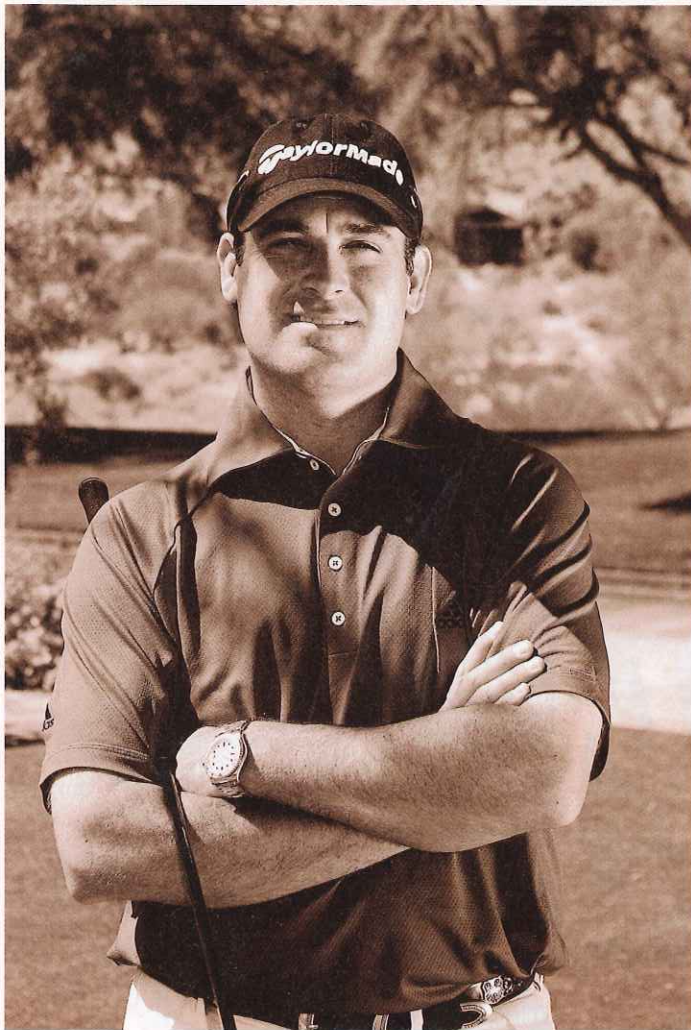


ONE ON ONE WITH TOM STICKNEY



1. What are some of the most common swing flaws you've seen from watching people try to hit consistent iron shots?

Most people seem to play the ball too far back in their stance and then try to help the ball into the air by falling back and scooping. This only causes poor contact and very inconsistent distances. Placing the ball in the proper position of the stance allows the body and club to work more in conjunction with each other, resulting in more solid contact.

2. You're a big fan of Homer Kelley's *The Golfing Machine*. Care to elaborate on why you find that book to be so instrumental in your teaching?

Homer Kelley's book is the bible of the golf swing. All swing models have come from this book, and the golf swing's motion is described in great detail by Homer. The book categorizes only the 24 motions that every golfer utilizes (from Bobby Jones to Tiger Woods) and the variations of those motions. For example:

Everyone must have a good grip. There are only five variations of the basic grip, each one serving a different purpose. That's the way the book lays out the golf swing. It describes the golf swing in parts, but the parts are interconnected to make up a whole golf swing. It's also loaded with options as far as what's considered the right way to develop the golf swing. In other words, there's more than one way to get it done. *The Golfing Machine* helps me build golf swings around what people can do, instead of forcing them into a swing pattern that they can't do.

3. How often should golfers practice?

Practice comes in many forms: mirror work, slow-motion swings, Internet study, hitting balls, playing practice rounds, etc. It would be nice to involve as many of these practice ideals as possible, but let's be realistic! Most people can hit balls or play only on the weekends, so I recommend folks use the weekdays to do mirror work and practice swings at home. On the weekends, head to the practice facility. Also, it's not a good idea to practice in one sitting for over 30 minutes. It gets too monotonous, and often golfers will begin trying different things instead of honing in on core fundamentals. And by the way, nobody cares if you can bust range balls over the fence. Practice ought not to be a long-drive contest. Get out there, pace yourself and take breaks to stay focused. Do that and you can practice all day if necessary.

4. How did you become a teacher?

Like several other instructors, I first began as a competitor, playing in college and on mini-tours. And it was during my competing days that I realized that my passion wasn't so much for winning tournaments, but rather helping people get better at golf and in studying the golf swing. Golf is a great game, and golf instruction has been a wonderful way to make a living. Bighorn and Cordillera are the best places in the world to work! I really get the best of both worlds—out in the desert and up in the mountains.

I've been asked before about what I'd do if I hadn't become an instructor, and if I could have done anything, professional wrestling would have been fun. But, I think I was skipped in the gene pool for that one!

5. Any favorite swings on the PGA Tour?

Am I allowed to answer "all of them"? If you're on the PGA Tour, you obviously have a great golf swing that can be repeated over and over again to produce steady results. I really like Stuart Appleby's fundamentals, in particular. He has no extra movements in his golf swing, and it's so compact and powerful. He'll win more, as soon as he gets that putter working again.