

## Champions are Made in the Off-Season

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*Physical Therapists with Body Balance for Performance*  
*The Complete Golf, Health and Fitness Training Program*

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**S**o, are you getting ready to finish another frustrating golf season? It's time to put those clubs away and forget about your less than Tiger-like golf game for another six or seven months. This sounds like a good plan...If you want to have the same frustrations with your game next year as well!

If you are a golfer who is serious about improving your game for the long-term, then it is necessary to dedicate yourself to a golf-specific fitness program this winter. Golfers are now becoming aware that they must undergo golf-specific fitness training to optimize their playing potential and reduce the possibility of injury. Athletes in every other sport train sport-specifically and golf should be viewed no differently.

Physically, the golf swing is an extremely demanding and complex activity. If a golfer does not possess the best combination of physical tools to swing a golf club, the chance of injury increases significantly. The key physical factors that must be maximized to play your best golf are good posture, balance, flexibility, strength, and control. If you are lacking in any of these physical areas, your body's structure will force you to make a variety of compensations in your swing to strive for consistent play. This is why many golfers experience a high level of frustration with the game. Dedication to addressing your golf-specific physical limitations will allow your body to swing without compensations, which, in turn, improves consistency.

So how should you get started with golf fitness training? The main components of your off-season fitness-training regimen should include aerobic, flexibility, and strength training. The aerobic exercise should consist of an activity that you enjoy for 20 to 30 minutes, 3 to 4 times each week. It is important to maintain a good aerobic exercise level to ensure that you have proper endurance late in a round.

In terms of flexibility, golfers must have a certain minimum level of flexibility in key areas to be able to swing the club without making compensatory move-

ments, or swing faults. Adequate flexibility in the hamstrings and mid-spine are required to be able to assume and maintain the ideal address position.

Here is a quick test to check these two key areas:

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding a golf club behind you running along your spine. The club should be in contact with the back of your head, between your shoulder blades, and just below the belt-line. Keep all of these contact points and bend forward from your hip joints approximately 45 degrees keeping your knees straight. If you felt significant tightness in your upper hamstrings and/or difficulty maintaining the club in contact with your spine during the movement, this means you have flexibility deficits that will negatively impact your golf game.

Common areas of weakness in golfers are the shoulder blade and lower abdominal muscles. These are key areas to strengthen to add control and power to your swing. These tend to be weak from sitting in a slouched posture for extended periods. This position causes your shoulder blades and upper back muscles to stretch and become weak. The posture you assume all day, every day is also the same posture you will tend to assume during your golf swing.

A strengthening program, targeting these muscles is needed to reverse this faulty position. The lower abdominals must also have enough strength to stabilize your pelvis and low back at address and throughout the swing. Strong lower abdominals not only add power to your swing, but also help to prevent a lower back injury.

Later we will give you will specific exercises to improve flexibility and strength in the crucial golf areas discussed above. For more information on golf-specific fitness training, please visit our Body Balance for Performance website at [www.bodybalancegolf.com](http://www.bodybalancegolf.com), call us at 312-214-9079, or e-mail us at [bvoyles@sprynet.com](mailto:bvoyles@sprynet.com).



Nevada Continued from page 13

In the nearby state of Arizona, Tom Weiskopf has already designed the #1 and #2 ranked courses. His latest and greatest design, **The Falls Course at Lake Las Vegas**, just may claim him another #1 ranking in the state of Nevada as well!

Located one mile west of the Lake Las Vegas Resort, The Falls is an amazing new course, with the front nine offering traditional desert play, in and around small canyons and arroyos. The second nine, set in the mountains, features spectacular 100-mile views, five sets of tees, big horn sheep and two, 18-story waterfalls!

On the 432-yard, par-4, fourth hole, the back tee must sit a good 30 stories above the fairway on the canyon floor below; your second shot is back up to a green, set in a canyon bowl. What a super hole! After launching, you will be able to brag that you can hit a 300-yard drive!

Wildlife is ever-present on this magnificent, elevated, desert mountain course. While teeing off on the 209-yard par-3 second hole, we had to shoo away five Big Horn sheep that were standing on the tee box. They moved off matter-of-factly and became our gallery. Recently, John Daly and Lee Trevino played a couple of amateurs in a televised match, and all sang the praises of the Lake Las Vegas Resort.

Fall and Winter are the perfect time for a golf-away business meeting or vacation, with cooler temperatures usually in the 70s or 80s. And, of course, the gambling and entertainment goes 24/7 in both Las Vegas and Henderson. The city of Henderson offers 100,000 square feet of meeting space, with over 2,000 hotel rooms and some of the top Las Vegas area hotels and attractions, including the five-time, #1-voted, top casino that locals gamble at in the Las Vegas area...Sunset Station. Here you will find great tables, great gambling, great rooms, great prices and just a few minutes from the top golf courses.

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