

Our Winter Program starts this winter in Australia, and students can enroll from a **minimum** of 5 weeks. With our partnership with the Australian Institute of Sport, one of the leading golf Programs/facilities in the world, this is an outstanding opportunity for all young golfers’.

***If you are serious about your game, and want to play next season with a “full set of clubs”, can you really afford to not to come? More information at [www.elitecoaching.com](http://www.elitecoaching.com)***

## Evian Masters



Our annual visit to the Evian Masters created a lot of excitement, especially amongst the female students, as all the Top Lady Professionals’ were playing. Student Tatiana Kernan said, “I enjoyed watching

Michelle Wie. She hit the ball so far and straight, but her swing was so rhythmical and controlled.”

Academy director Jon Wallett says, “Watching tournaments live is a very strong motivation for young golfers’. It fosters dreams within young players’ minds, and creates some of the battery power to follow and achieve these dreams”.



# Victim or Competitor?

*How often do you hear the phrase, “I just don’t understand it – I play well in practice, but when a tournament comes everything seems to go wrong?!”*

Tournaments tend to create a different level of stress on a player than a practice round, and learning to control this stress is a skill that needs to be learnt.

Creating an effective “tournament mentality” is one of the steps to you can learn to help you play your best golf when it matters most.

During a tournament round, let’s look at what you **can** control and what you **can’t** control;

## What can you control?

- Thoughts on the golf course (between shots and response/reaction to shots)
- Pre Shot Routine

## What can’t you control?

- Weather/condition of the golf course
- Bounce/luck
- Other competitors results
- YOUR results
- YOUR swing technique on the golf course

So why **talk** and **think** about things that you can’t control?

“When players complain about the course or conditions, that’s one less player I have to compete with” J NICKLAUS

But I often hear amateurs say – “It frustrates me that I hit good shots on the range but then on the course I go to pieces”. Let’s just ask ourselves this question;

## What is golf?

Is it a game like ice skating where judges hold up a technical merit mark afterwards, and where if you make one bad mistake, like a fall, the tournament finishes? Of course not!! Golf is;

- A game played on a golf course not a driving range
- A game of mistakes – the best round will only have 4 or 5 perfect shots
- A game where luck is an integral part of the game
- A game which creates mental challenges

## GOLF IS A GAME WHERE THE WINNER IS THE PLAYER WHO REACTS TO THESE MENTAL CHALLENGES THE BEST

## Are you a “competitor” or are you a “victim”???

### Traits of a competitor

- Focused and mentally alert, in the flow, in the zone
- Staying in the present – playing one shot at a time
- Calm and controlled
- Handles the mental challenges that the game of golf presents

### Traits of a victim

- Negative self talk, often sarcastic bemoaning about their bad luck
- Thinking in the past or the future
- Poor body language
- Impatient and irritable

“Ask yourself how many shots you would of saved if you never lost your temper, and never got down on yourself” JACK NICKLAUS

## How can I learn to become a “competitor?”

1. **Become aware of your self-talk** – one exercise that we use is to take a scorecard, and make two columns – one with “competitor style” thoughts (e.g after a 3 putt – “even great putters 3 putt sometimes”), and then the other column for “victim style” thoughts (e.g after a 3 putt – the greens are really bad and I been putting poor for a long time now”). Everytime you experience a thought, make a tally in each column depending upon what type of thought it is. At our Academy we call this the “mental scorecard”. At the end of say 9 holes you may have a score like 35 “victim” thoughts, “5 competitor” thoughts. Work with this exercise over several months and just by becoming more aware of your self talk you will notice that the balance will begin to change

2. **Choose the hat** – another exercise we use at our Academy is that we ask the students to put on the hat that reflects their mood – we have different colours and writing on the hats to represent different moods – red for anger (victim), black for depressed and frustrated (victim) and bright yellow for focused, in control and ready to compete (competitor)



## SUMMARY

If you want to play your best golf when it matters most, focus on **WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL**, and not on what you can’t control. Make the decision to be a “Competitor”.