



Tony's Update

## "Not Just Golf"



**As Christmas approaches and the professional golf season comes to a close, Tony would like to wish all our readers and friends an excellent Christmas with a healthy, happy and successful New Year.**

### European Commission Conference, Italy

With a growing desire to develop coaching programmes that are recognised between sports across Europe, Tony visited the Coni Servizi (Italian School of Sport) in Rome to take part in a European Commission supported Conference. Recognition of different countries' coaching programmes is key throughout Sport. Successful collaborations as shown in Football with the UEFA coach licences have increased coach mobility and standards. During the visit Tony noticed a plaque posted at the entrance to the school which outlined some key concepts. Particular notice was taken to the first line which translates to, "Practice Sport with Passion".



### PGA's of Europe AGM, Spain

As a member of the Board of Directors and Education Committee, Tony recently travelled to Spain for the PGA's of Europe Annual General Meeting in Murcia. Whilst in Spain, Tony met with officials from many countries to discuss training standards, membership issues and tournaments. "The meeting is a great opportunity to bring together Professional Golfers Associations from all over Europe, [30 countries] and from other continents [6 countries] so that we can discuss and plan for the future of the game in an atmosphere of freindship and mutual understanding" said Tony.

### Professional Education, Iceland

Tony was recently invited to present a series of seminars to members of the Professional Golfers Association of Iceland in Reykjavik. Tony, who has delivered seminars in many parts of the world and has great experience in coach education, spoke on the areas of developing elite athletes and short game.

Following his presentation Tony commented "it is always personally satisfying to speak with professionals and business leaders who enjoy learning. It is my hope that some of the comments will help develop the sport and act as a catalyst to action".



### New patrons and renewals

Preferred choice of 2007 US Open winner Angel Cabrera, PING Golf announced in November they would renew their club sponsorship of Tony Bennett. Titleist have also agreed to continue as the official golf ball whilst newcomers Footjoy and Sunderland join the family of patrons .



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### Tony's Comment

#### If you had to vote on who was the best sportsman / sportswoman and team of 2007, who would you select?

This month's 'comment' is not really a 'comment' but more an opportunity to reflect on the years sporting triumphs. Perhaps they are events that you have a personal interest in, either as a participant or as a spectator. Here I offer you some of my thoughts on what has been an excellent year of sport.

### Team of the year

Fresh in the mind is the Rugby World Cup where winners South Africa (the Springboks) went through the tournament undefeated beating a gallant England team in a tense final. Captain John Smit and Coach Jake White led the team of the championships to a deserved win, having entered the tournament third in the World rankings. The win now places them in second place behind New Zealand. I cannot let this opportunity pass without mentioning the success of my football team, Manchester United who took the 2006-2007 premier league title after a tense title battle with Chelsea.



**Wayne Rooney**

### Sportsman & Sportswoman of the year

In this category there are many performances that are worthy of mention. In Golf Tiger Woods continues to dominate his peers, winning events seemingly almost at will: he is so far ahead in the World Rankings that it will be several years before anyone gets close. Roger Federer claimed his fifth straight Wimbledon crown, rivalling the great Bjorn Borg. Perhaps Lewis Hamilton could be the rookie of the year finishing second in his first year in Formula 1.

Golf also has one of the top female sports stars in Lorena Ochoa, who after only four years on Tour dominates the LPGA rankings. Meseret Defar is the top ranked female athlete in the World. The Ethiopian is the reigning Olympic champion at 5,000m. Meseret won every race this year setting two World records and winning the World Championships, not a bad year!



**Meseret Defar**

**Other sporting moments:** Australia win Cricket World Cup in West Indies – Raikkonen claims the F1 Driving Championship in Sao Paulo – Hatton remains undefeated – Brazil win the FIFA Beach World Cup –



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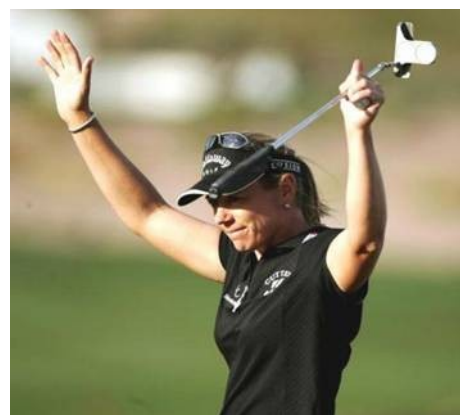
### New Year Resolutions

**It is that time of the year, but what golfing resolutions, goals or objectives can you set for the new year?** Everyone wants to play better golf and score lower, don't they? Well for the vast majority of golfers I am sure that this is true, but that is not always the case. I have a couple of friends that really do not mind what they score, in fact they rarely finish all eighteen holes. Are they poor players you might ask? Well in fact not really, one of them is a professional golfer who tells me that he gets his enjoyment from hitting good shots and does not grade himself by the score that he makes. **Play the game under your own terms.** If competition gets you excited then enter competitions. If playing with friends does it for you, then play with friends or if you enjoy practising then guess what? Practice.

The second point is to **optimise your driving.** All golfers would like to hit the ball a bit further. By ensuring that your driving club suits your technique and the ball that you use suits your ball launch characteristics, then you have optimised your current distance potential. This does not mean that you have to go and buy a new club, in fact sometimes a small adjustment to your existing club can work wonders. Any PGA qualified professional should be able to help you to select the most suitable specifications and then advise you of the correct ball.

The other end of the game is played on the green hence **spend at least 25% of your practice time on the green.** You should stand in a balanced and comfortable way that allows you to be perfectly centred. Unfortunately most golfers do not recognise the importance of the posture in putting. Most players stand to their putter, rather than having the putter fitted to their posture. Good practice with the correct posture will help to develop a repeatable stroke.

**Take golf lessons not swing lessons** is point four and will have a great effect. Unfortunately most lessons are swing based, with a strong bias towards technique, positions and drills. Yet the majority of players do not benefit from this type of lesson. Most players that I see hit the ball quite adequately on the driving range, but it is a different story when they get to the course. So why then does a lot of teaching not transfer from the range to the course? There are no penalties on the driving range, no out of bounds, water, trees or heavy rough. The fairway on average is some 30-35 metres wide, whereas the range is often 100 metres or more from side to side. The big difference between the range and the course is that if you hit a bad shot on the course you have to go and find it and then play from there. However on the range, you simply scrape over another ball and make another swing.



Anika Sorrenstam

A final point is to **walk when you can.** The weekly game of golf has been for many people the only form of exercise that they get during the week. In fact golf could perhaps be the best possible exercise for a great many, with a seven kilometres or more walk, fifty or more rotations and arm swings and plenty of fresh air. I have nothing against golf carts and especially for those who are injured or have difficulty walking, they are a fantastic addition to the game. However in general they are over used. Try walking, enjoying the health benefits and the ability to speak with all of your playing partners.





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### Golf Secrets "The Golf Putter Vault"

PING Golf who were established in 1959 by Karsten Solheim and has been at the forefront in golf technology, have a secret! What started as Karsten's unique way to say THANK YOU, to professionals for using PING putters, has now turned into a collection of 2,300 gold putters and probably the most expensive collection of putters in the world. In the 70's Karsten decided to reward all professionals who won a professional tournament using a PING putter, with a replica gold plated putter, including the golfers name and tournament title on the face. Karsten also produced another gold plated putter to keep in a special area (Golf's Fort Knox) of the PING Factory in Phoenix, Arizona.



Karsten Solheim

With the growing success of PING players, the vault has had to grow. Inside the vault there are many models of putters and it becomes obvious the impact PING and their players have had on the game. The highlights of the vault includes the first PING gold plated putter belonging to John Barnum, winner of the 1962 Cajun Classic, 47 major championship winners' putters and the complete collection of 1988 Major Champions Putters. Can you name the players? (answers below). **Who says that a good putt is not worth it's weight in gold!**

### The Lighter Side: The Rules

Two friends were playing golf one day. They decided that they would adhere strictly to the rules with no improving of their lie. After a few holes, one guy's ball landed on a cart path. As he reached down to pick up his ball to get relief, his friend said, "We agreed that we would not improve our lie." No matter how much the first fellow tried to explain that he was entitled to relief, the second fellow would not allow it.

So the man went to the cart to get a club. As he stood over the ball he took a few practice swings, each time scraping the club on the pavement, taking out big chunks of tar and sending out lots of sparks! Finally, after several practice swings he took his shot. The ball took off and landed on the green about 6 feet from the pin. "Great shot!" his friend exclaimed. "What club did you use?" "YOUR 7-iron!" he replied.

### Contacts and further information

Many of you will be aware that our website provides regular updates, industry news, instruction plus archives of recent copies of Tony's Update. Why not take a look at [www.tonybennettgolf.com](http://www.tonybennettgolf.com)

**'88 Major Champions:** Sandy Lyle (**Masters**) Curtis Strange (**US Open**)  
Seve Ballesteros (**The Open**) Jeff Sluman (**USPGA**)

### Tony Bennett Contacts



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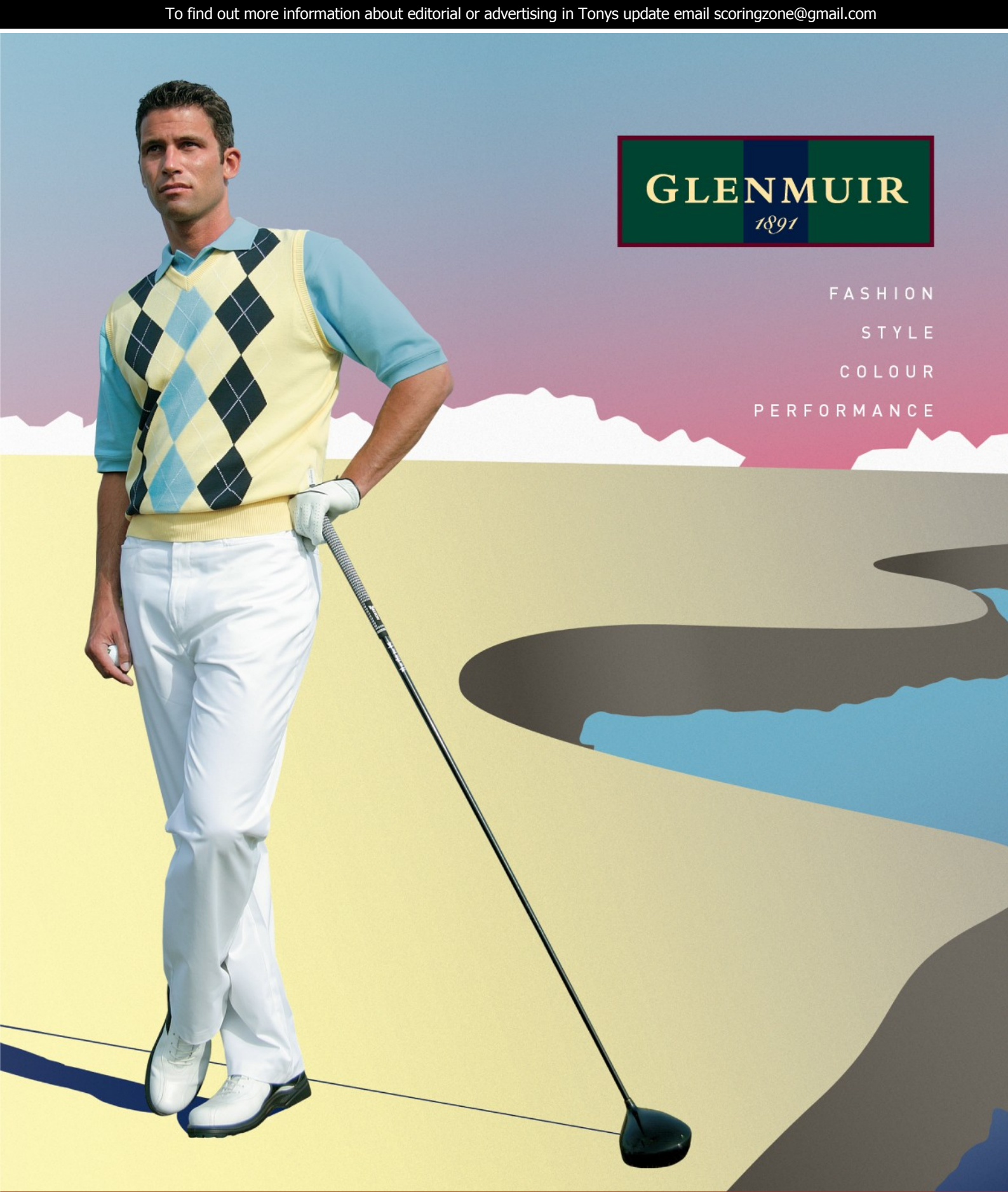
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