



My travels and clientele in '06

It's been a season of jet-setting, tour-hopping and some truly remarkable results.

I've lost count of the frequent-flyer miles I've amassed in the past year. My work with leading golfers has taken me around the world and brought me into contact with many interesting people. So I thought I would share my experiences, so that you can understand how golf-specific physiotherapy is starting to be appreciated.

In January, I started working with Peter O'Malley who was keen to get into shape in order to prolong his longevity as a player. As strange as it may sound, Peter had never done any specific fitness work for golf. We did 20 hours of intensive work and then set him up with a trainer and physiotherapist in Sydney and London so that he has a support team wherever he is in the world.

The physio and coach relationship is becoming intertwined. Gary Barter, who works with Nationwide Tour players Matthew Jones and Aron Price, wanted me to have a look at the pair at the start of the year. We gave them each a postural screening and conditioning program, and also a travel program. Remember, they are continually driving across America, which can be disastrous for your body if you're in a 'shutdown' position for extended periods. (By year's end, Matt and Aron had finished inside the top 60 on the Nationwide Tour moneylist, thereby retaining their cards for 2007.)

Overseas, I spoke to Asian Tour players and officials at a two-day forum involving the Singapore Sports Commission at the Peter Senior & Gary Edwin Golf Academy at Orchid Country Club. In particular, they have begun to recognise the importance of getting stronger, especially since they don't possess their physical builds of Western golfers. At the end of January, I had a five-day camp in Dubai with European players Henrik Stenson, Soren Hansen, and Joakim Haeggman. It was an intensive 30-hour program, involving coaching, gym work and physiotherapy.

In February, I visited Glen Burton, a myotherapist from The Melbourne Golf Injury Clinic, who has joined the Ladies European Tour to manage its medical services on a



Swede Henrik Stenson rose to the top dozen in the world ranking in 2006.

full-time basis. Across the Atlantic, Denis McDade from the VIS and myself were involved in a 15-segment, two-day TV shoot for The Golf Channel in America.

The following month I caught up with the Aussies on the US PGA Tour for a barbecue at Robert Allenby's place in Florida. I also oversaw Mathew Goggin and American Matt Kuchar at the Honda Classic. Then it was off to the inaugural World Golf Fitness Summit at Disney World in Orlando, lecturing as a guest of Titleist. The forum brought together leading coaches, therapists and trainers from all around the world. It was an amazing success with 400 people in attendance. Research has found that golf fitness is having a dramatic

effect on the amateur golfer: firstly, to prolong longevity and, secondly, to reduce their handicap. In Europe, I began working with Lee Westwood at the insistence of his coach Pete Cowan. Like 'POM', he had never had a golf-specific conditioning program. I referred him to the Irish golf physio, Orlaith Buckley, so that she can give him some continuity of care in England. We worked a lot on his body positions in conjunction with Pete.

In April, I lectured at the PGA of Australia's annual camp for trainee professionals at the NSW Institute of Sport. All the top Australian coaches, sports scientists, psychologists and physios came and gave lectures to the trainees prior to their final exams. I

talked about injury prevention as part of a presentation by the VIS with McDade and Ryan Lumsden. It focused on the interaction of coaching, biomechanics and physiotherapy as the future of improving the golf swing. I also caught up with O'Malley again after he had two top-10 finishes in Asia. POM had already started to show massive improvements with his fitness.

In May, I attended the PGA's three-day Coaching Summit at Hyatt Regency Coolum where Tiger Woods' coach, Hank Haney, was the guest speaker. What struck me most was that our best coaches are just as good as Hank Haney. Steve Bann, Dale Lynch, Gary Barter and Peter Knight are all very knowledgeable, which is shown by the number of quality players they work with.

In June, I became involved with a "life-experience" program for juniors at Yarra Yarra Golf Club in Melbourne where Andrew Bertram is the club professional. In Singapore, I visited Sentosa Golf Club to inspect new facilities that will be the base for the Asian Tour. On the European Tour, I worked with Brett Rumford, Soren Hansen and Simon Dyson at Gleneagles. We also were involved with some Gleneagles members through our "VIP" programs, which we normally only offer to tour players. These have been very satisfying because their potential for improvement is actually better than that of tour pros. Back in London, I lectured to physiotherapists from across Europe about the importance of golf-specific training, which can benefit the club golfers. In Sweden, I caught up with Henrik, before heading to The Belfry, the base for the European and British PGAs, to talk with their staff about the latest developments in golf health and fitness. They have come on board with the PGA of Australia to standardise training, making sure their pros are informed about how the body works in the golf swing.

The next two months were very hectic. At the K Club in Ireland, I caught up with Henrik, POM, Brett Rumford and Lee Westwood, who was encouraged by a top-three finish there. Next, we set up a program with Scottish professional Marc Warren and met Stephen Gallacher, arranging to come back and visit them both in October. It should be emphasised that we don't try to 'change' golfers when they're on tour; normally, we wait until their off-season. In Kansas, we

Ramsay's highlights from 2006

- Michael Sim recovers from a season-ending pelvic injury to capture his maiden professional victory and a US PGA Tour card.
- Sweden's Henrik Stenson rises to No.12 in the world after benefiting from a golf-specific training program.
- The inaugural World Golf Fitness Summit is held, signalling a new era for the way golfers are coached.



Brett Rumford is another to benefit from Ramsay's programs.

talked at The First Tee junior program for 120 kids over three days. We taught them about postural awareness and life skills. Then in Los Angeles, we worked with VIPs, similar to Gleneagles. Finally, we spent eight days with the New Zealand PGA at its inaugural Golf Health Summit conferences held in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

In September, West Australian rookie Michael Sim came home with a bad pelvic injury, which caused him to drop off the Nationwide Tour. We did some intense rehabilitation with his Perth-based coach David Milne and trainer Scott Williams in order to get him back on tour. It took three weeks to "patch him up" and back on tour where he broke through for his maiden pro victory. (I will detail more about his rehab next month.)

At the Dunhill in October, I worked with Warren and Gallacher for 20 hours' intensive physiotherapy and fitness at a great new facility that has been set up alongside The Old Course, St Andrews. Then it was across to Pebble Beach with The First Tee junior program for three days. That was followed by a coach's seminar at the Titleist Performance

Institute in California, where we received the latest data on pro golfers. I discovered that most of the top golfers in the world have much similarity in their "body ranges". For instance, their hips often rotate the same amount during the golf swing.

Finally, in November, it was back home for the Australian summer of golf when I work with all my Australian players like Michael Sim, Mathew Goggin, David McKenzie, Peter O'Malley, Rick Kulacz, Shani Waugh, Nikki Campbell, Andrew Martin and Jamie Arnold. And in December and January, I began treatment with a number of European Tour players. More and more pros, both men and women, are coming to Melbourne during their winter off-season to have golf-specific training programs set up.

Ramsay McMaster is a world authority on golf-specific physiotherapy. For more information, phone The Melbourne Golf Injury Clinic on (03) 9569 9448 for advice about a golf-specific rehabilitation and fitness program. Also, visit golffmed.net.



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