



# DESIRE

## Born to be a champion?



### DEVELOPING A LEARNING MENTALITY

Many young ambitious golfers, both Professional and Amateur, dedicate themselves and spend endless hours practicing their game. Some are successful, whilst others are not—so the key question is—WHY??

**“I have proved to myself what I have always said – that a good golfer doesn’t have to be born that way. He can be made. I was, and practice is what made me – practice and tough, unrelenting labour”**  
Ben HOGAN 1965

In order to improve you need to improve your SKILLS in all areas of the game (Technical, mental, management and physical conditioning). A skill is something that you can learn, develop and refine. A talent is something that you are born with. Most of what you need in order to reach a high level in golf are SKILLS.

Think of skills as “extra golf clubs” in your bag. Just like you may need a lob wedge for a greenside shot, you may need the “concentration” skill (or “club”) at certain times in your round. But if you haven’t developed that skill in practice, you won’t be able to call upon this club. As you can imagine, there are many different skills to learn, and if you haven’t learnt and developed these skills in practice, you won’t be able to use these “extra clubs” in tournaments. The problem is, you may be competing against players who HAVE learnt these extra skills, and hence have these extra specialist clubs.

But in order to get these skills, you have to have a learning mentality. What is a learning mentality?

A learning mentality is the ability and desire to develop, absorb and integrate new ideas and information into your game.

Tiger Woods is an excellent example of a learning mentality. Tiger says himself that it is one of his greatest assets,

and something that his father continually taught him during his formative years, was a thirst to learn, to continually seek new possibilities to improve further. Tiger turned Pro as the tender age of 20, with the best amateur record ever for someone of that age, and then in his first year as a Pro wins the US Masters. How many Pro’s would of then embarked on a major swing change? Whatsmore, after winning the “Tiger Slam” (2000/1), who would of then embarked on a second major swing change??

**“There is no greater satisfaction than improving. The fellow who is a 90 shooter and shoots 87 experiences the same enjoyment as the fellow who goes from 70 to 69. That’s what makes golf such a great game.”** BEN HOGAN 1957

Start your journey on a learning mentality with our Academy at Royal Pines this winter...

## AUTUMN TRAINING CAMP

At the beginning of October (Monday 2nd to Friday 6th) we will be hosting a 5 day camp. The first 3 days will be held at GC Gstaad, and then we will travel together to Crans-sur-Sierre for the last 2 days. This should prove a good opportunity to prepare well for the Credit Suisse Junior Tour event at Crans on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th October.

Coaching will be a mixture of golf education in the technical, mental and management areas of the game.

Accommodation has been organized at “Zloft”, which offers hostel style accommodation, and is located within walking distance of the Golf Club (more details available on [www.zloft.ch](http://www.zloft.ch))

Places are very limited as the group size is small so please reserve your place early in order to avoid disappointment.

Please email [info@elitecoaching.com](mailto:info@elitecoaching.com) or call +41 79 343 2524. Further information on [www.elitecoaching.com](http://www.elitecoaching.com)

## 8th Place for Oli Gilmartin in International Junior tournament



Full time ecGA student Oli Gilmartin finished a very creditable 8th place at the Harder German Junior Masters.

Juniors from as far a field as USA, Thailand and South Africa competed, and it was an excellent opportunity for Juniors to test themselves against likeminded elite players from other countries in the world.

Oli, 17 years old, shot 75, 72 and 74 on the tough Heidelberg Par 72 layout. Oli says, "I really enjoyed this tournament. It was so professionally

run, and on the last few holes there were lots of people spectating—I enjoyed this type of atmosphere and it motivates me to work on my game so I can contend more in International tournaments"

ecGA Director Jonathan Wallett adds, " Just over one year ago Oliver's handicap was 4.9 (now 1.3). But in the last year, Oliver has applied and dedicated himself to learning and developing his skills in all areas of the game. Of course this is a "work in progress", a continuing golfing education process, but Oliver has made real progress, and full credit to him—as we say at the elitecoaching.com Golf Academy, every student is the "pilot" of his own plane, and Oliver is becoming an accomplished pilot"

We have 8 key beliefs at the elite-

coaching.com Golf Academy, two of which are;

**" You get out what you put in—just like a bank account"**

**"Victories come during practice—train hard, then play easy"**

Oliver has really begun to absorb these two beliefs, and the snowball of progress is underway.



FEB '06

AUG '06

## 64 one day, 74 the next...why? It's all about AROUSAL!!

Often, on Day one of a Tour event, a "rookie" Pro shoots a course record. However, this Pro rarely is contending at the end of the tournament. Why??

Logic says that if someone is in the type of form to score 64, they should have a chance of winning the tournament. But let's take a closer look to see why this doesn't happen.

At the beginning of round one, the player has no expectations, just concentrating shot by shot in a new tournament. The player gets into the "zone", and scores a low round, for instance a 64. But the mental mindset is then completely different in the second round. Press interviews, name at the top of the leaderboard, increased expectations all lead to a different PERCEPTION by the player of the situation. The player now feels "under pressure", and has a completely different mindset to that at the start of the first round. Hence the player has a different mental state, so therefore a different physiological state, so these factors result in a decrease in performance (i.e score).

### AROUSAL LEVELS

From a psychologists' perspective, this is attributed to what is called "arousal levels". Thousands of years ago, our ancestors needed an adrenalin flow in situations of danger, commonly referred to as "fight" or "flight". This was an automatic self preservation system meant that when someone is danger, a high rush of adrenaline would act as a physiological stimulant to aid them.

In a golfing situation, this adrenalin flow, can work for you or against you. If you PERCIEVE that your ability is questionable under this added pressure (e.g "I'm leading the tournament after round one, but I've never won a Tour event before, and I'm not sure I'm ready to"), this will create STRESS which will then manifest itself in physiological anxiety. The player will be "overaroused" and this will lead to a decrease in performance—i.e the "74" the day after the "64"

So it's pretty clear, to be a top player, you need to learn first to be aware of your current "arousal" state, and whatsmore be able to control it when you feel overaroused.

### So how can you learn to control your arousal level (physiological state) ?

There are a number of ways you can do this. One way is to control your physiology, because your mental state and physiological state are intertwined. At our Academy students practice with a software programme that measures their heart rate and heart rhythms (Annika Sorenstam has practiced a lot with his programme). Learning to be aware of your physiological state, and then being able to control your physiological state through breathing and imagery is an excellent skill to have to avoid overarousal.

If you want to develop this skill, and learns other techniques for avoiding overarousal, please enroll on one of our Programs.