

Congrats on your new book. Why come up with A Swing now?

DAVID LEADBETTER:

This is my first instruction book for over 10 years, and I want to bring out something which is different, something to shake up the teaching industry.

Nothing has changed in teaching, it's been a little static. The average golfer finds the game very difficult. They don't have the time to play or practise, but they want to play well.

The A Swing stands for the Alternative Swing. In golf, the difficult thing about the game is there is a lot of motion involved compared to other sports. To try to return the club face to some form of squareness at impact, travelling at maximum speed.

So if you think of all the amount of motion involved in the swing, the average player, who is not as well-coordinated, finds it difficult to play well. To make it easier for people and to keep people in the game, we are going to find an easier way to play.

It's an easier way to get the club to a point where people can think about coming down and hitting the ball. It helps to synchronise the swing, it reduces the amount of wasted motion in the swing and above all else, we tested it on various players from beginners to Tour levels player, and it's simple.

I liken the A Swing to ordering curry. You can order the vindaloo version which is very hot, and that's the model, but you can also order the hot, the medium, or the mild, and anywhere within that framework, you're going to see improvement. You don't have to be perfect to do this.

Who has the best swing in the modern men's or women's game?

It depends what you consider good. Is it consistent, or is it pleasing to the eye? You look at Adam Scott and Rory McIlroy. Rory is the No. 1 player, you'll probably say he has the best swing. You look at Lydia Ko and you'll say she's got the best swing because she's No. 1.

Swings are like fingerprints, they are all a little different. Even people who work on the A Swing are going to look a little different because we are all taller, shorter, wider, narrower, quicker, slower. There's a lot of great golf swings out there. A lot of top players, you have to look at players who hit lots of fairways, lots of greens.

There's an argument for a lot of players, be it Jason Day or Justin Rose or Lydia Ko or Michelle Wie, the list goes on. It's very subjective.

WITH DAVID LEADBETTER

BY DAVID LEE

An Byeong Hun has just won the BMW PGA Championship with a record 21-under score. What do you make of your disciple?

He's been a good player and he's developed amazingly. He was a good junior, but out of nowhere he won the US Amateur when he was 17.

He has very good pedigree, his parents were Olympic gold medalists in table tennis, one for Korea, one for China.

He went to our junior academy in the States. He then decided to play in the Challenge Tour, which is unusual for an Asian player. It's not as comfortable playing in Europe as it is in America.

He went that route, played three years and finish third last year, learning his trade. He's still only 23 and his golf swing has got better.

He's a solid striker of the ball. From my standpoint, it's a matter of when not if, before he wins something big. He went out and played unbelievably well, dominated a good field.

It just shows that when you believe in what you are doing and if you work hard, the rewards are there.

When he was 14 or 15, he was just an average junior. It just goes to show players can come on at different levels and ages.

When he won the US Amateur, he was just a complete freak of nature, winning the tournament with no form at all. He wasn't even playing in the top junior events in the US, and went out there and won the thing.

It's very pleasing to see how well he has played.

Renowned celebrity golf coach David Leadbetter is in Singapore as a special guest for the Julius Baer Golf Classic, which was held at the Sentosa Golf Club this year. Leadbetter conducted a charity golf clinic for a selected group of participants prior to the corporate tournament. The Swiss bank has been running its Julius Baer Golf Classic since 2009, hosting more than 1,000 guests to date.



Golfers are hitting incredible distances these days. Do you think it's a matter of technique or equipment?

I think it's a combination. Certainly equipment has helped.

The fact is when you have such good equipment, you are able to have a go at the ball 100 per cent. In the old days, when you were using wooden drivers, you didn't want to break your favourite driver, so people didn't go at it 100 per cent.

Plus even if you did, you would hit the ball off line, so people tended to swing within themselves. Nick Faldo was a big guy, but he never really hit the ball a long way. He sort of thought more about precision.

But today, your equipment is so much more stable, you got golf balls that don't curve as much, and players go at it harder.

Is Lydia Ko going to do to the women's game what Tiger did to the men's game?

She could do. There're a lot of good players on the women's Tour now.

If you look at her, she does nothing bad. She's not the Tour leader in terms of longest drive or straightest hit or putting average, but she's up there in each of those categories.

If there's any area that stands out, it's her mind. She can certainly win a host of Majors.

She has said she wants to play only until 30, and that's it, so she's got a lot of work to do over the next few years.

It's always tough because I don't think in any form of the game, you are going to see a dominant player like a Tiger or Annika. There're just too many good players now to dominate week-in, week-out.

You can say she is dominant from the standpoint that she's always there in the reckoning, but she's not going to win every week, and it's the same for Rory McIlroy.