

# Overcoming Post-Tournament Heartbreak...

## A Fresh start for Competitive Golf in 2009!

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### Wins and Losses:

Congratulations to those golfers who can look back on the 2008 golf season with a satisfying smile and say, "Wow! It finally all came together". The thrill lingers as the high points of the season and what it took to get there are continually replayed.

Unfortunately, many professional and amateur players, alike, are looking back at some competitive events with despair and disbelief, perhaps even blaming the external elements for lackluster results. Even a "Q-schooler," who fell short, reluctantly knows the quest must soon begin again.

### To Look Back or Not to Look Back:

Many mental golf coaches suggest that once a shot is made, no matter the outcome, the mindset should be to focus on the next shot. Do not continue to dwell on it - just remember to "Let it go!" This is a very important, calming way of staying in "the present" when in a competitive game.

However, AFTER the game is a different story. That is when the golfer sits back, alone or with a coach, and plans for the next event with a clearer picture of what can go awry and of ways to prevent it.

Dr. Bob Rotella, a pioneer in the field of sports psychology, speaks of the *Ten Commandments* a golfer should keep in mind and practice in his latest book, "***The Golfer's Mind: Play To Play Great***".

### The Previous Season:

Statistics from a previous season are self-explanatory to a golfer. They emphatically lay out the black and white: strengths and weaknesses of each shot, each hole, each round. Those golfers who are loyal to the system of tracking fairways hit, greens in regulation, putts, and club selection will have a better grasp on what may be lacking in fundamentals during play.

Forget stats for a moment. What about the big picture? What about YOU? Look at the unsaid, the unwritten. What parts of the season could you have planned better? What about your activities away from the course and driving range? If you cannot be honest with yourself, then ask a friend, colleague, or family member about the following lifestyle choices that you have made. What would they say? Could they give you 100% in each category?

- \*Nutrition
- \*Fitness (general & golf specific)
- \*Sleep
- \*Stress Management
- \*Social scene & Extra-curricular activities

### Looking Ahead to Your Future in Golf:

After assessing your past year, it is time to decide what can be changed, added, or enhanced to ensure that this new season is different. The definition of insanity is ***doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result***. Don't let that happen to you. Plan methodically. Make a list of the areas that can be improved and the distractions that have limited you in the past.

Matt VanCleave, Gateway Tour player, finished first stage of Q-school this year with a 69-68-73-72, missing the qualifying cut for advancement by one stroke.....ONE STROKE! "*It is easy to dwell on the past and it would be even easier for me to beat myself up over the single shot that is keeping me from 2<sup>nd</sup> stage and the*

*opportunity to move on to the next level. If I want to be successful I have to look at what I can do better in preparation for 2009. I know that my fitness and nutrition can be better and that I can make sure that they are not the things holding me back a single shot or keeping me from getting to the PGA Tour. I have identified my goals and have made a plan with my trainer to stay on track throughout the phases of this upcoming year.”*

### **Are YOU Ready?**

There have never been so many resources for golfers as there are right now. Numerous publications and websites are constantly being updated with the latest research in the golf field. The *Titleist Performance Institute* stresses the importance of building your “team” of professionals to help you in your quest. This team includes: your golf coach, golf fitness instructor, and medical support such as a physical therapist, massage therapist, or chiropractor. Famed sports coach, Bobby Knight, once said, **“The will to succeed is important, but what’s more important is the will to prepare.”** Are you ready?

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