

Swing Sequencing Case Study

The purpose of this case study is to show coaches how to “think beyond the square” and use resources not commonly called upon within the golf circles. A high level (Australian female representative) was identified as having insufficient length and power in her game to make the step to becoming a successful touring professional a relatively small one. Whilst her coach had identified that lack of distance was problematical, and had tried numerous drills and approaches to solving the problem, mixed success had been obtained. For example, physiotherapy screening had indicated that lack of flexibility was not a major concern. Similarly, this athlete appeared to be relatively “strong” and was continuing on her strength and fitness work. Video analysis had been used to qualitatively evaluate swing mechanics and some possible mechanisms had been identified. Finally, a comprehensive biomechanical assessment using a state-of-the-art 3D measurement tool was undertaken. This assessment revealed a number of potential power “leakages” in the swing, but primarily there was evidence of less than optimal sequencing or timing in the swing. Thus, power generated in the lower limbs and torso was not being delivered efficiently to the arms, hands and eventually to the club.

Having identified the source of the problem, her coach then enlisted the assistance of a baseball coach who specialised in throwing and pitching. It is important to recognise that the golf swing has remarkably similar sequencing requirements to any throwing or striking activity – e.g., baseball pitching, javelin throwing, windmill pitching in softball, etc.). This coach recognised the nature of the problem immediately, and suggested a number of drills (these will be detailed during the presentation) for the athlete to work on.

After inclusion of these drills, along with progressions and her normal golf activities, the athlete was re-evaluated using the biomechanics equipment. Furthermore, video records of her swing were taken prior to and during the course of the training. Some of these clips, along with the numerical data will be presented at the Summit. Whilst it is clear that this athlete still does not have a “perfect” swing, she has made excellent progress. This progress has occurred for to a number of reasons:

1. Identification of the source of the problem (rather than fixing of a symptom)
2. Use of experts who have particular insight into a problem (the baseball coach and the biomechanics expert)
3. Perseverance and diligence on the part of the athlete and her coach
4. An “openness” or willingness to try new ideas