



Tony's Update

## "Not Just Golf"



### PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

In March Tony spoke at the Professional Golfers Association of Holland week 11 professional training programme and commented, "It is not that long ago, perhaps 35 or 40 years, that the development of coach skills and education took place informally with a senior coach sharing their knowledge with an apprentice". Today it is clear that PGA organizations take the education of its members very seriously with many countries not only having recognized education programmes but also continual professional development programmes. Tony spoke to a group of around 120 professionals on, "The Changing Landscape of Professional Education" and "The Requirements of an Elite Coach".



### THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

There are now only four months until the Open Championship. 2007 champion golfer Padraig Harrington will visit Royal Birkdale to defend his title and the course that he finds will be different than when the championship was last held there ten years ago. The course has undergone some major improvements, with several new tees, renovated bunkers and remodelling of the 17<sup>th</sup> green. International qualifying has already started with Africa, Australia and Asia already completing the final qualifying rounds. The Open not only attracts the World's best players but also raises considerable funds for golf development projects around the World.

### DISABELED SPORT

The European Disabled Golf Association (E.D.G.A) which provides opportunities to many golfers, is a European body that the majority of golfers know little about. The work of E.D.G.A and other similar organisations is important in promoting the participation of golf amongst those who experience physical handicap. Disabled sport is now increasingly becoming a hot topic on the political agenda and attracting increased media coverage in the lead up to this years Para-Olympics in China. For further information on Disabled Sport and E.D.G.A visit [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk) or [www.edgagolf.com](http://www.edgagolf.com)

### RENEWEL OF AGREEMENT

Our agreement with F32, was renewed during March. F32 provide a range of sport related photos for use on the redesigned website [www.tonybennettgolf.com](http://www.tonybennettgolf.com) which is due to launch at the end of April.



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### KEEPING IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Although Lewis Hamilton's first year in F1 was impressive some experts said that he "blew" the 2007 World championship. Hamilton was quick out of the blocks in March, winning in Australia and 5<sup>th</sup> place in Malaysia. The twenty three year old McLaren driver has an older head than some might give him credit for. Minutes after the disappointment of missing out by the narrowest margin in 2007, Hamilton stated, "Obviously I am pretty disappointed with the result today, having lead for so much of the season and then not to win....I have to put the result into perspective, this is only my first year in F1 and overall it has just been phenomenal. I am still very young and have plenty more years in me to achieve my dream of becoming world champion".

The quality of the car is without doubt vital to the success of any F1 driver, but so is the driver's skill, tactics and the overall team principle. F1 teams certainly follow the belief that together everyone achieves more; each person has specific tasks under the central race objectives. So if tactics are important in a team environment, F1, Football, Rugby etc, then are they also important in individual sports such as Tennis, Golf, Boxing and Athletics?

Boxer Ricky Hatton said after his tenth round knockout to Floyd Mayweather, that, "It wasn't my night and he got the tactics and the game-plan right". Interestingly although Hatton started the brighter in the fight Mayweather soon adjusted, changed his tactics and subsequently started landing big punches regularly. Tennis players frequently have a "bogeyman" to play against, that although lower in the ranking often trouble the better ranked player. Allegedly John McEnroe had an effect on his opponents due to his frequent outburst of temper; was this part of his tactics or just part of his personality? Many golfers say that they do not like a certain hole. Perhaps the reason may be that the shape or length of the hole does not suit the players style of play or shape of shot. In golf the term tactics is rarely used and instead golfers talk of course management, I am not sure that golfers manage the course but rather manage themselves and their game in order to successfully negotiate the 18 questions / tasks that the golf course asks.

There is one thing that you can be assured of and that is those who reach and stay at the top of their chosen sport all have tactical maturity and keep performance in perspective.

### John McEnroe



### Setting Tactics

- Assess your current strengths & weaknesses. Ensure that you do not employ a weakness against the oppositions strengths,
- Stay loyal to your personality.
- If you are habitually conservative / aggressive in your approach to life then as a general rule conservative / aggressive tactics will serve you best.
- Of course a change of your normal tactics can take your opponent by surprise.



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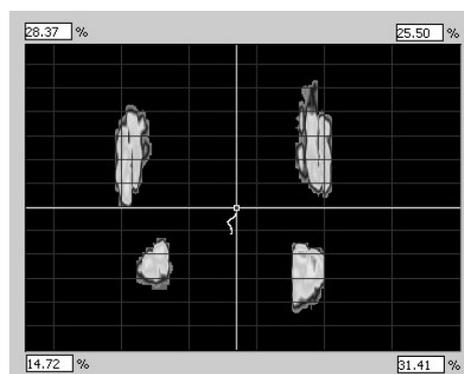
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### BIOMECHANICS PRESSURE & BALANCE

The use of balance and pressure analysis is becoming more popular in the analysis of the golf swing. Pressure analysis enables the instructor to look at dynamics and body movement that the naked eye cannot see. Generally the instructor can see positional aspects of the golf swing such as address and the top of backswing, but the balance / pressure software allows the instructor to critically review weight distribution and centre of pressure movement during the swing. A good putting technique has the ability to create a stable posture and pivot point to allow the putter to be returned consistently from address to impact without manipulation.

**Figure 1 - RSscan Pressure Platform image of a right handed golfer.**



Using a Footscan® pressure plate I can analyse the foot function during the putting stroke. The cross in Figure 1, represents the centre of pressure (COP) of the golfer at frame 1. The COP is the point on a body where the sum total of the pressure fields acts, causing a force and no moment about that point. In the example below, during the putting stroke the COP moves towards the heels of the golfer. The cross enables the four quadrants to specify the % weight distribution of the golfer at specific time intervals. For example in Figure 1: Left Heel = 14.72% / Left Toe = 28.37 / Right Heel = 31.41% / Right Toe = 25.50%.

In a recent study of 30 European Tour Professionals and 30 amateur golfers, it is interesting to note that the average weight distribution for amateurs show a weight distribution at address of 60% right and 40% left. The professional golfers showed a more balanced weight distribution at address of 52% right and 48% left. This was significantly different ( $p < 0.05$ ) to that of the amateur golfers. Ten professionals had a slight bias towards the left side. However, the professional golfers at set-up exhibited an increase in percentage favouring the toes at address, 55% toes, ranging from 32% to 86%.

The often prescribed advice to stand comfortably at address and relaxed over the ball creates a very individual style of putting. However, comfortably and optimum balance (50% Toes / 50% Heels) are seldom the same position.

Article written by **Paul Hurrion BA (Hons), PhD**. Paul specialises in biomechanical analysis. He is a leading biomechanist contracted to UK Athletics, International Cricket Council, English Cricket Board, and British Diving. His passion for golf has led to a specialism in putting analysis and advice, assisting European Tour Professionals. Through his work with Pdraig Harrington, he advised Hi-Tec on the biomechanical design dynamics of their CDT golf shoe. For further information visit [www.paulhurrion.com](http://www.paulhurrion.com)



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### UK GOLF PARTICIPATION – (A NEW REPORT)

"The number of golfers in Great Britain who play on a full length course remains around the 4 million mark – a level that has been consistent since the year 2000. The same is true of the number of regular golfers who play at least 12 times a year – at 1.65 million this is almost exactly the same level as in 2000.

Among these regular golfers, 566,000 play once a week or more, a figure which has been gradually declining over the last few years. Driving range usage meanwhile has been steadily increasing since 2002, and there are now in excess of 3 million golfers who take to the range each year.

At 1.1 million, fewer than 28% of all golfers are members of a club, which is a decrease of 4% since 2006, but because they each play on average nearly 40 rounds of golf per year, golf club members account for 59% of all rounds played." (2007 Golf Participation Report)

Considering these facts and that 10% of the 16-44 age group play the game of golf compared to 7% of the over 45 group, it is clear that if the implementation of successful youth and junior programmes, across the UK will have a massive impact on the growth of the game.

### GOLF BUSINESS CONFERENCE

This year "Golf Business Conference" will take place in Warsaw, Poland on 23rd - 25th April 2008. The event is organised by "Golf Poland" and has previously helped facilitate the discussion of ideas across organisations and communities around Europe through its working panels.

"Golf Poland" have also organised a programme of speakers, who are widely recognised across Europe to present on the key issues facing the golf sector across Europe. Speakers include David MacLaren (PGA European Tour Courses) Michael Pask (IMG), Mark Casey (Solheim Cup) and Tony Bennett (The PGAs of Europe).

On the 25<sup>th</sup> Tony will be speaking on "Golf has great prospects". For further information, visit [www.golfconference.eu](http://www.golfconference.eu)



Our website [www.tonybennettgolf.com](http://www.tonybennettgolf.com) provides regular updates, instruction, plus archives of recent copies of Tony's update, why not take a look.

Tony will be in Lisbon on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> of April, for individual and group sessions.

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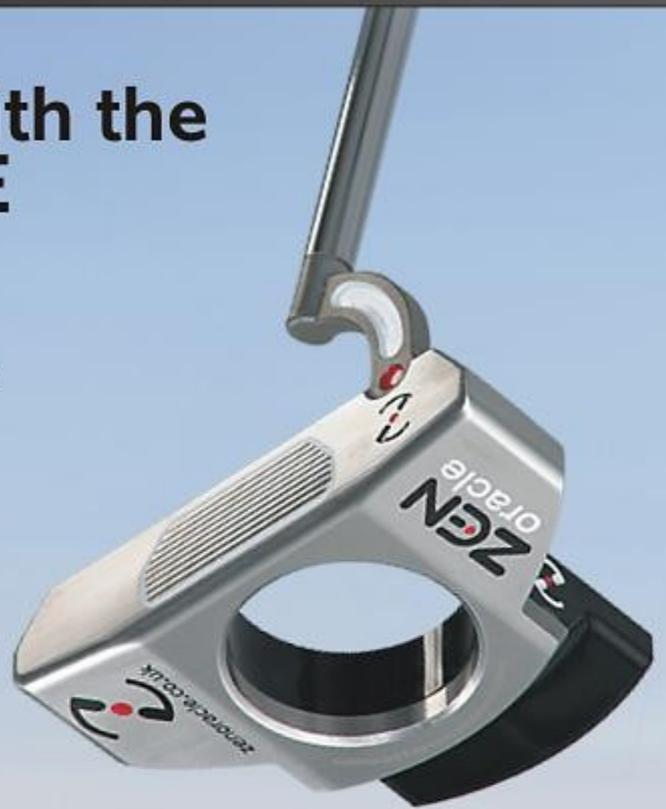
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