

# Raising the Bar on Peak Performance

## NICHE SPECIALISTS HELP GOLFERS

BY RUSS CHRIST

In their search for greatness, golfers continually try to improve, especially those at the elite level. After all, shaving even a few strokes here or there often determines how well they live or how happy they are.

That drive to succeed may explain why there is an emerging wave of niche specialists in the game. These professionals can take elite golfers and other athletes from above average status to the top of their games.

and other athletes who are on the verge of stardom. What motivates her is the satisfaction she receives from helping clients achieve top performance. "In virtually every case the golfers I work with are driven to succeed," she says. "When I can make a breakthrough in their performance, or help an injury heal faster I'm just as excited as they are."

A few months ago Vornbrock began working with Barry Conser, a professional golfer from North Scottsdale. Conser once shot a 59 in the final round of the 1994 Wyoming Open, a score that helped propel him to victory. Conser has won tournaments and is obviously talented, but after many attempts has never survived the rigors of the PGA Tour's Q- (or Qualifying) School.



BARRY CONSER AND STACEY VORNBROCK WORKING WITH TAPPING TECHNIQUE

Stacey Vornbrock is one such specialist, a self-described Sports Performance Pioneer based in Scottsdale. She uses the Emotional Freedom Technique, or "tapping," to improve performance, increase range of motion, overcome blocks and heal injuries faster.

Though somewhat obscure, EFT is growing in popularity. And anyone can do it. Using two fingers (index and middle), EFT allows a person to discharge negative blocks by physically tapping the body's pressure points on the hands, wrists and face. It is designed to address the physiology of the body and it releases mental, emotional, mechanical and physical blocks, including range of motion blocks. It works very quickly whether the person believes in it or not.

Vornbrock is passionate about her chosen career path and prefers to work with professional and amateur golfers



He is already seeing results after only a few tapping sessions with Vornbrock.

"What Stacey has helped me with the most is learning how to play in the present by eliminating doubts in my performance and ability," Conser says. It's safe to assume all elite golfers have bad shots or tournaments that remain with them (in the back of their mind), but Conser says Vornbrock eliminates those negative thoughts that athletes hold on to.

"Her technique erases the emotional attachment you have to negative performance situations," he says. "She's basically eliminated those and put me back to square one."



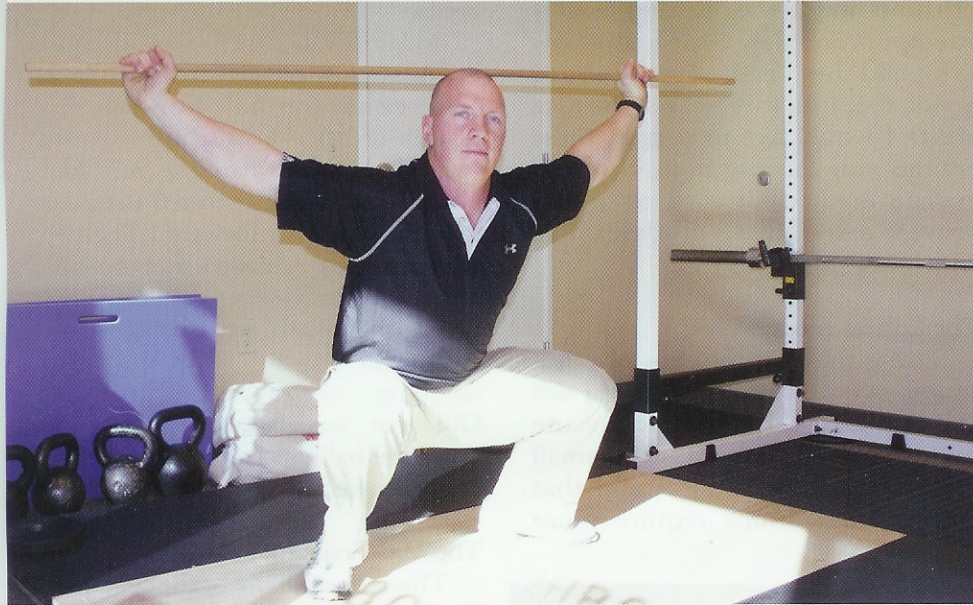
Vornbrock is also able to remove fears and anxieties that prevent some athletes from success. For example, Conser has never played well in cold weather. But after working with Vornbrock he finished seventh (out of 240) in the 2005 Nevada Open. "It was in December, there was ice on greens, but it showed me the technique she has taught me has helped quite a bit," Conser says. "I have a very positive outlook for 2006."

professional and amateur golfers and athletes that promises to increase range of motion by a minimum of 20 percent. "I'm under promising and over delivering," says Vornbrock. "In most cases, it's significantly more. The changes happen very quickly using this program."

Objectives of Vornbrock's program include improving accuracy, consistency, club head speed and distance (for golfers), preventing injuries, completing the healing of

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**TROY ANDERSON, A GOLF FITNESS COACH AND PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT SPECIALIST**

Former Arizona Cardinals linebacker Seth Joyner is another proponent of tapping. He says it has helped him not only with golf, but also with his daily life. "It's something you can use for everything," Joyner said. "It's a tremendous tool I wish I had known about a long time ago."

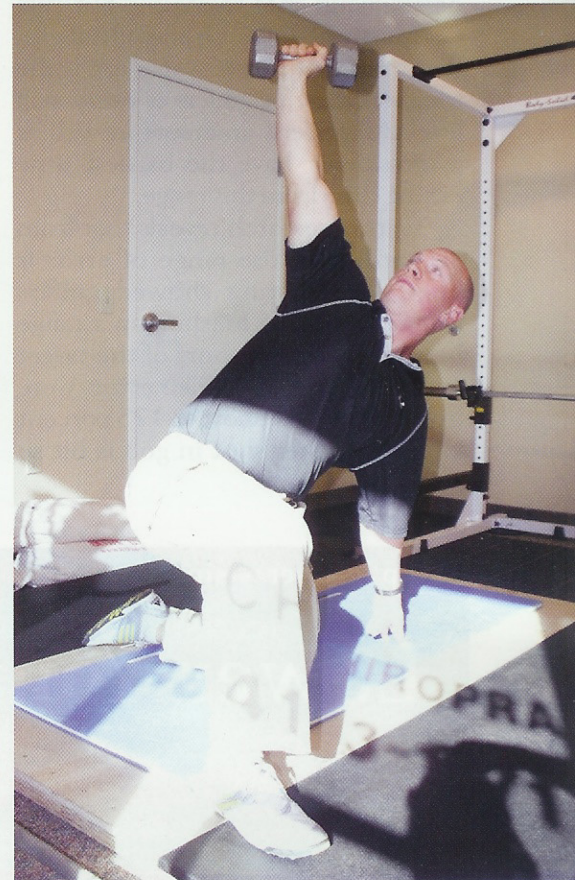
Former NFL legends Roy Green, Marcus Allen and John Elway have gone on to become pretty good golfers, and Joyner's goal is to join them and play well on the Celebrity Players Tour. "Golf is a game of how you react mentally," he said. "One bad shot or hole can ruin a round. Tapping has improved how I think on the course, my calmness and my concentration."

Vornbrock does not limit her practice to golfers and believes she can bring out the best in an athlete on any level. One of her specialties is a new two-and-a-half-day "range of motion" (ROM) program for

prior injuries, gaining strength and increasing stamina, movement, flexibility, agility and confidence.

Vornbrock brings in Troy Anderson, a golf fitness coach and performance enhancement specialist from Tempe, Arizona, and Kathi Billman, a massage therapist. Like Vornbrock, Anderson and Billman have developed their own industry niche.

The owner of Integrated Evolution, Anderson says his program complements Vornbrock's by making the golfer a better, stronger golf athlete. "Stacey and Kathi help golfers move properly," Anderson says, "and then I'll retrain that area and strengthen and stabilize it so they can perform more efficiently on the golf course. My part is developing the dynamic mobility drills—to identify and give them walk-away programming that will allow them to succeed."



Anderson says if golfers are in better shape physically (like Tiger Woods, for example), they'll have the confidence to pull off the tough shots. "I'm looking at the golfer as a power athlete, especially from tee to fairway until they get to the green," he says. "It's unique to have that (niche)."

As the number of competitive amateur and professional golfers continues to grow so will the careers of sports performance specialists such as Vornbrock and Anderson. It's clear the demand for their programs and services is on the rise.

*Russ Christ is a contributing writer to Desert Golf Magazine*