

The team approach to better golf

Instruction, fitness combine to make for better golf

By Libby Burwell
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Eva Dahllof, a 17 year LPGA Tour Professional, walked into Zen Pilates® Golf Studio nearly two years ago.

She introduced herself as a Professional Golfer knowing we offered golf specific fitness training.

Eva moved around the Studio gingerly as if she were 90 years old. I thought "what am I going to do with her – she can hardly move!"

She was in a tremendous amount of back pain but filled with hopes of finding a way to continue playing for at least another five years.

After collaborating with her medical professionals to understand her history, we worked for months building a golf foundation to stabilize her back along with regular golf massages before even thinking about connecting the dots to her mechanics.

"I have struggled my entire career with a bad back and worked with many trainers and therapists. However, I was never able to follow their fitness recommendations since my body was not strong enough to exercise without pain. Working with Zen Pilates® Golf has helped me understand the importance of a solid foundation. You would never build a house on a foundation with a crack in it!" Eva Dahllof

Once Eva's back became stable, she realized her swing mechanics needed to change to prevent further damage. She contacted Jim Hardy (author of "The Plane Truth") who became her Swing Coach. I attend all of Eva's lessons with Jim or his assistant Chris O'Connell to ensure that our program design continu-



Eva Dahllof is an LPGA professional who has combined her work with instructor Chris O'Connell with fitness training at Zen Pilates to improve her play on Tour.



ally supports their instruction.

"A player sees dramatic improvement when he or she corrects their most major mechanical swing flaws. It is up to the swing instructor to identify the flaw and provide drills to overcome it. The fitness trainer then tailors that golfer's workout to both allow the player to make the correct motion while making that muscle or muscle group more efficient. It is this teamwork between golf instructor and fitness trainer that enables the golfer to see quicker, more permanent lasting results." Chris O'Connell

In addition to working with Eva's medical and swing professionals, we did a comprehensive BioMechanical Assessment and a 3D Analysis.

The K Vest 3D provided us with a look at her efficiency of movement and power transfer throughout the swing to identify the power leaks.

Jim & Chris will review the 3D Analysis to assist me in updating her fitness regime to shift training emphasis as she gains strength and efficiency for power transfer as well as helping me create movement pattern drills for her to master while in the K Vest.

The Assessment gave us a picture of Eva's body as it relates to her mechanics not just golf in general. Just because a golfer displays limitations in golf related physical areas does not mean that cor-

recting them will improve their mechanics.

Increasing thoracic rotation may not improve anything in a two plane golfer. Increasing lat length may not change a thing for a one plane golfer.

A BioMechanical Assessment provides general information about a golfer's body- not a specific connection to his or her mechanics.

Collaborating with a golfer's swing coach to connect the dots between their mechanics, their body and the efficiency of their movement patterns is the key. It takes a village...

"My career would have ended prematurely without the team effort of Zen Pilates® Golf, Jim, and Chris." Eva Dahllof

"Eva is a great athlete with a great golf swing. Those two components make for a great ball striker." Chris O'Connell

Our job is to work as a team to give her a strong golf body that supports her swing...

Libby Burwell is a Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) Certified Instructor with Level 2 Junior Golf Development; Level 2 Golf BioMechanist and Level 3 Golf Fitness Certifications; a C.H.E.K. Certified Golf BioMechanic; a Stotts Pilates® Certified Instructor and holds a Masters in Science degree as an Exercise Physiologist. Burwell can be reached at Zen Pilates Golf 864-242-0102.