

COLLABORATE

www.proponent-group.com

Certifications Continue to Evolve and Our Exclusive Survey Keeps You Fully Informed

In recent years we've seen rapid growth in continuing-education opportunities for golf instructors, covering just about every niche in the game. Most include an official certification for those who complete the program – an achievement you can promote to students and prospects.

Our members devour teaching-related information at a much higher rate than typical instructors. So, last year we asked for your opinions on these certification experiences. We then poured your answers into a chart (below) that represents the first-ever survey of its kind with the results designed to help you choose future educational offerings that will best benefit your career.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, August 5th, be on the lookout as you will receive an email link to this year's Certifications Survey so that we can completely update the results as there are a handful of new certification programs that have been added to the survey.

Last year's inaugural study was our most responded-to survey in our eight-year history, which wasn't too surprising considering the strong emphasis our members put on continuing education.

To refresh your memory, last year's initial survey found that the top five most attended certification programs were: **Titleist Performance Institute, TrackMan University, U.S. Kids Golf, Certified Golf Coaches** and **Bioswing Dynamics**.

The programs rated highest for having "significantly added to your skill set" were: **Vision54 Coaching, Extraordinary Coaching** and **New Rules Golf Coach**.

When we asked if the program "somewhat or strongly enhanced their reputation", the top-rated included: **Stack & Tilt, Vision54** and **The Plane Truth**.

Earning the highest marks for "good or outstanding value" were: **BioSwing Dynamics, Extraordinary Coaching** and **Impact Zone**.

Once the new survey is complete, we will update the rankings for all 22 certification programs on the members website under the Certification Guide menu and we'll add more in the coming months if new options enter the market.



Stack & Tilt®



VISION54
 Bring Possibility to Life

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Summit 2015

Connecting with the Future of Teaching & Coaching

November 1-3, 2015 (Sunday - Tuesday)
Las Colinas C.C., Irving, Texas

Registration Now Open. Early Bird Discount Ends August 31st.

Join us for our eighth year showcasing what's coming next in golf instruction and highlighting fresh opportunities to grow your teaching business.

Join Us in Dallas to:

- Learn how "Every Ball Counts" is changing the way golfers practice
- Discover the keys to building a fair compensation package for you and your facility
- Learn new ways to create the ideal training environment for junior golfers' improvement
- Avoid costly customer service mistakes that drive students elsewhere
- Learn how to overcome the three biggest mental issues in golf
- Learn five new industry trends you can leverage
- Check out the latest teaching technologies
- Make new friends and expand your network of peers from across North America



PLUS – New for 2015 – "Building a Top-Tier Teaching Career" A special pre-summit session on Sunday afternoon exclusively for our Associate Members.



Summit 2015 Agenda

Sunday, November 1

- 11:00am Registration Opens
- 1:00pm Optional Golf at Las Colinas C.C.
- 2:00-5:00pm ***NEW*** For Associate Members Only:
Building a Top-tier Teaching Career
- 6:30pm Opening Night Dinner at Las Colinas C.C.

Monday, November 2

- 7:00am Breakfast Buffet
- 8:00 The State of Instruction: 5 Trends to Watch (Lorin Anderson)
- 8:30-10:00 Compensation Consternation: Why it's So Hard to Get Instructors and Facilities to Agree on Pay (Panel Discussion)
- 10:00 Break
- 10:30-11:15 What a Junior Golfer Needs to Evolve as a Player and Person (Iain Highfield)
- 11:15-Noon Turbo-Charge Your Business Through Improved Customer Relationship Management (Jeff Penson)
- Noon Lunch Buffet

- 1:00-3:00pm Every Ball Counts: Merging Elite Coaching with Golf Intelligence (Darren May and Bill Davis)
- 3:00-5:30 Teaching Tech and Training Aids Demo Day
- 5:45pm Cocktails and Dinner at Las Colinas C.C.

Tuesday, November 3

- 7:00am Breakfast Buffet
- 8:15-9:15 Overcoming the Three Biggest Mental Issues in Golf (Dr. Bob Neff)
- 9:15-10:15 Secret Shopper: Customer-Service Mistakes by Coaches and How to Fix Them (Jackie Beck)
- 10:15 Break
- 10:45-11:45 Panel Discussion: How to Engage More Golfers in Instruction
- Noon Lunch Buffet
- 1pm Lessons We Can Learn from Topgolf's Success (David Ogrin)
- 2pm Why So Many Golfers are Scared to Take Lessons and What to Do About It (Chris O'Connell)
- 3pm Summit Ends

Summit 2015 Details

Host Site: Las Colinas C.C. in Irving, TX is located approximately 15 minutes from Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

PGA/LPGA Education Credits: Agenda will be submitted to the PGA and LPGA for continuing education for association members. Approximately 13 hours of education will be included in the summit.

Lodging: Proponent has negotiated a summit rate at Aloft - Irving (972-717-6100) for \$149 per night. Aloft will provide shuttle service to and from the Summit. This hotel is within one mile of Las Colinas C.C. Many other hotel chains including Homewood Suites, Omni Mandalay, Hotel

Las Colinas and Dallas Marriott Las Colinas also are located within a few miles of Las Colinas C.C. Contact your preferred hotel directly to book a room.

Meals: Six meals from Sunday dinner through Tuesday lunch are included in the summit fee.

Cost: Our Early Bird Special is only \$445 for our full and International members. Associate members are welcome to attend for \$495. **Summit rates increase \$50 on September 1st.** NOTE: Optional golf Sunday afternoon at Four Seasons Las Colinas TPC Course is an additional \$50 (tee times are limited and will be filled first-come, first-served).

BUSINESS PRACTICES

When Destinations and Coaching Come Together Teaching + Travel: Ideal Combo for Instructors?

By David Gould, Staff Editor

Attitude surveys keep making the point that golfers play less because they lack leisure time. “Too expensive” and “too frustrating” are also cited as reasons, but the time constraint is a nearly universal problem. That’s why there’s magic in the air when golfers cut loose from the daily grind and “go with the pro” on a multi-course tour someplace far away. The amateur who’s enjoyed one of these trips quite typically says yes when the next invitation arrives.

Lately, a twist on this concept has emerged: The ideal person to lead golfers on memory-making trips is their teacher and coach. Not that there’s anything so wrong with having a head of golf operations lead the way, as traditionally has been the case. It’s just that, with so much golf to be played, and in venues where every amateur yearns to be hitting it well and scoring well, the swing-doctoring, head-shrinking, coach-who-knows-my-game is a logical first choice to lead the expedition.

If you think about it, when the golf director with heavy management duties finally settles into the luxury coach with seven club members, it almost always prompts him or her to say something like, “This is great, because I don’t usually get to spend a lot of quality one-on-one time with my members.” Well, if that’s the case, it could easily mean the D of G won’t recognize Charlie’s swing hitch or know how to get Mr. Johnson to stop hitting hosel rockets during warm-ups with one simple reminder.

More to the point, a teaching-coaching specialist has the type of schedule and job description that lends itself more readily to travel than a head pro’s schedule ever could. In a recent Edufi forum seeking Proponent member comments about trip-taking, Brandon Stooksbury, director of instruction at the Idle Hour Club in Macon, Ga., underscored this point. “I just returned from a trip to Whistling Straits with 11 students and members,” Stooksbury wrote. “I usually try to schedule at least one two-day and one week-long trip each year.” Think about a director of golf taking a regular mid-season trip for getaway golf—it’s simply not in the cards.

Renee Trudeau, a Proponent Group member in Coral Gables, Fla., exploits her scheduling advantage eagerly. “As an instructor, I’ve got more freedom and flexibility to plan out trips and go traveling with golfers,” says Trudeau, who has made



Main photo: Derek Hooper with 15 of his students playing golf and having fun at Sea Island and (inset) Brandon Stooksbury with his students at Whistling Straights.

touring British, Irish and European golf regions a profitable specialty. “We coaches also have the kind of relationships with clients that allows us to reassure any hesitant folks that they’ll be taken care of and really enjoy themselves,” she asserts.

Female golfing travelers are Renee’s sweet-spot clientele. And despite all the golf her travel clients play, the social and sightseeing element are usually top priority. “Women golfers eventually wake up and say, ‘Hey, men get to go on all these golf trips—wouldn’t I want to let someone else look after the kids and the house and go tee it up somewhere beautiful?’”

Brad Redding does an annual getaway that is very much the province of a dedicated instructor. Redding takes students from his International Club base near Myrtle Beach for some pre-season prep in Florida. “I take students down to PGA Village in Port St Lucie in February and March to get their games ready for spring,” says the longtime Proponent member. “The trip is four days, consisting of golf in the morning and three hours of instruction in the afternoon.”

Redding’s concept stands out for a couple of reasons. One is that the format of afternoon instruction naturally includes plenty of supervised practice, an element of game-improvement that has risen in perceived value. Meanwhile the morning 18 can act as a playing lesson with focus on decision-making—another hot topic in teaching. The second notable aspect of this trip is the spring-training paradigm it borrows from baseball—the male athletic psyche is completely com-

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comfortable with the logic of this idea.

Rob Stocke, a Proponent Group member from the Golf Club of Georgia in suburban Atlanta, views travel and touring as the ultimate connection with golfers. “No matter how much time you spend teaching lessons or in the shop,” Stocke maintains, “nothing compares to spending time with members during a golf trip.” Named the 2012 Teacher of the Year for his Georgia PGA chapter, Stocke “gets it” that amateur golfers bask in the double dose of personal attention travel provides. The person in charge of the trip is coaching that golfer and acting as their travel guide at the same time. It’s a powerful service combo.

Stocke recently put together a best-practices message for PGA Magazine’s email program that identified go-with-the-pro golf trips as the ideal way to promote clubfitting. “Travel gives you a great chance to explain clubfitting a bit and build that business,” Rob pointed out. He pays attention to patterns that emerge as he watches an individual play for several consecutive days, and makes mental notes when it seems clear that ill-fitted clubs are fouling that person up.

“As with swing changes, I don’t get into the details while we’re in the middle of a trip,” Stocke explains. “Instead, I’ll wait until the end and tell them to come see me when we get home and I’ll take a look at their clubs to see if there’s any room for improvement.”

One important exception to that rule involves the many adjustable drivers and fairway woods in peoples’ bags these days. “I can use my expertise as a clubfitter to tweak the settings to help them improve their ball flight if they’re struggling



Ryder Cup-type events are always a big hit when traveling.

off the tee,” says Stocke. That’s a great example of an under-utilized gear feature getting exploited because of not just expertise but the luxury of extended interaction time.

Eujone Kim, a Proponent member at the Golf Performance Center at The Woodlands CC, outside Houston, uses clubfitting and the “gearhead” angle on his golf travel expeditions, as well. Kim and a fellow pro take an annual trip west for golf in and around Scottsdale plus personalized clubfitting at the PING headquarters and take a walk through the glittering collection of gilded putters in the PING Gold Vault, considered “the Fort Knox of the golf industry” for its 2,800-plus commemorative putters engraved and gleaming on their racks.

Five Tips for the Travel-Promoting Professional

1) Decide Whether You Can You Handle Trip Arrangements Yourself: It’s a nice addition to a professional’s skill set to be able to organize trips abroad. However, going that route is iffy when the destination is unfamiliar to you. Other reasons to possibly hire a tour operator include: Going with a very large group; trying for tough-ticket courses like Royal County Down, Muirfield or the Old Course at St. Andrews; traveling to a destination that’s hosting an event like the Ryder Cup; or, expecting to cover an extremely large region, especially using boats and/or shuttle flights.

2) Consider Mixing Game-Improving Trips with Pure-Pleasure Trips: You may find there are two separate travel markets among your instruction clientele—those who want to get away for extra coaching and practice and those who want to play great courses at a famed destination with basically zero skill-building activities.

3) Keep a Notebook with Your Observations of How Travelers Played: With multiple days in which to study your amateur travel mates, you’ll be able to address skill areas, strategy problems or issues with equipment that may not

show up in the normal course of club activity back home. At the right time, you can bring these points up and suggest solutions. It’s a chance to deepen the teacher-student relationship and even encourage more travel participation by that student in the future.

4) The Longer the Trip, the More the Personalities Need to Mesh: Experienced travel planner Renee Trudeau believes that golf-intense trips with an all-male clientele have a different dynamic than trips skewed toward women golfers and couples. Especially if the trip is going to be over five days, she makes a serious effort to recruit compatible people and, when that’s not fully possible, to create pairings that create a good match of personalities on the course.

5) Decide If This is More a Work Duty for You, or More a Vacation: As Derek Hooper points out, his autumn golf journeys with longtime students don’t require much of him once they’re underway, so he comes back refreshed and rested. Every hardworking instructor needs a break like that, so if you’re the type who has trouble relaxing, book yourself some time off once the trip is over. – D.G.

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Derek Hooper, who runs the Lake of Isles Golf Academy connected to the Foxwoods Resort in Connecticut, feels the coach-student relationship builds bonds, and those bonds make the annual golf trip particularly warm and rewarding. “On the trip I put together, it’s all about playing golf, competing in a casual way and having a good time,” says Hooper.

“The guys on the trip appreciate the fact that I teach all year and don’t get much chance

to play, so they treat me like anybody else on the trip.” Mid-October is the timeframe for Hooper’s trip, which has selected Sea Island, Ponte Vedra Beach, Pinehurst and this year the Dominican Republic destination of Punta Cana. Thursday through Sunday is the itinerary, with 18 holes on the two travel days, 36 on Friday and 18 on Saturday, to prevent excessive fatigue. “Saturday we walk with caddies, and play the premier course, such as Pinehurst No. 2, so that’s our course-design appreciation day,” he says. And his Lake of Isles director of golf is part of the 16-player traveling party, as well—that’s a good bonding opportunity for two key golf managers of the resort.

Trillium Rose enjoys a similar peer-to-peer benefit, having been part of a trip that her director of golf at Woodmont Country Club, in Rockville, Md., organized for 27 women golfers to the Dominican. On her own this month Rose is scheduled to bring a group of women for golf at a notorious guys’-trip favorite, Bandon Dunes on the Oregon coastline.

Trips within the U.S. to one or two resorts aren’t usually a logistical challenge—the golf professional in charge will typically handle arrangements without difficulty. Journeys abroad, with larger numbers of paying amateurs, will raise the question of working with a tour operator. [See sidebar about self-planning versus using tour companies]. Chris Holmes is a Proponent Group member in charge of golf instruction at Heathrow (Fla.) Country Club, and a British-born keen traveler who brings members on trips regularly. This month he’ll be taking a dozen or so Floridians to play Royal Lytham, Royal Liverpool and Royal Birkdale, with side trips to jewels like Formby and Hillside, which are also part of “England’s Golf Coast,” as the tour books call it.

Holmes is such a veteran trip planner and tour conductor that on a recent trip he actually opted to drive the 17-seat minicoach that would carry the golfing party throughout the Scottish Highlands from links to links. “If you want to be on the



Group trips overseas can create memories and bonds that last a lifetime.

receiving end of ceaseless good-natured tormenting,” he says, “volunteer to drive the coach on a guys’ golf trip.” Chris earns some profit from his trips, only fitting giving the amount of planning and trans-Atlantic communicating they involve. He firmly believes that the typical country club has no stronger member-retention tool than the rollicking, links-roaming golf tour conducted by a club professional.

“If you’re in our Heathrow clubhouse and notice something that looks like a homemade coffee-table book, it’s our photo album from trips to Britain and Ireland for golf,” he says. “For a director of instruction, it’s terrific to do these trips with the people you teach. It creates such strong camaraderie among the travelers that it really boosts morale throughout the club.”

Elizabeth Granahan’s G2 Golf company, based outside Philadelphia, is another instruction-based enterprise that balances travel with coaching in a dynamic way. Along with partner Michele Gajderowicz, Granahan has gone to places as far off the normal golf itineraries as Iceland. They are proof that, at a certain level of interest and dedication, a golf specialist can branch so far into travel as to legitimately make it a business center within their overall golf enterprise.

One trip the longtime Proponent Group member particularly likes is her winter foray to the Tommy Thomas Barona Pro-Am. This event, held at Barona Creek Golf Club just outside San Diego, gives G2 the chance “to treat our students to a week of magnificent weather, fantastic golf, delicious food and lots of fun,” Granahan says. “Over the past three years, we’ve taken 12 or 13 teams out to play and virtually all have returned as better, more committed students and even better friends.”

That’s quite a desirable outcome—from an activity that, in and of itself, was filled with pleasure for the hard-working instructor.

As we continue looking at coaching and travel, it’s worth remembering the analytics showing that lesson-taking members spend more time and money at the club than non-lesson-takers. When you do your half-year and end-of-year activity reviews, try cross-matching the golfers who are involved with instruction with those who have gone golf-trekking with you. Quite possibly you’ll find that the travel spend is yet another category in which lesson-takers show up more prominently than other members.

RETAILTRIBE ON MARKETING

While You're Busy Saving the Golf Industry...

Instructors: Start a 'Golfer Engagement' Log

By Ian James,
CEO, RetailTribe

This month's article starts with a \$64 million question, which I pose to all Proponent members on behalf of the golf industry at large.

If you work at a club, do you publish an "engagement report" to management that details the numbers of golfers who've attended your clinics, coaching programs, skills challenges, supervised practices, assessments, performance events and clubfitting sessions? Or joined you for an accompanied round of golf?

And, if you don't keep such a log and generate regular reports from it... why not?

I'm prompted to ask in part by something I saw while reading the Proponent Group Facebook forum. I was struck by the number of members who 'liked' or commented on the article "Growing the Game: How Golf Gets it Wrong," written by Brandell Chamblee, posted with a link on Proponent's Facebook page.

Chamblee's interesting essay highlighted the power of the golf professional, especially the coach, in introducing golfers to the game then developing their competence and interest. For the incoming golfer, competence and interest tend to feed each other—plenty of research proves that. So, Tiger Woods, Rickie Fowler and Jordan Spieth may awaken a curiosity or make the game seem cool—that's important. Meanwhile, the pathway from introduction and exposure to committed golfer is most effectively travelled in the company of a skilled golf professional.

I know that. You know that. The PGA seems to know that. But quite evidently, the people in charge of golf facilities are often less enlightened. In the face of that lack of understanding, whose job is to enlighten them? And how are you going to do it? For starters, who else did you forward the Chamblee article to?



If golf professionals hadn't taken the time to engage and encourage the previous generations instead of sitting behind a desk, would Bobby Jones, Arnold Palmer and Tiger Woods have even become lifelong golfers?

In my experience, professionals are not even recording the key facts of golfer engagement. I have visited 100 or more PGA Professionals at golf clubs in the last 18 months. On only three occasions did I find them keeping track of the numbers and / or names of golfers they had engaged with each month. One of the three, Scott Kirkwood at Ocean Reef Club in the Florida Keys, had a fantastic report on the back of the merchandise stock room door, maintained daily by all staff professionals. It's the best such "scoreboard" I have seen in many years. Unfortunately, the club president had no knowledge of it. Excess modesty on Scott's part led to continued unawareness on the part of club leaders.

Coaches are the key to revenue for our whole industry

About a year ago, some truly sensational facts emerged from a Proponent Group research project. We at RetailTribe were able to take those statistics into the field and validate them with a large number of our prestigious country-club customers in the Northeast. These facts make it eminently clear that the most valuable revenue resource to a golf facility is the golf coach. If you'd like to learn more about them, go to www.retailtribe.com/features/coachesfactpack.

A conclusion struck me right then—the true challenge of this era is educating CEOs and general managers about teaching, coaching, golfer engagement and club revenue.

RETAILTRIBE ON MARKETING

To that end, at RetailTribе we are on a mission. We've produced educational programs for several club managers' associations around the world. We're currently building on them to create a program for the Club Managers' Association of America.

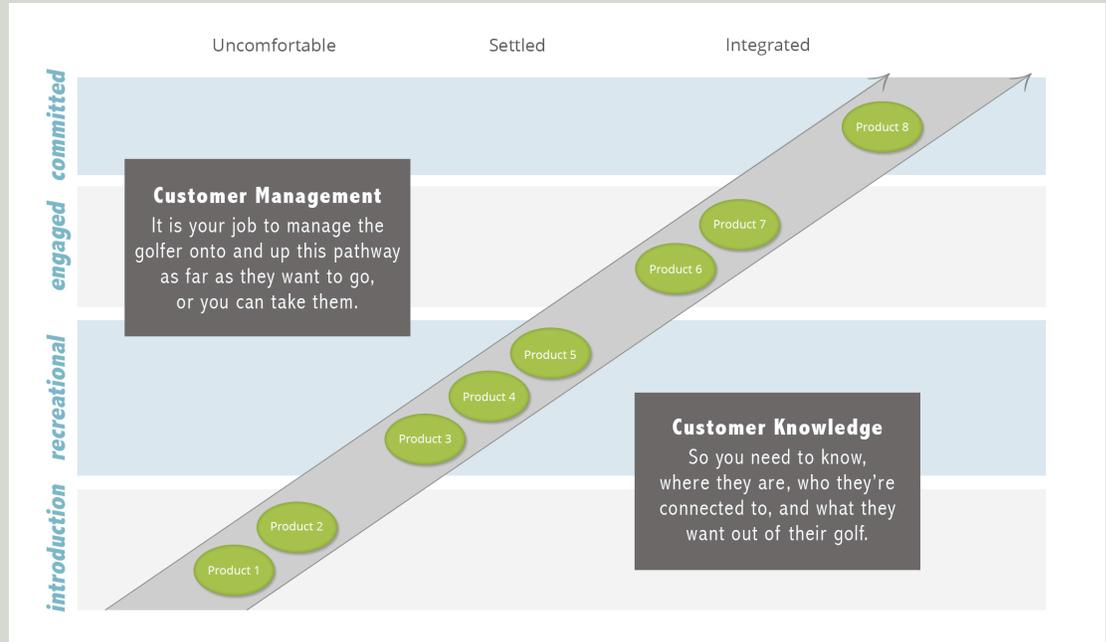
Don't think about golfers you've 'coached.' Think about the golfers you've 'created,' 'saved' and 'activated.'

It seems to be taking a while for golf coaches to grasp their own importance and appreciate the influence of their own activities. Recently I spent time with a teaching pro who, in 2013 alone, had led some 350 women through Get Golf Ready programs. That produced nice fee money for him, the coach. However, through follow-up it was found that only 28 of those women had gone on to play even a single round of golf. Few if any had made it to what we term the recreational level.

In that context, what was the value of the professional to the current cause of expanding the U.S. golfer base? It was very scant. His Get Golf Ready efforts produced almost no membership or green fee revenue, nor any equipment sales for the gear vendors. And, of course, no ongoing coaching revenue.

The good news is that this professional was a very quick learner and now appreciates that it's his job to develop the golfer, assisting them up a pathway from learner to recreational. And from there, to engaged if there's interest. And finally, to committed, if possible.

The value of a single golfer to the industry along that journey from introduction to even just



The value of a single golfer to the industry along the journey from introduction to even just recreational, never mind engaged or committed, is enormous in membership fees, food and beverage, retail sales and coaching.

recreational, never mind engaged or committed, is enormous (see graphic above). Do the arithmetic just for the one facility where you work. Project, over 10 years, the value of a golfer to a private facility, if that's where you are, in membership, fees, food-and-beverage, never mind retail and coaching. If you're at a public facility, you can do a similar projection (see example at left).

I'm willing to bet that you are shocked at the figure you've come up with. How about your management—wouldn't they also be shocked to see those figures?

Imagine we reported against that figure

Now think about a report listing the number of new golfers you were responsible for each year and the projected 10-year value of that. Add the golfers you saved, or "retained," to use the industry term. Add the golfers you managed to move up the pathway from recreational to committed, or to engaged.

Those are the end-result statistics the golf industry needs. But they make sense only insofar as you add the stats on all those instructor-led

The value of each new golfer created

Joining Fee = \$ _____

Annual Dues (\$ _____) x 10 years = \$ _____

Average annual spend on F&B (\$ _____) x 10 = \$ _____

Average annual spend On retail (\$ _____) x 10 = \$ _____

Total value = \$ _____

Your calculation at your club may be different. Just make the adjustments and work this out. And if you're at a public facility, you can do something similar around green fees, but remember that one golfer usually brings on average 1.8 additional golfers with them to pay and play at the facility.

RETAILTRIBE ON MARKETING

activities that produce the happy results. As noted, we are talking about the number of golfers you've engaged with in clinics, coaching programs, performance events, skills challenges, supervised practices, assessments, fittings and so forth. Again, how can the industry value those measures if there are no logs and reports detailing them?

Your job is to make sure that your management understands that those activities create the golfers and revenues they desperately need. A start is to immediately begin the publication of an engagement report every month, and to begin a conversation with your management as to why that's so important (*see example at right*).

Why are we so interested in this?

At RetailTribe our passion is revenue. We know that you're critically important to the revenue figure at any facility, and fundamental to the top-line health of our whole industry. Our job is to create 'Campaigns and Content' that inspire golfers to want to engage with you. Your job is to convert them onwards and upwards along the pathway to more golf.

And on the way, there's a better life for you. One where you're not only better rewarded, and more tenured, but one where your value and status in this industry is truly appreciated.

Engagement Report

– Scott Kirkwood & Team March 2015

Activity	Golfers Engaged
Accompanied Play	18
Supervised Practice	12
Swing Assessments	16
Fittings	9
Clinics	36
Coaching	8
Skills Challenge	18
Fun Performance Events	16

We borrowed extensively from Scott Kirkwood at Ocean Reef in the layout of this report. Scott's report also includes the name of every golfer engaged.

Do much less selling in your Marketing



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For world class marketing designed to drive more customers, contact Rick Williams on 215-622-6324 or rickwilliams@retailtribe.com.

Coaching works

Big reasons to swing on plane



And golfers will buy a whole lot more from you,
worrying less about price.

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Networking Still Matters in a Tweet-filled World



Everyone thinks they are so connected to everyone else, but is that really the case? We bounce from Facebook posts, to Instagram pictures, to Twitter comments all day long, but is this really building our personal network? I struggle with this personally because I love talking with our members one-on-one in person and on the phone everyday. It's those conversations where the rapport is created, where the trust is built and where

the knowledge is passed back and forth, yet I find myself spending too much time following the random postings that clog my inbox.

Proponent Group's tagline is *The Premier Network of Golf Instructors* and I take that very seriously. I have always envisioned our membership as a sharing network that is designed to elevate everyone through supercharged networking where the most dedicated and brightest people in the instruction industry would develop closer relationships that would spread the inside information that helps shape successful careers.

Robert Louis Stevenson may have said it best: "Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant." When it comes to networking, you can plant a lot of seeds at the Proponent Group Summit each year. If you haven't already put it on your calendar, please strongly consider attending our biggest event of the year in Dallas (details can be found on pages 2-3 of this newsletter.) Sure, the presentations are very valuable, but for most attendees it's the contacts and the conversations during the meals and breaks that will have the biggest affect on their futures.

At past summits, lifelong friendships have been formed, new jobs have been found, critical business information has

been shared and career paths have shifted for the better... and that was just during breakfast. Seriously.

Even if you are unable to attend the summit, please make an effort to participate in other industry events that will grow your personal network, which in turn will grow your knowledge, increase your career opportunities and build your business. Just reading the industry blogs, YouTube videos and Facebook group posts may provide useful information but it will always take a village of connections to get ahead.

A relationship moves to a completely different level once you spend time face to face. A hundred text messages is not as meaningful as having lunch with someone.

This reminds me of a story about a grad school teacher who asked his students to take a blank sheet of paper and write down their overall net worth. As you can imagine, the answers included bank account balances, stocks and bonds, real estate and other possessions.

He then told the class to toss out that paper and take out another blank sheet and write down their overall net worth beyond possessions. The class stared blankly at him.

He then asked the students to consider the value of their personal networks – their friends, connections, colleagues, classmates, family, neighbors and members from associations they are part of. He then said to assign \$100 to each acquaintance, \$1000 to classmates and association members, \$10,000 to co-workers and neighbors and \$100,000 to family members. The student's calculations were well into the millions of dollars. While only an academic exercise, it does remind us that we undervalue the relationships in our lives. Cultivating more and deeper relationships can have a huge affect on the harvest you reap in your life. Never stop building your personal network and we'll do our best to help you grow it in Dallas this fall.

Proponent Group Partners



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Negotiating Raises and Terms of Employment for Golf Instructors

By **John Torsiello**, Contributing Writer

Sitting down with a supervisor or manager to ask for a raise is a scenario that employees either dread or look forward to—in some cases it's probably both. Today's skilled golf professional whose job emphasizes teaching is living in promising times. Instruction is being valued more highly, which translates to a better shot at higher earnings. The key is to approach your negotiations wisely.

Important questions surround any salary review or discussion of pay increases, including:

- What pay and benefits should I ask for?
- When should I ask for them?
- How do I make a compelling case for what I want and what I deserve?
- How do I respond if my request is turned down?

As you plan for these discussions, two factors tend to be difference-makers: Preparation and timing. Cover those two bases and you are likely to have a productive exchange rather than an awkward stand-off. It helps greatly if you're able to answer yes to certain relevant questions, including:

- Is the business doing reasonably well?
- Are ownership and management fairly stable—not in transition?
- Am I performing well and bringing a positive presence to the workplace?
- Has an appropriate amount of time gone by since my last compensation adjustment?

If you're on sound footing relative to those fundamentals, you can ask yourself a more pointed question, one that's related to your own mobility. Namely: How ready or likely am I to leave my position and go work someplace else?

Bear all these contextual factors in mind and then examine your own job performance in detail, looking for

strong signs that your contribution is helping lift the business. "Generally speaking," says Jack Brennan, principal at Paladin Golf Marketing, "a raise is given to a person who has created value for a company in the form of new business, repeat business or referrals. In other words, they've generated revenue beyond expectations."

A wrinkle to add to that statement involves comparative performance—this is particularly relevant at golf facilities with multiple teaching professionals. "When a teaching pro can show that they are generating revenues at a superior level, they should be very comfortable approaching their manager, documenting their value and suggesting that they are due for a raise or bonus," says Brennan.

Almost everyone thinks they're worth more money, but most are hesitant to ask for it. That's the view of Dr. Marie McIntyre, author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics"



and a frequent contributor to CNBC. "Asking doesn't guarantee that you will get a raise, but not asking may ensure that you don't," she says. "These conversations can often be uncomfortable and unproductive, so it pays to prepare."

Dr. McIntyre believes the best time to ask for a raise is when you have just completed a big project, solved a major problem, taken on new responsibilities, or done something else noteworthy. "But if you have recently blown through your budget, fallen short of your goals or had a major screw-up, forget about that pay increase for a while,"

BUSINESS PRACTICES

she adds. “And if your boss was just called on the carpet by the CEO, or your company is looking at layoffs, that’s obviously not a good time.”

Don Hurter, head golf professional at Castle Pines Golf Club in Colorado, has “been fortunate,” he says, to receive three raises in the last five years without having to ask for them. Based on the steady recent success of the Castle Pines golf operation, Hurter surely could have initiated a discussion of his compensation. In response to the financial collapse of 2008, the club had been forced to trim salaries by 10 percent. On that basis, Castle Pines employees were armed with one strong argument in favor of subsequent raises—the simple fact that they had once earned more they were now making. That gave Hurter et al. a clear precedent for at least a 10 percent move back upward. Again, strong performance of the operation is what truly opened the door.

Your status as a rainmaker whose skills and personality can boost revenue is plainly a plus. There’s also an advantage in showing that you view the operation as a whole, rather than obsessing on your own niche within it. Proof of attunement to the overall business will show up in how you time your request for a salary bump. Paul Adams, director of golf at the Fairmont Southampton in Bermuda, says that because companies have budgets to stick to it is difficult to increase payroll mid-way through the year. “Typically, the budgets are done toward season’s end, in preparation for year ahead,” Adams says. “The time to discuss salary depends on when the company does its budget.”

Interestingly, the performance-review season—if your company has one—isn’t always the best time to ask about a raise. “In many companies,” says McIntyre, “salary decisions are made before appraisals are discussed with em-

ployees, so you want to get your request on the table before review time. If your organization does appraisals in November, for example, you should make your raise request in September.”

In the judgement of Ben Austin, head professional at Deerfield Golf & Tennis Club in Newark, Del., you don’t want to ask for a raise in a casual conversation. “Set a time to have a meeting and be prepared to prove why you are



worth the bigger number,” he advises. His fellow Proponent Group member, Gerard Scheer, Jr., agrees. “I would start the conversation at the end of the current season and be prepared with supporting documents to plead your case,” says Scheer, whose position at Aspetuck Valley Country Club in Weston, Conn., is first assistant professional in charge of instruction.

5 BASIC RULES WHEN SEEKING BETTER COMPENSATION

- The two vital factors are preparation and timing. If you have just completed a big project, solved a major problem, taken on new responsibilities, or done something else noteworthy, strongly consider “striking while the iron is hot.”
- The performance-review season is isn’t always the best time to ask about a raise. Because of the budget-prep process, you many need to get your request on the table before review time, even a couple of months prior to it.
- Try to “quantify your existence,” as one veteran manager puts it, by producing a record of how many rounds of golf you’ve been responsible for adding, how many clubfitting sessions, and so forth. Document your economic impact on the club.
- Be proactive about researching wage-and-benefit profiles of area instructors close in rank to you. Ask around and keep notes on how your peers are compensated.
- An ideal way to gain leverage in salary negotiations is to be offered a job elsewhere at higher pay. But since your current employer has to value you highly enough to want to keep you, don’t share the news of the rival offer unless you’re prepared to accept it and move on. — J.T.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

It probably goes without saying, but the basis for having more dollars added to your paycheck can't be personal life circumstances. You'll only receive a raise, according to McIntyre, because of the value you bring to the company through outstanding ability, attitude, or both. "The fact that you have a lot of mouths to feed or some other hardship is completely irrelevant," she says. "Don't ever plead for more money because you need it. Sell your boss on the fact that your performance makes you worth it."

Documentation is vital when making your case. Tim Mahoney, director of education for Troon Golf, says that when a teaching professional or director of instruction walks into his office for a salary review he wants that person to "quantify their existence." Mahoney adds: "I want to see a daily record of how many rounds of golf they were responsible for adding, how many clubfitting sessions, and so forth. I am looking for numbers that express their economic impact on the club."

It helps to have a management person in your corner, naturally. Recently Hurter took up the cudgels for his assistants by researching what comparable clubs were paying their own assistant professionals. One important correlation that came up in his research—and this sort of documentation is spreading quickly through the industry—was between lesson-taking and spend-per-member. "I provided the general manager with a list of lesson takers at the club," Hurter says, "along with a sheet showing how much money they spent. He was impressed."

As the cause-effect relationship continues to be proven between instruction-program engagement and dollars spent at the club, younger professionals who devote so much time and personal energy to these programs stand to gain. The example of Castle Pines is just one among many that could be cited.

When the time comes to ask for more money it's the employee's job to toot his or her own horn. Strategically, they are better off doing a little bit of that on a regular basis, rather than saving it all for one information dump. "If you are demonstrating your value day after day, that goes miles," says Austin. "The conversation becomes much easier when you're asking for a raise if your boss already knows your value rather than you having to prove it all in a single meeting."

Along with not waiting to spotlight your conscientiousness and your value, you should also be proactive about researching the wage-and-benefit profiles of area instructors close in rank to you. Make it a habit as you travel to keep notes on how your peers are compensated, and on what their working conditions and job descriptions are like.

Every job has a market value, according to Dr. McIntyre.

Learn the value of yours by networking with peers at other facilities or checking salary-comparison websites. "Be careful about cross-company comparisons," she warns. "The same title can mean different things at different companies. So you need to compare responsibilities." She considers it helpful to find out in advance what the benchmarks are for compensation hikes. "Well before you intend to request more money or responsibility, ask your manager what the criteria would be for getting a raise or promotion," advises McIntyre. "If your boss has never thought about this before, your question may stimulate some helpful discussion."

And if you get turned down for a raise, walk away with



your head up. For Austin, the negative answer isn't necessarily the end of the process. "I would respect the decision but let it be known that I'd like to ask some additional questions," he says. "I would ask what tasks should be met for a raise to be granted and what timetable this would be on. I would let the boss know that my goal is to earn a raise and I'd ask for feedback on what improvements or accomplishments are needed in order for that to happen."

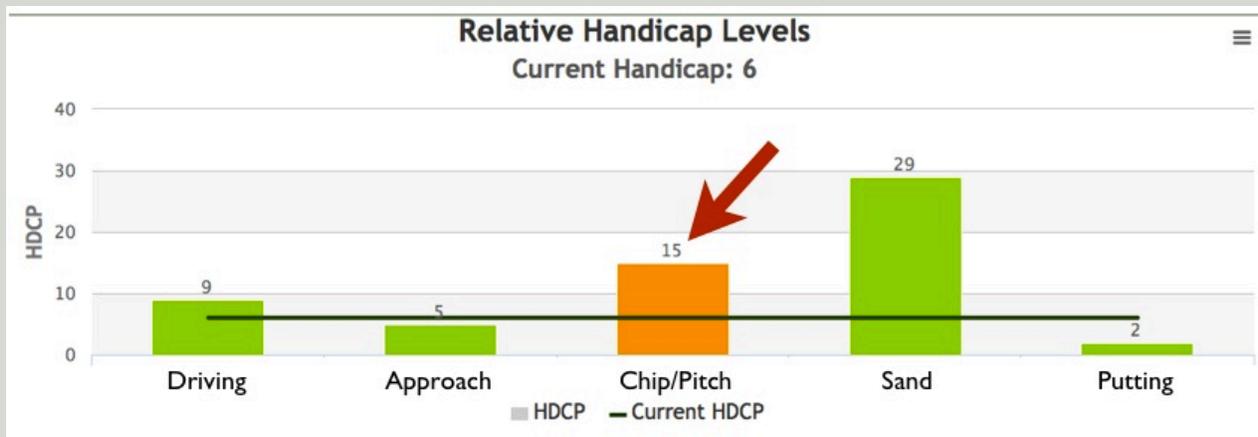
A superior way to gain leverage in salary negotiations, according to McIntyre, is to be offered a job elsewhere at higher pay. "Of course, your employer has to value you highly enough to want to keep you," she notes, so don't share the news of the rival offer unless you're prepared to accept it. But getting noticed for what you do well is generally a very good thing. To that end, make sure you perform above and beyond expectations, and document your worth to your club or facility. It will make getting that next raise much easier come salary negotiation time.

For more information on negotiating a raise, download the full text of our Instructor's Guide to Negotiating a Raise in the Business Guides section of the members website.

ShotByShot.com Update: Strokes Gained is In

- The program was completely converted to Strokes Gained analysis in May.
- ShotByShot.com is the only place where non-touring professionals can go for this unique analysis.
- 150+ Instructors/coaches now build and monitor groups of students.

Understand exactly where your instruction will do the most good. Our Strokes Gained analysis clearly identifies your player's #1 improvement priority. In the example below, the player's short game (Chip/Pitch shots) is costing the most strokes each round when compared to their Target Handicap profile.



Our detailed comparative data focuses on exactly what about the skill needs the most work. For example, for the player below, eliminating ERRORS will lead to the most improvement in the short game.



- We updated our Player Ranking Report.
- Group Leaders can get email notifications when players enter new rounds.

For more information, call 203-968-1608 or email psanders@shotbyshot.com.

*** Don't forget to ask about the Proponent Group member discount. ***

What I've Learned: Kate Tempesta

Kate Tempesta's Urban Golf Academy, New York, NY

Interview by Paul Ramee, Jr.



We're always looking for signs of the swift pace of innovation taking place within golf instruction. One such indicator is Kate Tempesta and the unique role she has carved out. As one of few working golf professionals who spends the majority of her time in New York City's borough of Manhattan, Tempesta is known for teaching some of America's very youngest golfers. Her platform is the Urban Golf Academy,

designed and founded by Tempesta more than seven years ago.

UGA was a natural outgrowth of an early vocation, teaching creative movement to very young children. In a moment of inspiration, that concept became woven into golf, a sport Tempesta took up as an adult and quickly became skilled at. It helped that she was already a successful fitness professional with kinesiology training and a plenty of natural athleticism.

Tempesta is dedicated to serving her clientele but also spreading the latest insights into early child development as it relates to golf and movement in general. When the PGM program at Penn State wanted to bring in someone with expertise on how golf could be taught to preschoolers, their call to Kate was almost automatic. This interview with Paul Ramee recaps her career to date and covers the fundamentals of her practice.

Kate, could you speak about your childhood and the path you were on, in terms of sports, movement and the learning process?

I grew up in Ithica, N.Y., as a faculty brat with two parents who taught at Ithica College. It was a great life for a kid and I loved every minute of it. My dad was a professor of history and Western Civilization and my mom was an education specialist. She taught courses and then became director of teacher education. I played soccer, basketball and softball as a girl, with basketball being my best sport. I went to the State University of New York at Brockport and played on the hoops team there. I majored in physical education with a concentration in athletic training, so I was a certified athletic trainer when I finished school in 1994.

What did you do in those first years out of college?

I took a job as an athletic trainer and one of my clients happened to be the director of a nursery school in New York City. She had undergone a knee replacement and needed therapy on it. We worked together for a while and she seemed to like my style and approach. We began discussing the possibility of a dance class for kids using creative-movement principles. The idea became a reality and I started teaching the class one day a week to 3- to 5-year-old children. During the first few months we developed a curriculum and by the second semester it was three days a week all day for the next 10 years.

At that point, you weren't a golfer, correct?

I wasn't, but within 1 year I had taken up the game. At the time I was just shy of 30 and hadn't ever had much exposure to the game. For some reason the time was right and I had the sudden realization that golf was the best sport ever. I started playing at Montauk Downs, out on the eastern end of Long Island, where I had spent a lot of time as a kid. Kevin Smith, the head professional there, really helped me with my skill development.

What kind of progress did you make?

By 2007 I was good enough to register for LPGA membership. That year I took the PAT and passed it. The next year, 2008, I joined the Montauk Downs staff as an assistant professional. I could see there was a huge potential market for a children's golf program based on movement. It was in 2008 that I first hit on the concept of UGA. It would take me a couple of years to develop it and actually set up the LLC. We were offering a unique sort of in-



After going through some hoops, Tempesta now calls Central Park her "home course" for her programs.

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

school program, holding classes in the gyms or taking the children outside, to Central Park. We did an eight-week program in Central Park in the fall and spring. It was well accepted.

So you went along for a while balancing these two roles, depending on season?

That's right. I worked as an assistant golf professional in the summer and taught my program in the city schools until 2010, when it was time to make a decision. I took the leap and hired two other full-time instructors. Now we are in Central Park and Montauk and are selling directly to the consumer. We have a program that recognizes the social and emotional development of children and realizes where they are in each stage with respect to age. Last year we started working with younger kids, as young as 2 years, 8 months old. We use puppetry and storytelling to get them started learning about golf.

What exactly is a 2-year-old capable of learning?

They can roll a ball, they can learn about the relationship to a target, basics like that. As the teacher you are creating "future points of reference" for them. You have to match their development ability. If you can talk in a 2-year-old's language then you can make some headway.

Being the father of three, I would notice our youngest always wanting to be involved with what the older brothers were doing. Do you see that in your business?

Oh, sure. The younger siblings are great at mimicking what their elder siblings are doing and the sooner you can get them into a routine or structure, the sooner they will thrive in it.

Were you pretty intent on working with kids, teaching them golf?

When I first got into the golf business, I thought that my background as a fitness professional would point me toward getting TPI-certified, and that would be the natural route for me. And while TPI is amazing, I went a different direction. I had an epiphany one day and realized golf is a great game for kids, very young ones.

What's the biggest difficulty in doing what you do in New York City?

Obviously, the winters in New York are not conducive to golf in



“We are tapping into a younger mindset and I think the coaching paradigm needs to shift in a way to reflect that. It's about the children not feeling afraid to fail. When they fail, they learn and we make it better. Most adults are afraid to fail.” -Kate Tempesta

Central Park, so finding indoor locations is a challenge. There are a number of other very good children's programs in New York, so competition is strong. Things like Super Soccer Stars and Bull Dog Baseball take kids from the golf programs.

What are some typical mistakes golf instructors make working with younger children?

The language they use needs to be chosen more thoughtfully. My sense is that whether a golfer is age 4 or age 40, they are unique individuals and as you guide them through the process you need to talk to them on their level. You have to find things in their world that they can relate to. With the young kids you can do a lot of that by drawing on their imaginations and the fantasies they create. Second, you need to tell them what they can do, not what they can't do. You're their guide, their educator. You're their coach.

What is next for the Urban Golf Academy? Can you franchise to other cities?

I think it's a very good possibility, I've trained Doug Lawrie up in Canada. Doug has 300 kids age 4 to 6. The hard part is we have to document everything we do, in order to create manuals for the people we are going to train. Our model is a two-day coach training session and then each coach gets an online account and access to our training videos and the full curriculum. I think this model is much needed at private clubs and would do a lot to increase their traffic. We also just launched an Edefii training space

(\$19.99 a month) that anyone can sign up for and receive our latest tricks of the trade for teaching young children.

Do you expect the franchisees to be able to run the program the way you want it run?

We would probably have to spend at least two full days with them to teach them the entire program and then follow up with them as we introduce new information.

How much of what you do is about golf and how much is about letting kids learn about themselves?

It is really about how we teach them. The kids are in such a "receiving state." And, while we are teaching golf, the point of entry is not really golf. You could teach children of this age basically anything. We really understand our audience and what this age group can do and retain.

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

Would you say that a 5-year-old child can be molded much more readily than an adult can, to acquire a motor skill?

These children are able to do things adults cannot or would not feel successful doing. We are tapping into a younger mindset and I think the coaching paradigm needs to shift in a way to reflect that. It's about the children not feeling afraid to fail. When they fail, they learn and we make it better. Most adults are afraid to fail.

What has been the most satisfying aspect for you personally about building a new niche in golf instruction?

For me it has been a natural path to go down. Both my parents were in education. On a daily basis, my staff and I have a lot of fun with the kids. While some view their junior program as "babysitting" we view it as a totally different program. I am very proud of how we have been able to simplify our thoughts and we have done a great job of translating our thoughts into "children speak." If all else fails we ask the kid. For example, we ask them "what is the target" and many now respond, "it is a spaceship", "what is the club", "the club is an astronaut", "what is the ball", "the ball is a laser". We really get into the fantasy world that they live in. I recently posted on Facebook a picture of kids putting into a castle, "imagination creates reality" and I really don't think metaphors end at 4, 5, or 6.

I imagine you have read some really good books on the subject of child development, any you want to share?

One that is great is "Fires in the Mind: What Kids Can Tell Us About Motivation and Mastery," by Kathleen Cushman. It's a



Tempesta educates fellow professionals in the intricacies of teaching the youngest of students.

great resource. Also, books on how we learn are great.

How much more can your business grow?

I think it can grow a lot more, there are many opportunities in places like Shanghai and with the help of Edufii, after we branch out we can then monitor the programs for their success.

Pretty happy with where you are now?

Yes, I am very happy. We still have a lot of work to do. We need more seminars. Making junior golf more prominent in the industry is how we will move the needle. We've created a solid developmental pathway with UGA which I believe is more valuable than any Trackman. In the end, I go on the basis that we grow the game with children and that is how we can grow golf. If you work with children on their level and care about the children, you can, as I said, teach them anything.

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MEMBER MILESTONES

Please Welcome Proponent Group's New Members for July 2015

Colin Amaral, Metropolis Country Club, White Plains, NY – Full Member.

Kerrod Gray, Margaret River Golf Club, Western Australia – International Member.

Christopher Kenney, The Patterson Club, Fairfield, CT – Full Member.

Michael Martin, Sinclair's Golf Training Center, Euless, TX – Associate Member

Andrew Stephens, The Andrew Stephens Golf Academy, Burlington, KY – Full Member.

Mark Widvey, Bearpath G. & C.C., Eden Prairie, MN – Associate Member

REMINDER: New Social Guides Added to Members-Only Website

Jeff Penson, who oversees all Marketing Communications for our sister company Golf Channel Academy, has created three very easy to use guides to marketing your services on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. These guides focus on the mechanics of how each of the three services functions and each guide covers specific ways to leverage each platform from simple to more advanced options along with links to additional resources.

You may pick and choose the items in each that will work best for your situation and comfort level. All three guides can be found in the Business Guides section of the members-only website.



McCormick Named 2015 PGA National Teacher of the Year



If you think that Cameron McCormick lucked into his meteoric rise in the golf coaching world because a 12-year-old kid named Jordan Spieth showed up on his lesson tee one day, you've got it backwards. It was Spieth who lucked out finding McCormick.

While the official press release doesn't go out until next week, we are extremely pleased to announce that Cameron McCormick is the 2015 PGA of America National Teacher of the Year.

Cameron McCormick began coaching golf in his home country of Australia in 1998. Two years later he moved to the United States where he brought with him the coaching principles honed under the tutelage of the world-renowned Victorian Institute of Sport coaches.

Today, he is the Director of Instruction at Brook Hollow Golf Club in Dallas, Texas.

His client list covers the gamut from beginner to elite players. Besides coaching Jordan Spieth for the past decade, his clients also include over 20 PGA, Web.com and LPGA Tour players along with 4 of the last 7 USGA Junior Amateur champions!

Cameron has been very generous in sharing his immense knowledge with Proponent's members and we couldn't be happier about the PGA's choice.



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