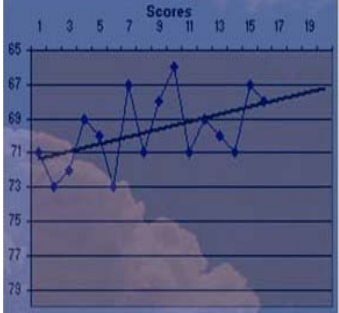


The Lone Ranger

TECHNIQUE
MANAGEMENT
MENTAL
PHYSIOLOGY
EXCELLENCE
FUN



Golf is an individual sport. But does that mean that elite players should train alone? I think many players are brainwashed by parents or peers that ‘you have to do your time’ on the range—meaning that in order to be the best player you can be you need to become a ‘lone ranger’! Is this fact or fiction? Well first of all let’s look at some of the best players in history and look at how they spent their time in their formative years.

Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson grew up as caddies at the same golf club, and the annual caddy championship was as much a major to them as any US Master’s in their autobiographies. The caddy yard was a place where many great players were shaped, just as the shanty towns of Brazil and Argentina have fostered footballers like Pele and Maradona. The un-proportionate number of successful Tour Pro’s from the relatively sparsely golf course populated countries such as Argentina and Spain are testament to that.

Many of the modern players benefited from the US College environment—players like Tom Watson, Mark O’Meara, Phil Mickleson, Colin Montgomerie, Tiger Woods, Paul Casey, Luke Donald etc to name just a few.

More recently many players have developed through the group training environment of elite golf programs such as the VIS or AIS in Australia—players such as Stuart Appleby, Richard Green, Matthew Goggin, Michael Sim etc. Sweden developed their players from a starting point of no Tour Pro’s in the early 1980s to a major force with considerable depth in the Pro game with their ‘Team Sweden’ program.

Some modern players which were not in a ‘formal’ development program benefited from a hugely competitive club environment. Workstop GC, Broome Manor GC, Sand Moor GC in the UK churned out a number of Tour Pro’s, including players such as Lee Westwood, David Howell and Mark Foster.

At the golf club where I grew up, a club with a 130 year history, produced 4 players who represented their country at Junior level within a 5 year period in the 1980s—before and since none. Is that coincidence?

So does that mean you should only practise in a group? No—many of the players quoted spent part of their time alone, but not exclusively—their training was a mixture of individual and ‘group’ training. And when we use the term ‘group’ - we mean ‘group environment’.

It’s unrealistic to expect an athlete to be supremely motivated 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. **Motivation can be like the weather.** Some days you will be full of energy raring to go. Other days it will be a chore to do your practise routines. In fitness training it’s highly encouraged to have training partners, as a group environment adds energy and motivation and pulls the athlete through the ‘slow’ days. It’s the same with golf.

Group training allows the player to build what I call **‘competitive confidence’**. This is the critical potion every player needs to build in practise—**confidence in their skills under pressure**. Slapping away on the range is like Ronaldo practising for a World Cup penalty shoot out in his back garden with a 5 year old in goal!

Learning is not just about sitting down watching a video of your swing with your coach. Much of a player’s **learning will be from other players** and other competitors. Their learning will be shaped through their experiences—both in practise and tournaments.

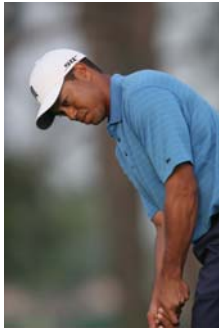
Is it coincidence that many of the best players in golf history learnt and developed their game often within a group environment? Our programs in Australia and Evian are based around some of these principles. We look to **create an environment where your game can thrive and flourish, in a competitive atmosphere.**

Look to make part of YOUR training in a group environment wherever possible. Yes, golf is an individual game, but that does not mean you need to become a hermit.

Interested to learn more about developing your golf so that you can become the player you aspire to be? Send an email to info@elitecoaching.com and we will email you our free 15 page GMAP questionnaire, and then we will give you a free of charge game assessment.

2010 US Masters Preview

With Tiger Woods' eagerly awaited return to the Tour this year's US Masters, it promises to be one of the most interesting events for quite some time.



Will Tiger win after almost 6 months of no competitive golf? Will the 'off the course' pressures make it more difficult for him to perform?

My opinion is that this year this year he will not win or be in contention come the final 9 holes on Sunday afternoon. Tiger is undoubtedly one of the greatest golfers ever and you can be sure he has been practising and preparing his game, and I think we will see some good golf from him, but inevitably interspersed with some rustiness.

So who will be this year's contenders?

Augusta is a golf course that suits both power combined with finesse around the greens. This is validated by both in yesteryear and the modern era. Ballesteros and Norman contended for most years over a 10 year stretch—both long in their day with great short games. Tiger has dominated in the modern era, together with two victories for Phil Mickelson. That does not mean a short hitter can't win, as Zach Johnson proved several years ago, but it does mean that their game has to be running at 100% in all areas.

Paul Casey has been growing in stature, and if his wrist injury has passed I expect him to contend.

Adam Scott had the most difficult year of his career in 2009, but as they say with difficulty lies also the seed of greater success, and with his first win on Australian soil in December he looks to have turned the corner. I think he will be coming to the Masters with the least golfing press

expectation for years, which I think will help him 'smell the flowers' and play his best.

Ernie Els, the big easy, has been in scintillating form of recent, and he's just too good a player not to have a Masters victory on a CV that already contains 65 career worldwide victories, so this year may just be his time.



Lee Westwood is now regularly contending in majors, and with his near flawless long game he can win as long as his putting doesn't let him down.

It promises to be a great Masters, and there will probably be some hearts broken come Sunday evening, but there will be one lucky player slipping on the coveted green jacket!

Join us for a trial training for one week!

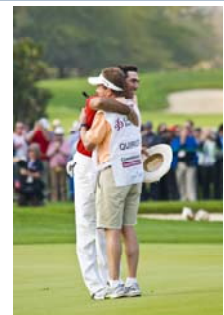
Interested in building your skills in order to make 2010 the year you dream it to be?

We are offering players the chance to join us for a **one week trial training**. Almost all calendar weeks are available, and students can then join one of our training weeks, Mon to Fri to see if they feel they can benefit from our holistic approach.

We have programs ranging from Tour Pro performance programs to junior camps. The prerequisites we demand from potential players are just ambition, discipline and desire.



- Personalised and individual solutions based on performance coaching
- Multi cultural learning environment
- Emphasis on personal development and integrity
- Lifetime experience
- Professional Golf Diploma Program available—entry dates January and May each year



Interested in learning more about our Academy? Send an email to info@elitcoaching.com

