

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMERICAN TOUR GOLF SCHOOLS:
Results through Innovation, Technology, Dedication**

“Practice doesn’t make perfect; practice makes permanent. Only perfect practice makes perfect.”

CHARLESTON, S.C. – The quote above, attributed to no one in particular, or something very similar has no doubt been used by countless coaches and instructors regarding a variety of endeavors – from sports to playing a musical instrument. But nowhere is it truer than in golf.

Golf is often called the game for a lifetime. Many would argue that is because it takes a lifetime to learn. And even then, only a small percentage of those who play ever achieve a degree of proficiency that trims their handicap into the realm of single digits.

Ask anyone who has ever played the game and all will agree; golf is a difficult sport. But those same players will also tell you that golf is one of the most rewarding pursuits in all of sports. Little can compare with the feel of a perfectly struck golf shot. And helping players achieve that feeling is the goal of countless golf instructors and schools throughout the game.

One school, however, is more serious than others when it comes to preparing its students. Billed as a ‘grad school for golfers,’ American Tour Golf Schools, based in Charleston, could be called a boot camp for serious players. ATGS represents a melding of solid, proven teaching philosophies and techniques with the latest in high-tech monitoring and testing equipment in one comprehensive program that works to evaluate and improve **every aspect** of the student’s game (mechanical, physical, analytical and psychological).

What makes American Tour Golf Schools different is the length and intensity of the programs. Most schools are resort-oriented affairs geared to fit within a long weekend or, at most, a vacation. At ATGS, programs run from four days to two months. Students stay in apartments on property, and the daily regimen is demanding. Not the two-hour ‘clinic’ followed by lunch, a round of golf and cocktails, this is more than 10 hours a day of serious work on your golf game. And while ATGS programs will benefit all ability levels, make no mistake; the school is geared to better, more experienced players.

A significant difference between ATGS and other golf schools is the level of individualized instruction. Other schools boast of 5:1 student-teacher ratios; at ATGS, the ratio is one-to-one. Each student receives an in-depth evaluation of their game after which an individualized program is prepared and the instructor works as hard as the student to help each individual reach his or her goals.

In addition to a talented staff of instructors, headed by Kim Young, a veteran of six years on the PGA Tour and winner of more than 100 mini-tour events, ATGS also has an array of high-tech training aides, including Swing Dynamics Launch Monitor, one of only four on the East Coast and Swing Motion Trainer and Putting Monitor, also from Swing Dynamics. Using the Launch Monitor, ATGS can measure and fit equipment precisely according to what the ball is doing – launch angle, spin rate, etc. – not just length, lie, loft and shaft flex. For the best players, such information is critical if they are to achieve their optimum performance capabilities.

PHILOSOPHY

American Tour Golf Schools teach a single-axis, rotary swing. Blending physics and biomechanics, ATGS programs are designed specifically to maximize results for each student, whether they spend one week, two weeks or two months in the school. The teaching sequence, combined with the latest in swing monitoring equipment, swing aides and drills, accelerates the learning curve.

“Biomechanics teaches us that it takes 350 repetitions to make a motion a habit,” said David L. Forbes III, founder and chief executive officer of ATGS. “We have developed drills and swing aids to help each student not only produce the most efficient motion for a proper golf swing, but also to make that proper and efficient motion habit.”

The single-axis, rotary swing revolves around the spine. Straight from the skull to the tailbone, the spine is tilted approximately five to seven degrees to accommodate one hand being placed below the other on the grip, yet the spine remains straight, or neutral. Swing speed is generated by turning around this neutral spine position and the faster the turn or spin, the straighter the axis. The same principle applies to a figure skater’s spin or the spin of a gyroscope.

In the single-axis, rotary swing, the spine is the axis. The right elbow controls the swing plane and the left wrist controls the clubface.

FACILITIES

American Tour Golf Schools, located just 20 minutes north of historic Charleston, is based at Charleston National Country Club. Although it is independently owned and operated, its students can take advantage of the facilities at Charleston National, including the golf course and fitness center. Charleston National features a Rees Jones-designed course with holes overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway and the barrier islands beyond.

The ATGS Learning Center offers both indoor and outdoor facilities. The outdoor practice area includes a large range with teaching and practice tees, putting and chipping greens, practice bunkers and a short-game area designed specifically to hone a player’s skills from 100 yards in.

Moving inside, students can take advantage of two hitting stations as well as the array of technically advanced monitoring and analysis equipment. ATGS is also home to a complete club-fitting and club building facility operated by Golfing By Design, Inc. This Sanford, N.C.-based company fits and builds clubs perfectly matched to the individual student based on actual ball flight,

not merely static measurements. Using a Swing Dynamics Launch Monitor – discussed further in the “Equipment” section below – Golfing By Design technicians measure and fit equipment according to launch angle, spin rate and initial velocity, not just length, lie, loft and shaft flex. This is the same technology used in the R&D departments of many of golf’s leading club manufacturers. But at ATGS students are not locked into any one brand of equipment. Applying this technology, students can be confident that their clubs are built to launch the ball at a precise angle and with the optimal spin rate for every club from the driver to the wedges.

This same technology is used in doing ‘ball fitting,’ matching a ball with certain performance characteristics – spin rate, trajectory, etc. – to the student and their game.

The indoor facility also features space for video analysis – of one’s own swing or that of one of golf’s greats, as well as space for putting training and monitoring.

Using computerized monitoring equipment, instructors can determine and teach the optimum putting stroke, improving roll, minimizing skid and perfecting the path and face angle of the putter itself.

EQUIPMENT

Though the heart of the ATGS teaching process remains the personal instruction each student receives from the staff of teaching professionals, the technically advanced equipment used by these instructors to monitor and evaluate results sets American Tour Golf Schools apart from most golf instructional programs. The investment that this high-tech machinery represents demonstrates the commitment ATGS makes to each student, even before the student arrives at the school.

Swing Motion Trainer: Swing Dynamics™ has developed the Swing Motion Trainer into a state-of-the-art swing diagnostics and training system. The system integrates motion assessment, digital video and clubhead position with a Windows® compatible software program that’s fast and easy to operate.

SMT identifies where the body is out of position at any instance throughout the swing. The student simply slips on the lightweight sensor vest, takes a stance on the weight shift platform, addresses the ball and swings. Instantly, the instructor has a comprehensive computer and video analysis at his fingertips with all the data necessary to analyze every aspect of a student’s swing faults and strengths.

At the heart of the system lies the CA6000 Spine Motion Analyzer, a portable spinal instrument created by Orthopedic Systems Inc., a leader in biomechanical research and development. All the components of the Swing Dynamics system are linked by an integrated software solution. This powerful program presents swing motion data in an easy to understand format for eight key swing parameters and it’s all packaged on a user friendly Windows® platform.

Using the SMT, teaching professionals custom tailor a series of instruction sessions for any player, regardless of individual physique, age or level of play. Students can then receive a video tape or CD that integrates footage of their swing with side-by-side motion data analysis. To clarify the

lesson even further, instructors can add voice-over commentary to the tape or CD with their own on-screen graphics to emphasize critical areas.

A patented Auditory Feedback System literally directs a student's muscles to memorize a more powerful and consistent swing. The instructor simply sets the system to monitor one or more of eight key swing parameters. A single tone is heard when the correct position is achieved. Muscle memory locks in swing changes and the student remembers how it feels to improve their swing.

Ball Flight Monitor: Tour departments for major club manufacturers all use ball flight analysis technology to enable their professional players to optimize golf club, shaft and ball selection. The Swing Dynamics Ball Flight Monitor systematically compares shot performance of different clubs and balls, taking the guess work out of choosing which shaft flex, driver loft or golf ball maximizes the student's performance.

The Ball Flight Monitor System consists of a ball flight capture device, personal computer, monitor, printer, impact zone analyzer and transport cart. All components are linked by an easy-to-use Windows-based software program. The Ball Flight Monitor takes three high-speed photographs of the golf ball between four and ten inches after impact. These images are digitized and precisely measured providing launch angle, ball spin rate and ball initial velocity. This data is formulated with propriety algorithm to compute shot carry distance, deviation from center and a trajectory model.

ATGS has two Ball Flight Monitors – one fixed in place at the school's indoor hitting facility and a second portable unit that can be used outdoors at ATGS or at other locations.

Putting Monitor: Similar in theory to the Ball Flight Monitor, the Putting Monitor uses a high-speed camera linked to supporting computerized analysis programs to measure the exact physics of a putt. What is the path of the putterhead? Where is the face at impact – open, square or closed? Is the clubface closing or opening? How far does the ball skid before it begins to roll? The answer to each of these questions is critical to achieving the optimal putting stroke. And the Putting Monitor provides exact answers without any guesswork.

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