

Touch the Future with  
**Peter Jacobsen**  
and Michael Mendizza

M: Help me understand how you became one of the best golfers in the world.

P: I'd have to say that my love of the game and my comfort level with the game, in the game, is what has brought me to where I am. My mother and father taught me the game, to my brothers and sister, and I think that in looking at a family structure, family values, it was all based on golf. Everything we did was around golf and it only seemed natural to me that, to this day I feel comfortable in golf. Whatever I do, any business venture I'm in, involves golf because I know the game, I understand the game, I think that I do better in the game and it's helped me to grow as a person and to, I kind of see the world through the eyes of golf.

M: Part of what we talked about is ... how it has affected you, what is the difference between the great champs and those who ... have talent...?

P: Well let me start and say that the one powerful difference about golf from every other sport is that when you start in golf as a child, you interact with people of all ages, of all classes, of all income structures, from all different parts of the country. When I 12, 13, 14 years old and playing golf with my father and his business associates or his friends, I was not in that little mini-vacuum of 13 year olds because whenever you do that you have the bullies, you've got the wimps, you've got the wallflowers, the mamma's boy, the tough guys, and on and on an on.

As a golfer I was thrown into the environment of having to understand others and that's why I think when the sports writers and all the media will say that professional golfers are probably the most, the easiest to understand, the easiest to get along with and I think that's because of golf. There is no set structure and as a result, those children that come from that environment I think heads and shoulders automatically have a little bit of a leg up when it comes to understanding people, and therefore understanding themselves. And the players that understand themselves are the ones that become the great champions.

The players that have had that safe environment or that caring environment growing up become the ones that can go with that pin, can hit that pressure shot time and time again because they know that if they fail, there are no consequences. There's really nothing that threatens their existence. It's simply, there's the ball, there's the hole, I'm going to get it in the hole. If it doesn't happen that's okay because I learned a long time ago that playing with my father or my fathers friends or my older brother or his friends that they may be better than I am, I may be better than them, but at the very end of the day, no matter what we shot we're still going to go home, jump in the car, go home and sit down and have dinner and I'm still the same person. That's always been something that I've lived by is that I don't identify with my golf score.

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I'm not a great guy if I shoot 65 and I'm not a bad guy if I shoot 78. I'm still Peter Jacobsen the person and my golf score is simply that, my golf score. And the great players can go beyond the determination of that score and be the great people that they are, first and foremost. You've got to be a great person. You've got to have I think the great human kindness before you can be a great performer.

M: How did you learn this?

P: Well it's interesting how my mother and father interacted in my golf. They were the ones that taught me the game. I spent a lot of time with my father learning the game and a lot of time with my mother as she nurtured me growing up and my mother made it very safe for me to be me because I'm a little bit different than my other family members, my brothers and sister, I'm a little wackier. I was always the comic, the clown, always told the jokes in the family.

My father never watched me play. My father always, he kind of pushed me. He said, "look, if you can't win these tournaments, maybe you should just quit playing the game and go back to school because you'll probably need to get a job when you get out of college." That motivated em and my father passed away a few years ago and I never really had the guts to ask him whether he did that on purpose or whether he really believed that. And to this day I don't know which is true.

But I think that having a great mom and dad and having great brothers and a great sister who loved the game as much as I did. Sure we fought. I mean we fought, we fought probably more than any family ever fought and our parents disciplined us. But I think rather than using the word discipline I think that parents try to help their children with their life's experiences and discipline is nothing more than trying to educate and direct and guide your children when they make mistakes.

Hey son this is what I did and I don't think you should do it that way because it doesn't work. It didn't work for my dad, it didn't work for me, it won't work for your. That's discipline. And we also have to understand that our children are a lot smarter than we give them credit for. I'm going through that right now with my 15, 13 and 11 year old. I have to give the the responsibility to make the decision on their own. As they say, you have to hold your children with open arms. They're going to go away, you certainly want them to come back and they're going to fall and stub their toes just like you did. The answer is to pick them up, love them, and kick them out the door and let them go again.

But I really owe a lot to my mom and dad and also, in the world of golf there are so many unsung heroes in the club pro ranks and I was very fortunate to grow up with some club pros in our area, people up in the Portland area, the names I would mention; Mike Davis, Tim Bird, Bob Ellsworth, Jack Daus, Jim French, Dick Harmon, club pros

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that are not household names like a Jack Nicholas and Arnold Palmer, but these are the people that have helped guide me, helped teach me and make it safe for me to play my golf.

M: And what about the times that you don't win?

P: Well the one thing about golf is that you have to prepare to fail because in golf you fail all the time if you look at it from that sense. If you look at it from a winners standpoint, we win very few times. Last year in 1995 I won two tournaments back to back out of the 26 that I played. That isn't a very good batting average, but in the world of golf it's a tremendous thing.

Those players, those teachers that taught me, they know that and they know it today and they're teaching kids today that it's okay to not win a tournament. The key is to challenge yourself under pressure. The key, and the key still remains for me at 41 years old, is to test myself every year. Can I stand on that first tee and put that first ball in the fairway? That's all I'm thinking about. Can I hit that shot from the fairway onto the green? That's all I'm thinking about. Can I make the put? It boils down to execution, the desire to execute, and the desire to be good.

The teachers of the game let you, they let me know early on that it's okay if you don't win because it isn't whether you win or lose, it is how you play the game. I believe that. I believe that to this day more than I ever have in my life. And I think that's why I'm playing some of the better golf than I've ever played in my life because I think it's important the way, to conduct yourself as a gentleman. We don't see that in a lot of the professional sports today and it's a shame. And I think we need to get back along the lines of the way it used to be.

M: What's the difference ...?

P: I think when, everybody gets nervous. I don't care if it's a basketball player at the free throw line, or a golfer over a four footer, we all get nervous. And we get nervous because we're anxious to play, we're anxious to win, we're anxious to execute the shot properly, successfully. I think the answer, number one, I think that great players will go beyond the emotion. They will go beyond the emotion of the day or of the situation. I've always believed that you have to expect the worst and hope for the best. That maybe sets up some sort of a fail-safe system to where you're not going to self-destruct if it doesn't work out. I lost my train of thought there.

M: Pressure can be good or bad. What's the difference?

P: I think that's the safety of being comfortable with yourself. It's the self-doubt. Whenever I have a difficult, let's put it this way. I've made many five foot puts on the practice green. I've missed many five foot puts in tournament play and the only reason

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I've missed five foot puts is because I have self-doubt. That five footer on the practice green and the five footer on the tournament, those are exactly the same.

But it's the self doubt and it's the situation. It's the anxiety of the situation. That is why, one of the keys in the game of golf and in any sport, and in any walk of life, I don't care if it's a lawyer, a doctor, or a veterinarian, is to go beyond that self-doubt, go beyond the emotion of the moment and just execute it, believe in yourself. But you can't hardly believe in yourself if you don't have anybody else believing in yourself and that's where that safety system, that's where the teaching environment comes in to where you try to help the kids along the way to believe in themselves.

So many times in this we need help society that we have, I mean, we sue everybody. If you have a problem, you have a bad leg, you sue somebody. We need to get back to more of a self-help. We do have all the answers we need inside us, whether it's a question about our life, our children, school, which club to hit on a par 4, we just have to quiet ourselves down, close our eyes and listen to what the answer is inside us. And if we think about that, that people call that intuition, they call that dejevue, they call that whatever it may be, but we have the answers and I think that the whole idea is predicated on that self-doubt. If we could eliminate that self-doubt, I think we're going to succeed more.

M: What are the qualities that make up a perfect coach?

P: That's a wonderful question and I'm not sure there's really any answer for the perfect coach. But number one that coach has to understand the game, has to understand the complexities of the game, from whatever sport it is, he has to have a complete understanding of the fundamentals of the game, whether it's a swing or a shot or whatever it may be.

But I think he has to hopefully instill into the pupil, the student, the belief that you're probably never going to actually get it. You're never going to succeed in mastering the performance because the performance can never be mastered. As they say in golf, "you can rent it for a while, but you can never own it."

In 1995 I won two tournaments in a row, then I didn't win for the rest of the year and everybody kept coming up to me, all the golf fans and the media were saying, well what happened? How come you're not winning? My only answer was I don't know. I really don't what I did to win and I don't know why I'm not winning any again.

It's because you just go out there, you execute, if the ball goes in the hole, wonderful, if it doesn't, well you just try harder the next time. The coach would have to be somebody that would, as I said would understand the fundamentals or the complexity of the game, would be able to instill in you a confidence in yourself and never judge you as a person or judge you as a performer. A golf swing is a golf swing and a golf ball goes where it

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goes because it goes there. And go over there, if you find it, hit it again, and watch it and if the ball curves to the right try to figure out what you're doing wrong to make it curve right and if it goes left, figure that out.

And do that day after day after day. I think that if you did that, you would be a competing machine, I guess that's the wrong word, but you would be able to see yourself competing successfully because there would never be any determination or anything bad about an errant shot or anything bad about a missed free throw. It's just a part of the game. Missing the hole in golf is part of the game. Losing is a part of the game. Because if you believe in winning, there has to be losing. If you believe in making puts well then you have to believe in missing puts. That's just the way it is. That's not a negative way to look at it, that's just a realistic way of looking at it.

M: What's the worst thing that can happen to you playing a round of golf?

P: The worst thing that's ever happened to me on a golf course is not winning, and I say that simply because I've been in situations where I've had chances to win. I bogged last holes to lose, I've double-bogged last holes to lose.

I've birdied holes to win. I've done the whole thing. But really when you think about it, as I say, every time I finish a tournament or I win a tournament, or I compete in a tournament, I'm so lucky to be able to do what I do. The worst thing that can happen in a golf tournament is really nothing. I mean you're out there, you're competing against people who love the game as much or more than you do.

It's still a game, G-A-M-E. If you look in the dictionary what the definition of a game is, it's going to make you smile, whatever it is. It's not life and death. It's not something that you're going to grind your gut over. The only thing that can happen bad in a game is that you don't win. But you're still going to go home and hug your kids and kiss your wife and have dinner and go to bed that night. The sun's going to come up the next day. As an athlete, as a performer, as a competitor, I feel very honored and very blessed that in my career, my career of 19-20 years so far, I've been able to have the excitement and the fun and the enjoyment of winning golf tournaments, and a lot of people in the world don't ever have that opportunity for that excitement.

We have children, we get married, those are exciting times. We watch our mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts die and that's a very sad time in our life. But whenever there's a death I like to think that we have to think back to the great times that we had with that person rather than dwelling on the fact that that person's gone because that's really a selfish way to look at it.

They're gone, I miss them, therefore I'm miserable. It's not really the best way. As I said, when my father passed away in 1992, people thought I was very upset about it and I was but I said you know my dad's the luckiest guy right now because he hasn't

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made a bogey since the day he died because I know he's up there playing the great golf courses and he breezes every hole.

M: How are we doing with all this? Where are we going?

P: I think athletics in general is heading down a real cynical path. I think it's a negative path and I'm not going to sit here and blame sports writers or the media for that. But I do see that when articles are written now about the athletic performances, whatever it is, it's fairly cynical. If you don't win, it's pretty nasty what they write about the performers.

If they do win, it's almost like it's about time they did this, these bums, they need to perform. But I'll now look at the performers, it's almost become, it is a business, athletes perform for the money, or at least that's the impression they give the fans. That's why I love the writer cup so much. The writer cup is played by the European team and the American team. There's no prize money, there's only pride. And you wouldn't dare not play.

Everybody dies to get on the writer cup team because it's respect, it's an honor to compete for your country, and when they raise the flag and play the National Anthem, you cry because you have pride in your country and pride in yourself. That's the way sports should be. People play the game because they're good at it. Unfortunately a lot of people get paid lots of money. I think it's wrong. I think there's too much money in sports. There's too much recognition of sports heroes. I think the real heroes are the teachers in our society. We need to learn how to teach the youth, the children of our society, because that is the future of our society.

We idolize the athletic endeavors, the heroes, and I take my hat off to people like Michael Jordan because Michael Jordan is a real role model. He cares about everything, people, he cares about education, cares about doing it the right way. But I also see a little bit of a trend to move away from that too because there are many athletes in golf, basketball, football, baseball that recognize the direction sports are heading. And it's a small movement but I do see that athletes are now starting to say hey, we need to grow up here.

We need to act more our age. We need to start thinking about the kids today that are playing high school and college and we need to help them become who we are right now. I mean we've got to watch ourselves. A lot of states around the country are looking at cutting sports in high school. If we cut sports in high school then we don't have any athletes to play sports in college and then they're gone, and then kids are in trouble. Golf has given me a direction in my life which has helped me to do many other things in my life, many good things.

M: If you could only do one thing to turn it all around, what would that be?

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P: It all begins and ends with education. I think the drug problem begins with education. I've got young kids now, they talk about education in school, sex education in school. Everything's prevention nowadays because the world is a dangerous place and if we can get to the athletes, the professional athletes as much as you possibly can, but to the college kids and to the high school kids with the message that hey, it's great to worry about yourself, it's great to make ends meet, yes, but you don't always have to make more money than this guy. Performance and the pride of performing, the pride of doing your best really does count.

Maybe you can't spend that in the bank, but it goes a long ways to helping you sleep at night and it helps determine who you are. And that years down the road when they're giving humanitarian awards, they look at people like that. They don't look at the here today gone tomorrow, but it doesn't matter because I got a big signing bonus people, and there's reason why they give humanitarian awards because people, those athletes like Arnold Palmer and Chi Chi Rodriguez and Roberto Clemente and Dr. J, these people perform and they care about themselves and they have pride in their performance.

But they also draw a line and they leave that at the office. And they worry about their family and kids in their community and charitable organizations and people, in crisis situations, and they do things with their name and their money to help those people and they get a following. I've always said that if we as athletes can take care of the communities we live in, then we wouldn't have problems. If we take care of the communities around us, if we reach out, if all of us reach out and help those that we can touch, we would be better off. We wouldn't have to worry about people that are 5000 miles away.

Let's worry about the people that I can physically lay my eyes on. I'll worry about them. Then we wouldn't have the problems that we have. But we have too many selfish athletes, we have too many selfish people in the world that are thinking about number one. It's wonderful to think about number one but you also have to think about other people that can't help themselves.

M: What about parents?

P: I see kids today, because I coach, I help coach my children's teams as much as I possibly can and I am always shocked and amazed at the attitude of the parents. They look at their child playing on a team as having to win, having to be the star, having to be the hero, where as an 11 year old playing in a basketball league or a 12 year old playing in a soccer league, it isn't about winning and losing, it's about learning the game. It's about learning how to get along in a simile with others, your age and also those children's parents, and having fun. I mean isn't that what it's all about? Isn't that what 10, 11, 12 and 13 year olds want to do is have fun?

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I didn't play organized sports really until I was 15 or 16 and I'm almost beginning to believe that we shouldn't have children's sports between the age of 10 and 15 because children are not emotionally secure enough to understand what it's all about.

And what happens in that situation is that they turn to their mother and father who a lot of the times are raving lunatics out there screaming at the coach because the coach is not playing their son or daughter. No wonder they feel humiliation.

And I've also seen many, many instances where when a child, a daughter or a son misses the open goal kick in soccer, or misses a lay-in in basketball, the parents will berate them and talk down to them almost as if they stole a gun and broke into a convenient store, I mean it's that bad. And I just sit back in amazement and shake my head and it almost makes me want to do better with my children. I don't do that with my children because they're trying to learn, they're trying to learn the game, and I think that's simply because parents try to live their lives through their children and they don't really have a great understanding of the sport.

M: Most kids really just want to PLAY.

P: One of the most amazing things I've ever witnessed or ever seen happened in a 10 year old basketball game, and I think this is, well what happened was I was keeping score for a team, for the game, and our team which my son was on went out and in a basketball game they scored 15 baskets and the other team scored 2 baskets and it was a whitewash. I mean our team was just throwing the ball in lay-ups back and forth and their team rarely had the ball and they rarely scored. So the buzzer went out for the first half.

Kids come charging over to me and the coach is giving them high five, "way to go, way to go," and the kids come up to me and they say, "Mr. Jacobson, what's the score?" And I say, "well, it's 30 to 4," and they said, "who's winning?" Now if you think about that, it was obvious to everybody who was winning, the coaches, the parents, because they were scoring so many baskets here and none there. But if you stop and think about the children, score had meant nothing to them. They were playing the game and when that happened I thought to myself, wow, if there is ever a reason to not keep score in these games, it's this comment by this one child who said, "who's winning?" because he didn't know. He was playing a game.

The only reason these kids keep score in these games is for the parents satisfaction and for the coaches satisfaction. So these guys that coach high school games can say well I'm undefeated or we were 10 and 3, who cares? They're 10 years old. They're not qualifying for the Dream Team. They're not playing the Olympics. They're trying to learn the game and learn to get along with others. And to me, it was one of the most amazing things I've ever seen in child's play.



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M: Now, let's deal with the impact that the pressure that adults, what we would say, this keeping of the score and all this other stuff we might call the negative side of the sports environment. The humiliation, the failure, that sets up certain patterns.

That impacts on ... where it's real tough and maybe we're fortunate that ... one's ability as a professional to really get out there and "play the game." Either you didn't have any of that negative input or you have to overcome it. So the question has to do with the great ease that when you're playing with ease and making the shot and playing, everything is just so easy. Tell me about whether it's easy for you. Is playing the game easy for you and do you have to overcome some of those early things?

P: I have overcome quite a few of my jitters, if you want to call it, with the work, through the work of Chuck Hogan. Chuck is a very good friend of mine, very close friend of mine, but more than that he's one of the most knowledgeable people about human behavior I've ever talked to. Early on in 1984 I just had a real phobia about putting. For some reason, when I grew up people would tell me that I was a good player but a bad putter. Good player - bad player.

You hear that enough, you believe it. And in 1984 Chuck started working with me on positive affirmations, positive self-talk, and believing in myself. And now, to this day, today I feel like I'm one of the best putters in the game. Another area that he's helped me in is just the ease while I play. I couldn't understand and Chuck and I would laugh, we laugh about it now but it was pretty serious at the time. I would play poorly in the tournaments but on Mondays and Wednesdays when we have our pro-ams, I was the greatest player in the game. I'd shoot 65, 6, 7, 8's, 64's, course records.

He finally said, "well Peter, you understand why don't you?" and I said, "No, I do not. Help me." He said, "You're two different people. When you play in a tournament you think you have to focus and you think you have to be tough and be mean and be the 'focused man'." You know it's interesting, the belief today of a great athlete, one who tries and wins is the guy that, you know, he treats the fans like crap, he refuses to sign autographs, cheats on his taxes, beats his wife, whatever. All these crazy things that happens today and Chuck said to me, "The reason you play so well in pro-ams is you're you. You're you. You are you. You talk to people. You smile. If you hit a bad shot it doesn't affect you on Monday or Wednesday, so why would it affect you on Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday?"

And I started trying to integrate that into my play and boom, in 1995 I think it all came together for me. I had flashes of it throughout my career, from 1984, it's when I started working with Chuck. But then there, I still have my problem times where I take everything too seriously. But when I don't take it seriously and I have fun with the game, then is when it's easy. That is when it's easy. If I just am myself. And a lot of times I have to force myself into being myself.

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I know that sounds crazy but by whistling a tone or thinking of my children, or thinking of my wife, or trying to think of something different than golf, something that's spiritously uplifting for me, it kind of shifts me into who I am as a person and it shifts me out of this "oh poor me, I made a bogey on the last hole because my ball beared in the bunker" thought process. And I've gotten to where I'm pretty good at that. When that happens to me now I can wish it away and it's gone and I'm back to being myself.

M: You'd call that focus?

P: Probably is focus on me.

M: Instead of saying that focus is panic so much ..

P: But it's very interesting because sports writers, fans, people in the game will look at success as focus and failure as lack of focus. Whereas I don't think there's an athlete playing today that isn't focused. It's just what they're focused on. Some athletes are focused on the money. Some athletes are focused on playing time. Some athletes are focused on getting their picture on the billboard. Some are focused on a shoe deal. And I think that when you perform well is when you're focused on playing well and everything doesn't matter.

M: We talked about coaching, we've also talked about the parents and how they ... What is the difference between being a good coach and ...

P: I don't think there's any difference between being a good coach and being a good parent because that's what you are as a parent is a coach, and that's what you are as a coach is a parent. You're trying to give the children that you have for that specific amount of time, if you're a coach, the belief in themselves, the understanding of the game, and trying to give them an opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. I think the other thing that's important as a parent or a coach is to teach your children that it's okay to have limited ability. It's okay to have inability.

My daughter can sit down and play the piano and sing like a bird. I can't do that. It doesn't make me any worse than her. God gives us different strengths in different areas. Just because one child or one person, just because I can run faster than you, doesn't make me any better, just makes me faster than you running. And unless you're an Olympic sprinter and I'm an Olympic sprinter, it's just not going to do much for me in the real world, so get beyond that. It's no big deal. But there is no difference between being a good coach and a good parent.

M: What's the difference between competition and play?

P: I think that when you play the game and you have ease in the game, competition in that game becomes the carat or becomes the diamond or becomes the goal. When I go out and play golf with my brothers, my friends, I'm still executing and trying to hit my

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golf shot the way I want to. When I have a chance to compete it makes it, it brings it to a sharper, keener focus for me and I'm one of the lucky people that doesn't beat himself up after losing.

I don't go out with the express intent of winning. As I said, I hope I do, and I want to, but if I don't it's okay, it's okay. So in that respect, I think that the competitive end of playing, obviously they go hand-in-hand. They go hand-in-hand. Once you've mastered or once you've come close to being able to play the game with ease, competition is a piece of cake. It almost is something you welcome.

M: Some people perform a lot better with that pressure, the carat, the diamond or the challenge let's say that the competition represents. And I wondered, did you play better under pressure, or do you actually play better where there's no pressure?

P: Well I think I've proved my track record. I play better when I'm under pressure because I've won my golf tournaments when I've been under the gun. I find that when I'm ahead or when I have a comfortable cushion I tend to lose the focus, if you want to use that word, of the situation that I'm in. And only when somebody comes up from behind me and catches me do I look and say whoa, I'd better get going again and I take off. But at all times I'm enjoying myself. I'm just thinking about different things whenever I'm pushed from behind.

M: What does it mean to have heart? Apparently everybody knows what that means and I don't.

P: Having heart is simply I think understanding that there are, let me start again. Having heart is never saying die, never quitting, having compassion within the game and knowing that the complexities of any game, any sport, are that you're not going to win every time. You don't win every time and if you don't win every time it doesn't mean you're a bad person. It doesn't mean something's wrong with you. It means it just didn't go right for you that day. But it will because the success that that fellow had that day is going to be yours down the road if you continue to believe in yourself. Having heart is also as I said never quitting.

Many times when athletes are up against the wall, they have two directions to go, they can either push off the wall and go forward or they can lay down and die. And I think that we are at our best when our backs are against the wall. Whether it's fighting to keep our family together. Fighting to keep our jobs. Fighting to keep our home, or fighting to win a golf tournament. I think we as human beings are at our best. That is what heart is all about. Doing things for the right reason is what heart is all about. As many times as has been said sports writers will write and say that these guaranteed contracts today take the heart right out of a great player. I believe that. I believe that because that carat, that brass ring which is just a little bit out of your reach and the only

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way you're going to get there is by your effort. Getting and moving to that end result. Being hungry helps get you there. It helps get you there.

M: Assume now that the questions are actually being asked by a 9 year old.

P: I have an 11 year old.

M: Well these are the kids questions. When did you first get interested in playing golf and why?

P: My father got me out of the house to caddy for him. It was a pretty wise thing that he did because I thought golf was pretty stupid, but it was a way for me to make some money. He paid me a little money to caddy for him. I learned the game from kind of the backwards way. I learned the etiquette of the game. I learned how to tend a pin, how to replace a divot, how to replace a ball mark, where to stand, what to do as I watched my father and his friends play the game. From about 12 until about 15 I played the game just a little, more of a social thing. But you know I got better and I saw that I could, I felt comfortable in the game. It was kind of who I was. I was known as a golfer and that's really how I got started.

M: .Now this is a 9 year old saying "what's the best way for me to learn?"

P: The best way for you to learn is to go out and get one or two clubs from your club professional, your father, your brother, your uncle, your friend who has knowledge of the game. Go get a couple of clubs. Get a wedge and a five iron or a seven iron and a four wood and go out and just start hitting the ball and try to get the ball airborne. Try to get the ball moving in a direction that you intend it to go. And try to do that consistently and if you can master that one club or that two club, then you'll be able to move up and put four or five clubs in your bag because at the age of 8 or 9 or 10 years old, you're not going to be able to hit the ball a long ways. You're going hit every club the same. And as you start to hit the ball pretty solidly and start to feel it off the club face, then you'll be able to get to the golf course and start competing and playing some holes.

M: Do you get nervous playing and why? If you do, why?

P: I always get nervous when I play in tournaments but I think I get nervous because of the anxiety, the anticipation of the competition. There's nothing like competition. Nothing like playing against somebody who loves the game as much as I. But there's nothing like challenging myself under the gun.

Peter, do you have it right now? And if you don't have it right now, what's keeping you from having it right now? And the only way I can get rid of the nervousness is to tee off and get into my round of golf. It happens to everybody. Once you hit that first shot or

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and Michael Mendizza

the second shot, or you're done with the first hole, you pretty much get into your thing and the anxiousness goes away.

M: .What does it take to become a professional?

P: I decided to become a professional when I was out of school. I went ot the University of Oregon and I played four years of competitive golf and I didn't have the money to finish school so I decided to turn pro and try to make some money so I could go back to school. I played in some mini tour events, made some money, went to the tour school, got my card and here I am sitting here 19 years later. The game is more fun for me now than it ever has been because I have continued to learn through the help of people like Chuck Hogan about what a great game it is. What a great game all sports are because it does challenge yourself and it's fun to be in the heat of the situation, win or lose.

end