



The Official Certification Body
For Teachers In India

Up To Par

With the NGAI

"An Initiative of the Indian Golf Union"

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From the Editor



The Olympic Games were held in Rio last month and the return of golf after a hundred years was a grand success. It was also fitting that Justin Rose and Henrik Stenson won the Gold and the Silver medals respectively. Both players had supported participation in the Olympics while a lot of other top ranked professionals were withdrawing due to the Zika virus scare. With golf returning as an Olympic sport, a lot of countries will put the emphasis and financial backing behind investing into their golfers in much the same way as they would do for their medal hopefuls in other sports.

A special mention here is due for Aditi Ashok. Aditi was the youngest player in the field and was competing with the best players in the world. At a stage on day 2 of the competition, she was leading the event and India was harboring dreams of a medal in golf. Aditi's performance made every Indian as well as the golfing world notice her and though she could not finish on the podium, I am sure she will inspire many young Indians to emulate her.

For India, it was a disappointing campaign as only PV Sindhu and Sakshi Malik finished amongst the medals with Sindhu taking Silver in Badminton and Sakshi claiming bronze in Wrestling. Dipa Karmakar was unlucky to miss out on a medal in Gymnastics but became the first Indian to qualify for the final stage at an Olympic level. Overall, the Indian women performed better than the men and brought some cheer to an otherwise dismal campaign.

There was a lot of introspection on why the medal haul was very low and various theories pertaining to training, budgets, coaching, facilities etc made the rounds after India's poor show. India's best golfer, Anirban Lahiri was at the Olympics and experienced it first-hand. As he put it, an Indian athlete succeeds not because of the system but in spite of the system. This was also evident as many an Indian Olympian did not have access to any sort of technology or training and were totally self-made in their sport. In comparison, a country like England had a spend per athlete that was many times more than the average Indian spend and every athlete had been trained using the best coaches, equipment, technology and bio mechanics.

And this is where the role of the NGAI as the Official Certification Body for Golf Teachers in India becomes very important. NGAI provides the correct knowledge and growth to its members and ensures that there is a continuing education program that keeps all golf teaching professionals up to date with the best systems in the world be it bio mechanics, launch monitors, putting labs etc. After all, with all other things being equal, the better the knowledge and education of the teacher, the faster he / she can help a student improve and therefore the better the students that come out of the system.

September is also the month where we celebrate Teachers Day on the 5th of the month. It is a day where the students acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of the teachers in shaping their lives. Life and golf are both a continuous learning experience and to all my fellow NGAI teachers out there, thank you for the great work with all your students and a very Happy Teachers Day!

Anitya Chand

Editor, NGAI Newsletter & Joint Director, NGAI

Learning with the Brain in Mind



Learning Styles

University of Virginia cognitive psychologist Daniel Willingham published a research in 2005 that showed we should teach to the content of the subject, not to a learning style. Then seven years later a Wall Street Journal article by Professors Christopher Chabrs (Union College) and Daniel Semour (University of Illinois) revisited the Learning Style Theory along with two other brain myths.

They began their article with three statements asking which one was false:

- 1) We only use 10% of our brain.
- 2) Overly stimulated environments will increase the intelligence of preschool children.
- 3) Individuals learn better when they receive information in their preferred learning style.

The article pointed out that two hundred and forty-two teachers took part in a study by Sanne Dekker and colleagues at the Universities of Amsterdam and of Bristol. The findings report that the most popular brain myth was about learning styles. Seventy-six percent (76%) believe that exposure to Baby Einstein type video enrichment and going beyond what is already a significant developmental environment would improve a child's cognitive development – which is not true. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the teachers in the study believed they should teach to the student's learning style. Forty-seven percent (47%) believed that we only use ten percent (10%) of our brain, while contemporary studies show that we use the entire brain. Essentially, all the three statements above are incorrect.

The Association for Psychological Science found that there is essentially no evidence that customizing instruction to match a student's preferred learning style will lead to better achievement. Daniel Willingham's research shows that teachers should teach to the content's modality, not the student's learning style. If you want students to see something; or hear something; or feel something, teach for that outcome, not to a preferred learning style. They believe it because it fits a general assumption; or because others believe the theory; or because it is perceived to have become common knowledge? In the 21st century it's unacceptable for students not to make progress at a reasonable rate when instructors and students could benefit from what science has uncovered about improving learning, teaching and performing.

Michael Hebron

PGA of America Hall of Fame

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Five Key Fundamentals to World-Class Ball Striking

What are the key fundamentals to a great golf swing? Is it a straight left arm, a big shoulder turn, a flat left wrist, a stable right leg, or maybe just a good left hand at impact? There are so many theories and so many books written on this topic that sometimes it seems impossible to decipher the true facts. Here at the Titleist Performance Institute we believe that great golf swings don't have to look the same. There are thousands of touring professionals on the planet and no two swings look the same. So how do you isolate the key characteristics that make all these swings work? After 22 years of studying great golf swings and testing players in every possible manner, we have come up with five fundamentals that make up every great golf swing.



Center Face / Square Face Contact: This fundamental is hard to debate. Modern day launch monitors and overall club designs show us that the closer you hit the ball to the sweet spot (which tends to be centrally located) the better energy transfer we will get into the golf ball. Off-center hits give more inconsistent flight patterns to the golf ball. Just as an off-center contact can create excessive spin, so can a closed or open clubface contact. The more you contact the golf ball with a glancing blow from a non-square face, the more you will tilt the spin axis on the ball. So the first key fundamental found in every great ball striker is their ability to repeatedly find the center of the face and to square the face at impact.

Path of Intention = Shot of Intention: This fundamental allows for the variety of ball flights seen in so many players. Great ball strikers deliver the clubface on a swing plane or path that will create their intended shot. In other words, if they want to hit a draw (right to left for a right-handed golfer) then in general a more in-to-out path with a closed clubface will allow this ball flight to occur. If they want to cut the ball (left to right) then a more out-to-in or square path with a more open clubface will give them better results. Poor ball strikers try to hit shots with an improper path, attack angle and clubface position. It is hard to get repeatable and efficient results when you don't understand what causes the ball to curve and how it differs with irons from woods.

Dominant Rotary Force: Great golf swings have a high rotational force that dominates their movement. The less lateral (sway/slide) or front to back (loss of posture/early extension) movement that occurs in the golf swing, the more rotational force a player can develop. This rotational force is what makes great players develop such high club head speeds at impact. The more you add other movements besides rotation to the swing, the more chances you have of making different golf swings with every shot. So this fundamental is important for two reasons, maximal speed and power development and balance, tempo, and rhythm are all easily repeated with one primary movement (rotation). By the way, we all know that there needs to be an aggressive weight shift in the golf swing, but it is this lateral weight shift which begins the dominant rotational force into impact. If the rotary force does not dominate the pattern during the downswing, then you are not applying this fundamental skill.

Proper Kinematic Sequence: The most important fundamental for consistent ball striking is the ability to produce a proper "kinetic link". The basic foundation of any athletic movement is called a kinetic link. This term, used by bio mechanists, describes the sequence or chronological series of movements an athlete uses to generate and transfer power throughout their body. In golf, like most sports, the power or energy is created from the ground and passed up through the body to the club head. This transfer of energy from the lower body to the upper torso, from the upper torso to the arms, and from the arms to the club is called a golfer's kinetic link.

It is amazing to see how many golfers are unable to produce a fluid kinetic link. Using 3-D video technology, we can measure the patient's ability to generate power in their lower body and transfer this power through upper torso and arms and into the club head. If we see that a golfer has good lower body speed, good upper torso speed, poor arm speed, and poor club head speed, we can start to make some simple conclusions. It seems that they are able to generate power effectively in their lower body and transfer this energy to the upper torso. The upper torso then seems to create speed or power effectively as well, but is deficient in transferring this energy to the arms and club. Therefore, we should evaluate the connection between the upper torso and arms, or the shoulders, since that seems to be weak.

Good Segmental Stabilization: This last fundamental is the key to generating power and speed in the golf swing. In order to pass energy from one part of your body to the next, there must be a deceleration of the previous segment so that energy can be effectively transferred to the next body part. A great analogy is the cracking of the whip. In order to create a loud snap at the end of a whip, you must rapidly accelerate the handle of the whip and then quickly stopped or decelerate the handle. It is this deceleration of the handle that allows speed to be transferred to the next part of the whip.

3D Analysis with K-VEST

Assess, Coach and then Train

From time to time, other professionals will ask us to take a look at a player's data and give our opinion on what we see and how we would proceed. Let's look at one such case. The player in question has been playing for 4-5 years, and shoots between 90 and 100. He is athletic and does well on the majority of the TPI Level 1 screens, with the exceptions of single leg balance and lead side lower body rotation, which is slightly inhibited.

When working with players, we always want to have as much information as possible about their objectives. We want to know their current level of play, their goals, and their level of commitment in time and effort to make the changes we would suggest. The prescription for a collegiate player with All-American aspirations is significantly different than the prescription for a player whose goal is to break 90.

The Critical Questions

When looking at a player we are concerned with the following:

- What is the ball doing and what would the player prefer it to do?
- What is the club doing to create the current, undesired ball flight?
- What is the body doing and how is it influencing the club to produce the undesired ball flight?

Based on the answers to these three questions, we determine where the best opportunity lies to improve a player's swing.

What is the Ball Doing?

As you can see, the player's ball flight is very low due to a low launch angle, resulting in very short carry distances. Clearly, the player would like to get the ball in the air more effectively and see it travel farther. With his club head speed, it is not unrealistic to expect a driver carry in the 220 yards range and total driving distance in the area of 235 yards.

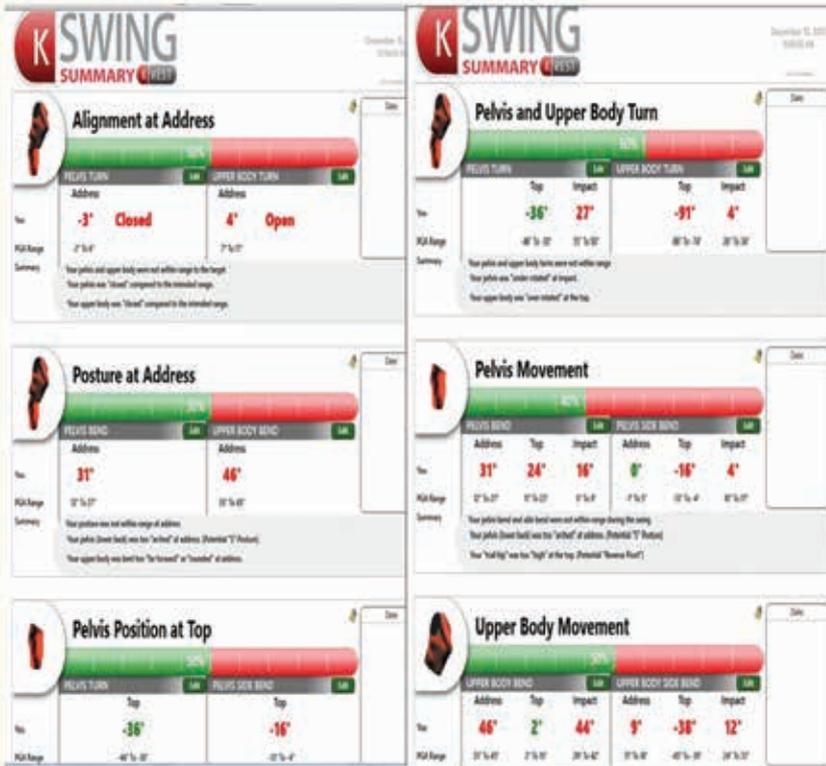
		Driver		Standard Ball				Results							
Element	Carry Y	Distance(yds)			Speed		Ball Angles			Height ft	Time (s)	Roll (yds)			
		Total	Lateral		Club (mph)	Ball (mph)	Spin (rpm)	Axis	Desc				Horz. -Vert.		
Clubs															
Driver	139.3	212.7	5.4R		90.3	130.7	1.45	2425	11.3L	6.1	4.2R	13.2	18.8	3.0	73.7

What is the Club Doing?

In the case of this player, his face, path and angle of attack are decent for a player shooting in the 90's. However, we would expect those delivery parameters to produce a high push. More often, though, he is seeing exceedingly low ball flight and producing lots of snap hooks. Low on-the-toe contact is causing a lot of the problems for this player.

What is starting to become clear is that this player's low ball flight and poor ball performance are caused by an overly steep vertical swing plane. To improve the launch angle for this player, and to create a higher ball flight, we need to get his vertical swing plane under 50°, generate more dynamic loft, and more spin loft. Looking at K-VEST data, we will be looking for movement patterns that will allow him to shallow the swing plane and deliver more loft to the ball.

		Driver		Standard Ball				Results						
Element	Club	Ball Angles		Height	Time	Roll	Face to Target	Club Path	Dynamic Loft	Angle of Attack	Swing Plane		Spin Loft	
		Vert.	Horz.	Descend	(ft)	(s)	(yds)				Vert.	Horz.		
Driver		6.1	4.2R	13.2	18.8	3.0	73.7	4.1R	5.9R	6.4	5.1	59.1	8.4R	3.1



What is the Body Doing?

With our initial findings in mind, the next step is to discover their origins in the player's body movement patterns.

They are:

1. Less rotation with the pelvis and upper body at impact.
 - We can see in the data above that the player uses this influence with a 27° open pelvis and a 4° open upper body; both are well below tour averages but they are the only shallowing influences he currently employs, so they are not something we need to correct at this time.
2. More right side bend with the pelvis and upper body at impact.
 - We can see that the player is NOT using side bend as a shallowing method. With pelvis side bend at 4° and upper body at 12°, this presents a great opportunity.

Looking back at the data, we can review the areas that we want to affect with our change. We will work to increase the amount of pelvis and upper body side bend at impact and reduce upper body forward bend at impact.

Ultimately, we want to increase rotation of pelvis and upper body. But currently they are the only body orientations this player is using to shallow club delivery.

The Plan

The orientations that we want to affect at impact are links in a chain. They are determined by what is happening earlier in the swing. The orientations that need correcting begin at set-up and carry through the swing.

Here is the program we would recommend:

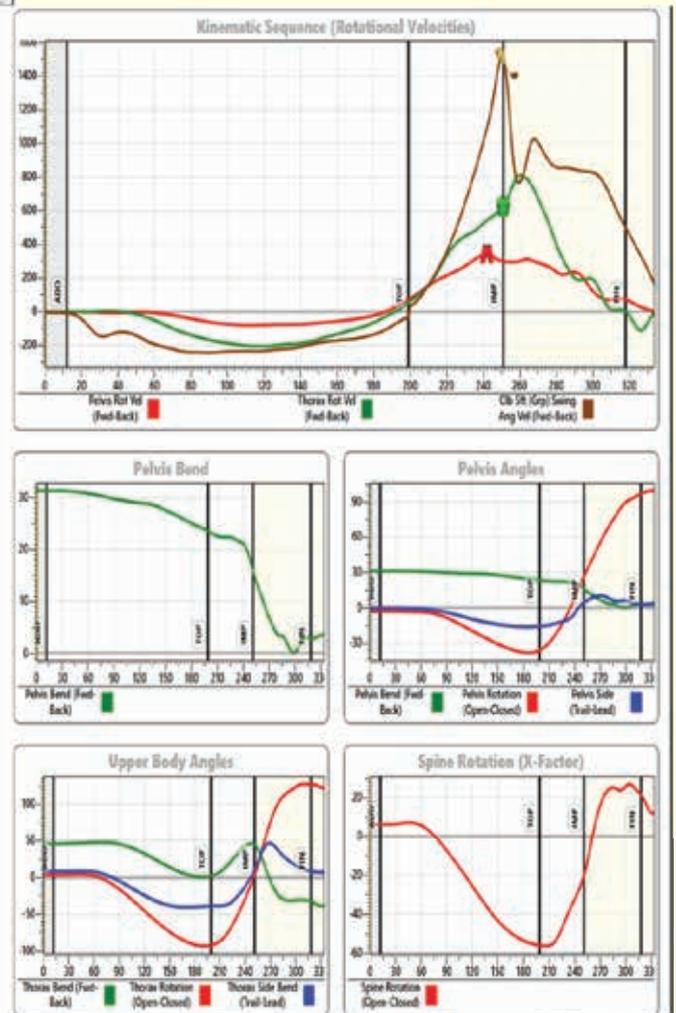
1. Increase side bend at address. Pelvis = 4°. Upper body = 16°
2. Work on upper body position at the top. Bend = 8° +/- 2. Side bend = -40° +/- (This should result in better loading into the trail leg, and a significant reduction in pelvis side bend at the top. We would like to see the player's pelvis side bend at the top in the 8°-10° range.)
3. When the player is loading into the trail leg and able to hit these numbers, work on clubface control at impact. Utilizing a tennis racket, have the player feel that he is hitting the ball up and right. His "miss" should be a towering block.

Conclusions

What we have come to understand in the past 10-11 years of using K-VEST is that there is no such thing as a "perfect" graph for everyone. There are Tour Pro Averages that provide great insight.

However, making the graphs perfect for a player is no guarantee of ball-striking success. It is also quite possible for great ball strikers to have graphs that aren't perfect.

Approaching these changes in the proper order can ensure that you are able to help players effectively achieve their objectives.



Meet the NGAI Instructor - Indrani Pendekanti

Indrani Pendekanti came from a sports background and played cricket for the Tamil Nadu State team. Her sister Lalita Balasubramanian introduced her to the game of golf and she made the transition from cricket to golf in 1979. The transition was very quick and before she knew it, she was totally addicted to golf, playing in amateur tournaments all over the country.

There was a break in playing golf after that and a chance meeting with NGAI Teaching Staff Vijay Divecha in 2004 changed the course of her life. She asked him if she could teach golf as she had played at a good level and still loved the game. Vijay told her to take up teaching golf if she is committed enough to the process of learning and becoming a better teacher and also invited her to the Eagleton Golf Club to train under him. Indrani was working with Singapore Airlines at that time and had just got her promotion. She quickly put in her resignation and started the journey of becoming a teaching professional.

Indrani started her teaching career in 2004 at the Hyderabad Golf Association. They had a driving range and 3 holes ready at that time. She joined the NGAI in 2005 and went on to teach at all three army clubs in Hyderabad namely, the BEPTA, the EME Center as well as the Artillery Centre Golf Course. Teaching at these facilities, she introduced many an army and naval officer to the game and conducted regular clinics for them. In 2006, she also taught at the Kalajyoti Golf Club which is a Par-3, private course in Hyderabad.

.In July 2007, Indrani joined the Boulder Hills Golf & Country Club as a Golf Teaching Professional and was given the task of establishing the academy as a learning center. Between 2009 and 2011, she was the only Teaching professional at the club and managed all the lessons and clinics along with establishing the junior golf development program. This is also the period when she started training four of her golf assistants in teaching and playing to support the academy and the junior program. Today, all the four golf assistants are NGAI C Class coaches. Indrani is also credited with starting the junior golf development program at Boulder Hills. Today, the program has more than fifty juniors learning golf with more joining in. She is especially proud to have coached two of her students to playing golf for their university in the United States - one at Purdue and one at Carnegie Mellon.

Having joined NGAI in 2005, Indrani attended most courses conducted and became an A Class instructor in 2016. She is also certified as a TPI Level 1 Golf Fitness Instructor and a TPI Level 2 Junior Golf Instructor. She has a C Certification in refereeing from the Indian Golf Union. She is a certified soft skill trainer and hypnotherapist and has more than 17 years of experience in marketing and branding. Amongst the seminars she has attended, those conducted by Dr Gary Wiren, David Kearney, Jonathan Mannie and Steven Orr have left a lasting impression on her teaching. She was awarded a Merit Certificate and medal on International Women's Day by the Lions Club of Hyderabad in 2013 for being the only Lady Teaching Professional in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

A special memory for her is when she met with Mr. Michael Hebron at the NGAI Teaching Summit in 2015 and exchanged notes with him. Michael sent her a copy of his book and asked for her comments on it which she sent. The comments were included by Mr Hebron in his book 'Learning with the Brain in Mind' making it extra special for Indrani.

Indrani believes that golf is a game that comprises all life skills and learning/playing this game can only add value to the life of players from any age group. To her, golf is spiritual.



News from NGAI

The D Course – The D Course was held at the DLF Golf Academy, Gurgaon from 11 – 6 August 2016. It was conducted by Teaching Staff Indrajit Bhalotia and Karan Bindra. A total of 24 professionals attended the week long course including 9 professionals from Bangladesh.



Attendees of the D Course with Indrajit Bhalotia and Karan Bindra

To get more details about the National Golf Academy of India, please visit www.ngai.org.in or email at ngai@indiangolfunion.org

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