



Janine Young

GET FIT

“All I have to say is WOW....”

“All I have to say is WOW...,” a text message sent yesterday, the Saturday of The OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP at Turnberry, from my friend Lance Gill, Head Athletic Trainer at the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI). Me, too! And today as I sit down to write this, having been blessed with the opportunity to work with Tom Watson over the last 10 years, I feel like I may have just as many emotions running through my head and heart as Stewart Cink, as he so aptly said, after beating Tom Watson in a 4 hole playoff, on a historic Sunday in July.

I was asked, by one of my clients on Friday morning if I was surprised to see Tom atop the Leaderboard. I answered, “Absolutely not, I watched how well he played during the very difficult and very different weather conditions at Shadow Glen Golf Club, just a few weeks ago, as he solidly won the Watson Challenge.” (As a side note, for those of you who missed the opportunity to see Kansas City’s best amateur and professional golfers competing in PGA tour Major like conditions--as Tom described Shadow Glen following his win--What a great event! Make sure you put it on your calendar for next year, it is to be held at “the” Kansas City Country Club, the course Tom grew up playing. My money is on Tom)

And at almost 60, less than a year after total hip replacement surgery Tom is striking the ball as well as he ever has. His eternal passion for the game of golf, could never be questioned, it has for years inspired him to keep working towards improving his fitness level, and with that, his performance. So how can a 59-year old guy not only keep up with, but BEAT, all but one of the best players in the world? I wish I could take even a little credit, but truly it has to do with these three things: 1) EFFICIENCY, 2) FITNESS and 3) EXPERIENCE. And they all are interrelated.

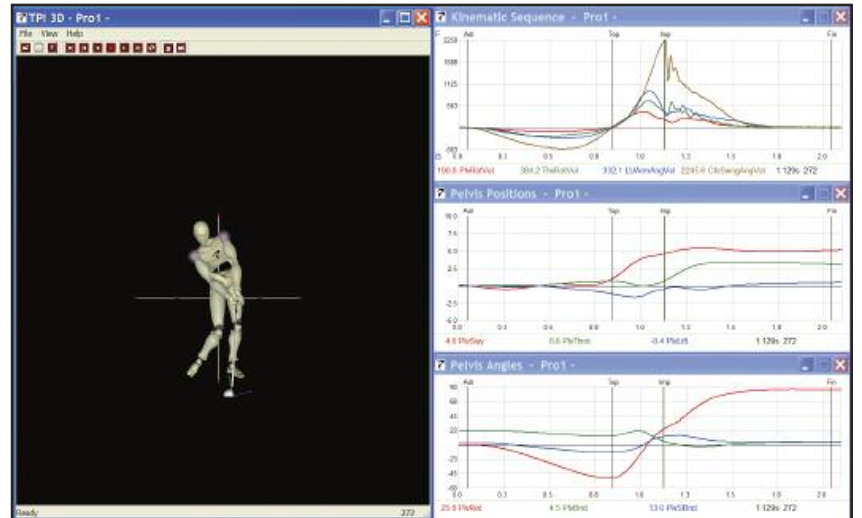
In my opinion, EFFICIENCY is the biggest difference between multiple major championship winner and the guys trying to make it on the developmental tours, and even more apparently, the average amateur. Efficiency is defined as “The production of the desired effects or results with minimum waste of time, effort, or skill. A measure of effectiveness; specifically, the useful work output divided by the energy input in any system.” How does this relate to the golf swing? Well, the golfer who minimizes his or her unwanted movements, aka, swing faults, will conserve energy, limit damage to joints and muscles. The results are obvious, less physical and mental fatigue, better GOLF! Through the use of TPI 3D Motion analysis, we can evaluate the efficiency of anybody’s golf swing or how golfers generate speed and transfer this speed or energy throughout their bodies. There is a certain sequence or “signature” of how this speed is passed on to the club head. This is called the “Kinematic Sequence”. Three things that have been shown to create efficiency or kinematic sequence breakdowns:

- 1) Improper swing mechanics.
- 2) Physical limitations
- 3) Improperly fit equipment. (see picture above, right.)

Which leads us right back to fitness. Once we have analyzed a player’s swing, and take them through a complete physical evaluation, we are able to determine how their physical attributes could be leading to this inefficiency. This process allows us to target the areas, which need to be addressed and design a training program to do so. Our Golf Biomechanists work hand in hand with the Fitness Professionals and Golf Instructors to make improvements to swing mechanics, utilizing both fitness training and golf instruction.

So back to our question about how a 59 year old, recently recovering from major hip surgery, could have possibly been leading the British Open...my answer...God-given athletic ability he has worked hard on physically to continue to improve, despite his age and injuries.

I have had the opportunity to work with many golfers who have hip issues, strik-



ing similarities in all of them are loss of range of motion in internal rotation of the hips, particularly the lead hip, and lack of glute strength. Not being able to fill out your golf shorts not only looks bad, but may also lead to instability in your golf swing. Hip mobility and stability is key to clubhead speed.

Hip Windshield Wiper Test

Here is a way to check if you need to work on internal rotation in your hips:

Start by lying on your back with your knees and hips bent to 90 degrees. Make fists with both hands and place them together between your knees. Now, without separating your hands and knees, try to move your feet as far apart as possible (like windshield wipers). The PGA tour players have over 45 degrees of internal rotation in their hips. This is the same motion that occurs in the golf swing. A right-handed golfer will rotate and load around the right hip, shifts their weight, and then rotates back posting around the left hip. Loss of internal rotation on the lead leg can result in the efficiency killers of sliding, hanging back, or early extension. If you lack hip mobility and suffer from any of the above swing faults, take the time to increase your hip mobility and Glute strength.

Cross Over Hip Stretch

Lay flat on your back with both knees up and feet flat on the ground. Next, take your right ankle and cross it over your left knee, and allow the left knee/right ankle complex to fall slowly down to the ground on the LEFT side. While the complex is slowly lowering to the left, place left hand on the RIGHT knee and gently aid this slow lowering of the legs. Once the legs have fallen completely to the left and your left hand is pulling the right knee towards the ground, you may turn your head to the right to try and get the maximum out of the stretch. Always perform this stretch in a very slow and controlled manner, never to the point of pain. Repeat procedure on opposite side.

Figure 4 Leg Press

Lying on your back in a horizontal leg press or sitting in a leg press machine, cross your right foot over your left knee. Keeping your left foot flat on the leg press plate, start to perform leg presses with just your left leg. As you get closer to the platform you will get a great stretch in your right hip and piriformis. Repeat on both sides.

Being able to reproduce an efficient swing, in an extremely high-pressure situation, is where Tom really showed how much his experience played into his success dur-



Hip Windshield Wiper Test 1



Hip Windshield Wiper Test 2



Cross Over Hip Stretch 1



Cross Over Hip Stretch 2



Figure 4 Leg Press 1



Figure 4 Leg Press

ing the Open Championship. He spoke of it being a spiritual experience and when asked, was very confident he had the game to be able to win this prestigious honor. If his physical body were not prepared, he would never have been in a position to call on his multitude of experience playing in Major Championships and Turnberry. And we all would not have had the pleasure of watching the most amazing performance in golf history. Thank you Tom for making the game great.

I think one of coolest things, which makes the game of golf so great, is that our physical bodies, can be maintained and even improved upon through the years so that we are able to enjoy playing at whatever level we choose to work towards, much into our later years.

Happy/Sad ... it kind of makes you a little sick in the tummy and the heart. I can only imagine what Tom feels....

As Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) Certified Golf Fitness Instructors, the Elite Golf and Fitness Staff is trained to implement the protocols that the PGA Touring Professionals use to identify their strengths and weaknesses to design and create their individual golf performance training programs. In order to achieve maximum success, we would encourage you to go through our complete assessment process – the Eagle, including 2D and the only TPI 3D video swing analysis available in the Kansas City Area, exclusive to the TPI and the Elite Golf and Fitness Process.

We are proud to bring to you the only complete Titleist Performance Institute Model in the Midwest and announce our new partnership with Tony Phillips and his staff of the Inside Sports Clinic and our new location “Inside” Will Shields’ 68 Inside Sports Complex located at 11301 W. 88th St., Overland Park, KS 66214

Interested in finding out more? Contact us at 913-226-7092, or www.elitegolffitness.com.