

The magic pill for golfing success

TECHNIQUE
MANAGEMENT
MENTAL
PHYSIOLOGY
EXCELLENCE
FUN



Every player is looking to take their game to the next level—whether it is an elite amateur looking to break into the National Team or a Challenge Tour player looking to make their way onto the Main Tour. Indeed, Tiger Woods said the reason he was making changes to his swing in 2002 because he was looking to take his game to an even higher level. So a critical question becomes—**how do you take your game to the next level?**

Some players go to exceptional lengths (admirably in my opinion) in order to follow this quest for playing at a higher level. This can entail going to the TPI in Carlsbad, or getting new fitted clubs with the latest technology at a renowned fitting centre such as the PING centre in the UK. It may involve travelling to another country or continent to visit a leading swing or mind coach, or sports scientist. Is this then the magic pill for success? The most important thing to realise is that information alone will **NEVER** help you to play better—that's just phase one of the process (although naturally of course an important one). Phase two is the **APPLICATION of that information**. This is the magic pill for success, that I see very little and without doubt is the critical success factor.

What do we mean by application? The **DO-ING!** You can't learn to ski with just information—it's the application of the information that progresses any skill.

Pete Cowen cited a story recently about how he was working with a National Squad at an Autumn training camp, and stressed the importance of several key dry drills to do each day through the winter, which would take at maximum 10 minutes per day, but which he emphasised would make a critical difference in the improvement of their technique the following season. He visited the squad again in Spring, and when he asked the players who had done the drills religiously only one player put his hand up. Several others had done them sporadically. He was incredulous that such an 'elite' group of players could have that little discipline or commitment.

Dr Patrick Cohn, a leading mental coach on the PGA Tour, reinforces this concept that the application is a critical success factor.

He often finds players can understand his concepts and logic in conversations out of competition, but then when they are faced with the same situation in competition again players sometimes follow the same habitual patterns.

So what's the solution? As a coach, you have to be innovative and look for ways to help your players implement the information that you present to the player. For instance Tour Physiotherapist Ramsay McMaster has created the 'Golfers Survival kit'. This is a bag of training tools, so that are player can do their physiology training exercises without the use of a gym. Ramsay saw that his players on Tour were constantly travelling and often did not have access to a purpose built fitness studio. So with the 'Survival Kit', the player can then do the exercises in the locker room, hotel room etc. The key point to understand that as **coaches we have to design tools to help the player APPLY things**.

As a player, you have to **truly take self responsibility for your actions**—and understand that you can only **improve and succeed with ACTION and DOING**. And that does not mean blindly hitting 1000 balls a day and calling this action—what we mean by action is doing the **THINGS YOU NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE**, often outlined in partnership with your coach. This can be incredibly hard to do sometimes, as we are all often stuck sometimes in comfort zones and habitual patterns—but this is undoubtedly the key to golfing progress and success.

Interested to learn more about developing your golf so that you can become the player you aspire to be? A business colleague recently asked me what the 'Unique Selling Point of the ECGA', and my answer was – yes, we do all the other stuff, but our **player success has come through creating tools and structures to help players APPLY success strategies**.

In addition we consciously and actively look to instil a success mentality in our players.

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 OPEN preview

The 2010 US Open is being played from the 17th to 20th of June at Pebble Beach, CA. Last year Lucas Glover pulled off a remarkable victory, with a resurgent David Duval finishing 2nd, and if Glover had not finished so strongly it could have been an amazing victory for Duval.

The US Masters proved a fantastic event. My pre-tournament pick Lee Westwood ran close, but a superb 67 by Mickelson on the final day was too much for anyone. Mickelson can really establish himself as No. 1 in the World rankings this summer, and I think it'll happen as Tiger Woods seems to be in the wilderness with his game.



Westwood has now gone 3rd, 3rd and 2nd in the last 3 majors, with a 3rd at the 2008 US Open as well. I'm not sure he'll contend this time—it's very difficult to consistently peak for the majors and I rather fancy Westwood for the British Open in July.

I think two dark horses for the US Open are Adam Scott and Sergio Garcia. Scott endured the worst year of his career in '09, but then since last autumn he has steadily been on the rise culminating in a US Tour win last month.

He's just too good not to have really contended for a major so far in his career, and I definitely think he'll be in the mix come Sunday afternoon. Garcia has also endured the worst slump of his career, but he has been making encouraging noises about his game, and again when he has his 'A' game he is undoubtedly one of the best players in the world and his fine driving ability and iron play will bode him well on the demanding narrow courses with punishing rough the USGA invariably sets up for the US Open.

A critical element now is that because of their slumps, the media spotlight is less on them and I think this will bode them well as the level of expectation has rescinded which I think is a key to peak performance.

Who do you think will win?

Cocoon Concentration—*learn to develop a Zen like focus*

Many years ago, I attended a coaching conference and one of the speakers asked the audience the most critical skill necessary for golf excellence. The most popular choice was concentration (fortunately for him as this was the topic of his talk!), and then he asked how many of the coaches actively coached this skill into their students? The answer was virtually zero (including me). This struck a chord with me as I could identify through my own experiences as a player how my best performances were not necessarily when I was technically at my best, but rather when I could focus well, and distractions just passed by, rather than interfering with my game.

Cocoon Concentration—*learn to develop a Zen like focus* is the 5th workbook of our Elite Performance Series'. Chapter One discusses what concentration and focus is, Chapter Two describes the 5 key elements of 'The Zone' - the elusive concentration state that players experience when performing their best. Chapter Three then moves on to identify strategies to help players enter 'The Zone' and strategies to enhance focus during competition. The theme of Chapter Four is 'Concentration Cancers' - things that undermine a person's ability to focus, and Chapter Five is a review of the key information in the workbook. As with all our Elite Performance Series each chapter is loaded

with exercises, as we believe learning is not just about information, but the critical point is in the APPLICATION!!



It is available for pre-order and we are looking to have the first run of 100 books back from the printer early July, and then the book will be shipped out by mid-July. Cost 75 euro's—less than the price of a one hour golf lesson! To pre-order please send an email to info@elitecoaching.com

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