

editor's  
**letter**

BY  
**S. MURALI**

# BACKBONE, **GREAT SWINGS** AND THE ART OF SPIN

From the reactions I got, the first issue of Swing went down quite well with most of you.

It was the US Masters issue, had a strong focus on Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy and helped some of you win a Philip Stein watch, new Cobra drivers and some great Footjoy shoes.

The 2015 Masters have now come and gone, with the world crowning a new superstar in the unflappable Jordan Spieth.

While many have been justifiably impressed by a very old head (and I'm not talking about the receding hairline) on very young shoulders, I have a rather "old golfer" theory about why Spieth was so special on those Augusta greens.

I think he has not missed enough putts in his life to be afraid of them, and that played a big part in how he put on a putting masterclass for the ages.

You see – and the older golfers among you may empathise with this – I think Spieth has not been scarred by missed putts on those treacherous greens.

Players like Phil Mickelson, Tiger Woods and company have missed so many putts at Augusta National over the years that they sometimes flinch at the thought of running one six to 10 feet past the hole.

But Spieth showed no such fear, draining putts that looked near impossible every time he needed to hole one.

I am not for a moment belittling his amazing performance but just trying to put a different spin on how this 21-year-old made playing on the fabled old course look like a Sunday morning walk in the park.

And speaking of spin, did you read what Tiger's former coach Hank Haney made of

his ex-student's performance at Augusta?

To refresh your memory, Haney, in the last issue of Swing, said "Let's be serious. Tiger has the yips."

"If he goes to Augusta and chips the way he has, he's only going to produce more mental scar tissue. It's just not worth the risk."

Now after Tiger went to Augusta and finished in a tie for 17th place, showing no signs of the yips, Haney said "People said he had the yips."

"All I'm saying is when something looks like a duck and it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it's probably a duck. But I never thought it was a life sentence. He figured something out. He's using different wedges. He's using a different technique."

"He's totally changed both and the short game was pretty good. Probably not quite as good as everybody said it was, but it was pretty good."

"People said," Mr Haney? Uhh, wasn't that you saying it? And we all listened because it was you, his ex-coach, saying it.

I'm not saying Tiger doesn't have the yips anymore, but Haney should have the backbone to stick to his words rather than trying to spin himself out of this situation.

And changing the subject to men of real backbone, we are proud to lead this second issue of Swing with a special feature on Singapore's late founding father Lee Kuan Yew.

Though he eventually gave up golf for other forms of exercise, you would be pleased to read that he was once a very decent player, one who methodically charted his way around the golf course and could break 80 with ease.

Are we spinning things in fond memory of our former Prime Minister?

Just take a look at his swing on Page 6. Enough said, no?

It takes hundreds of good golf shots to gain confidence, but only one bad one to lose it.

— JACK NICKLAUS



**SWING**  
TEAM

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Patrick Daniel

**EDITOR**  
S. Murali  
muralis@sph.com.sg

**CREATIVE EDITOR**  
Jacqueline Wu  
wuyej@sph.com.sg

**SUB-EDITORS**  
Ida Karsia  
Joanne Low

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**  
Godfrey Robert  
Spencer Robinson  
Tan Ju Kuang  
Ven Sreenivasan  
Rohit Brijnath  
Rahul Pathak

**HEAD OF SALES**  
Tan Ooi Boon

**MARKETING AND PARTNERSHIP ENQUIRIES**  
Timothy Lim Acct Director  
9623 0118, limsht@sph.com.sg

**Vivien Cham** Group Acct Manager  
9746 0379, champs@sph.com.sg

**Tan Ann Nee** Acct Manager  
9455 7786, antan@sph.com.sg

With content by  
**Golf Digest**