



THE THONG ADJUSTER



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The unofficial online magazine of the Iron Thong Golf Gang



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The Putter speaks

A word from the editor

Welcome to the fifth issue of The Thong Adjuster. I hope all fellow Thongers are enjoying our monthly online magazine.

In your travels, if you come up with any news items, cartoons, photos, or anything else that you'd like to share with our members, send them to me at stevevanwert@hughes.net. I'll make sure they become part of the Thong Adjuster.

Also, this is to anyone who has not submitted a bio, especially the new members. Sit down and fill one out and email it to me or John Hernandez. It's part of being a Thonger!

Our group is growing by leaps and bounds, and I don't mean out-of-bounds! Our unofficial goal was to double our membership in the first year, and we've done that easily. The added revenue from dues and unpaid skins will make our second tournament a fantastic one, I'm sure. Your officers are beginning preliminary work to get the semi-annual tourney underway sometime in January.

Speaking of officers, nominations are being sought for a new president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. Active officers, overseen by our Board of Directors, are vitally important to keep our group running smoothly. I urge you to think long and hard about who you want to be your officers for 2007. And if your name comes up in nomination, I urge you to accept the fact that your peers think you're the best man for the job and accept your nomination. Believe me, there are a lot of subjects on the table waiting for the new officers to "cuss and discuss."

Let me know what you think about The Thong Adjuster.

Steve





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Go to <http://www.IronThongGolf.com> to view the current issue.

Articles, including for sale items, can be submitted at any time. Send them to the editor at stevevanwert@hughes.net.

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Jokes of the Month



1 Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods are standing at the throne of heaven. God looks at them and says, "Before granting you a place at my side, I must ask you what you have learned, what you believe in."

God asks Arnie first: "What do you believe?" Arnie thinks long and hard, looks God in the eye, and says, "I believe in hard work, and in staying true to family and friends. I believe in giving. I was lucky, but I always tried to do right by my fans."

God can't help but see the essential goodness of Palmer, and offers him a seat to his left.

Then God turns to Nicklaus and says, "What do you believe?" Jack says, "I believe passion, discipline, courage and honor are the fundamentals of life. Like Arnold, I believe in hard work. I, too, have been lucky, but win or lose, I've always tried to be a true sportsman, both on and off the playing fields."

God is greatly moved by Jack's high-pitched eloquence, and he offers him a seat to his right.

Finally, God turns to Woods: "And you, Tiger, what do you believe?" Tiger replies, "I believe you're in my seat."

2 Leon and his wife are sitting around one evening, just talking, when the wife suddenly asks, "If I died, would you re-marry?" "I would," Leon answered.

"You would?" the wife asked, a bit surprised. "Would you let her come into my house?"

"I would."

"Would she be cooking in my kitchen?"

"She would!"

"Would she be putting her clothes in my closet?"

"She would!"

Growing more exasperated, the wife continued, asking: "Would she be driving my car?"

"She would!"

"Would she be sleeping in my bed?"

"She would!"

"Would she be using my golf clubs?"

"Oh, no, definitely not."

"Why not?"

"She's left-handed."

Golf rules of the Month

Q *What is the penalty for playing a wrong ball?*

A In most cases, playing the wrong ball results in loss of hole in match play and a two-stroke penalty in stroke play.

In stroke play, the offender must go back and replay any shots with the correct ball.

Exceptions are wrong balls played out of hazards. In both match play and stroke play, no penalty is incurred for wrong balls played from hazards as long as the player goes back and plays with the right ball.

A player whose ball was incorrectly played by a competitor or partner should play a ball as close to the original spot as can be determined.

In stroke play, a competitor can be disqualified if the mistake of playing a wrong ball is not corrected.

In the rulebook, wrong ball situations are covered in Rule 15.

Q *What is the order of play around the putting green?*

A Here's a rule frequently misunderstood by recreational players. Everyone knows that the player who is "away" plays first. But when it comes to putting greens, many recreational players get the rule wrong. They believe that someone off the green always plays before someone who is on the green. And that's incorrect.

It doesn't matter if you're on the green or off - if you're farthest from the cup, then you play first. That means you might have to putt before your partner plays from a bunker - if your putt is longer than your partner's bunker shot.

If your partner is short of the green, 30 feet from the cup, but you're on the green, 40 feet from the cup, you play first.

The player who is farthest from the cup plays first (see Rule 10), regardless of where that player is.



GOLF *tips* Setup for success

From Mel Sole, Ritson-Sole Golf Schools

From Michael Lamanna

Golfers striving to improve their scores must focus on fundamentals for success. The single most important and most overlooked full swing fundamental is the setup. The setup writes the script for the swing and all too often amateur and professional golfers struggle due to poor address positions. All great golfers and teachers are aware of the importance of the setup.

Alignment

At address your body (feet, knees, hips, forearms, shoulders and eyes) should be positioned parallel to the target line. When viewed from behind, a right-handed golfer will appear aimed slightly left of the target. This optical illusion is created because the ball is on the target line and the body is not.

The easiest way to conceptualize this is the image of a railroad track. The body is on the inside rail and the ball is on the outside rail. For right-handers, at 100 yards your body will appear aligned approximately 3 to 5 yards left, at 150 yards approximately 8 to 10 yards left and at 200 yards 12 to 15 yards left.

Foot placement

The feet should be shoulder width (outside of the shoulders to the inside of the heels) for the middle irons. The short iron stance will be two inches narrower and the stance for long irons and woods should be two inches wider. The target-side foot should be flared toward the target from 20 to 40 degrees to allow the body to rotate toward the target on the downswing. The back foot should be square (90 degrees to the target line) to slightly open to create the proper hip turn on the back swing. Your flexibility and body rotation speed determine the proper foot placement.

Ball position

The ball placement varies with the club you select. From a flat lie:

Play your short irons (wedges, 9-iron and 8-iron) in the center portion of your stance. These clubs have

the most upright lie angles and they must be swung at the steepest angle, and you should take a divot in front of the ball.

Your middle irons should be played one ball toward the target-side foot from center (a ball left of center for the right-handed golfer). These clubs have a slightly flatter lie angle and you should take a slightly shallower divot than with the short irons.

The correct ball position for the long irons and fairway woods is two balls toward the target-side foot from center (two balls left for the right-hander). With these clubs, the ball should be struck directly at the bottom of the swing arc with very little divot.

The driver is played farthest forward (three balls left of center for the right-hander) to strike the ball on the upswing.

Balance

Your weight should be balanced on the balls of the feet, not on the heels or toes. With short irons, your weight should be 60 percent on the target side foot (left foot for right-handers). For middle iron shots the weight should be 50/50 or equal on each foot. For your longest clubs, place 60 percent of your weight on the backside foot (right foot for right-handers). This will help you swing the club on the correct angle on the back swing.

Posture

Your knees should be slightly flexed and directly over the balls of your feet for balance. The center of the



GOLF tips

Setup for success

Continued from page 4



upper spine (between your shoulder blades), knees and balls of the feet should be stacked when viewed from behind the ball on the target line.

Also, the back knee should be cocked slightly inward towards the target. This will help you brace yourself on this leg during the back swing, thus preventing lower body sway.

Your body should bend at the hips, not in the waist (your buttocks will protrude slightly when you are in this correct posture). The spine is the axis of rotation for the swing, so it should be bent towards the ball from the hips at approximately a 45-degree angle to the shaft of the club.

This right angle relationship between the spine and the shaft will help you swing the club, arms

and body as a team on the correct plane.

Your vertebrae should be in a straight line with no bending in the middle of the spine. If your spine is in a "slouch" posture, every degree of bend decreases your shoulder turn by 1.5 degrees.

Your ability to turn the shoulders on the back swing equals your power potential, so keep your spine in line for longer drives and more consistent ball striking.

When viewed from face on, your spine should tilt to the side, slightly away from the target. The target side hip and shoulder should be slightly higher than the back hip and shoulder. The entire pelvis should be set an inch or two toward the target. This places the hips in the lead and it counter balances your body as your upper spine leans away from the target.

Your chin should be up, out of your chest to encourage a better shoulder turn. The head should be tipped at the same angle as the spine and your eyes should focus on the inside portion of the back of the ball.

The arms and hands

At address, your hands should hang just forward of your zipper (just off the inside of your target side thigh). The hands-to-body distance varies depending on the club you are hitting.

The shaft of the club will appear to lean slightly toward the target with your short irons because the

ball is positioned in the center of your stance. With your middle irons, the shaft of the club will lean only slightly toward the target (or not at all) since the ball is forward of center. With long irons and woods, your hands and the shaft of the club will appear to be in line.

Again, as the ball position moves forward, the hands stay in the same place so the lean of the shaft disappears. With a driver, the shaft will lean away from the target.

Your arms and shoulders should form a triangle and the elbows should point to the hips.

Tension

At address the upper body should be tension free. You may feel tension only down the inside of the back leg.



*A Luke Samuel Goodyear Mystery by Steve VanWert***MURDER ON THE 13TH GREEN****Chapter Five – The aftermath**

An hour or so later, the EMS boys had taken Bruce's body to North Summit County Medical Center, located on the south of town, near the interstate intersection. Doc Cook had gone along with them. Most of the gallery was still milling around the clubhouse, unsure of what to do.

Horace Chamberlain had decided, even with the certainty of a visit from the local constabulary, to open up the bar. Luke was slumped in his chair, with the Irregulars and even some ir-irregulars sitting nearby. No one spoke.

There were a few notable absences. Cash and Cassy were nowhere to be seen. Putts wasn't there, but he seldom was. The caddies didn't have lounge privileges anyway, although Horace usually looked the other way. Hartly, though, was sitting on the end bar stool, nearest the picture window.

It was, understandably, a somber time. Leave it to Hartly to fuck it up. "I don't mean to be pushy, Horace," he said, several hundred decibels under his usual level, "but does this mean I win the championship?"

Everyone looked at him like he had leprosy. Horace showed an exceptional amount of self-control and answered Hartly's question without telling him what a consummate jerk he was. "I've been thinking about that, Hartly, and I really don't have an answer for you, yet. Obviously, we've never had anything like this happen before, so there's no precedent. We'll call a meeting of the Governing Council and make a decision. But I would suppose that, yes, you can consider yourself the new

course champion."

Hartly tried to suppress a smile, and he was almost successful. He downed his shot of VO, quickly sipped his beer back, and stood up. "You all know that this isn't the way I wanted to win, right?" He looked around at everyone. "I refused a concession on number five, remember?"

Several people nodded. To be fair, Hartly had played a hell of a match and might have won anyway. It just seemed kinda heartless to claim the title so quickly.

He turned and headed for the door. "I - I gotta go, Horace. You let me know about the council, okay?"

Horace nodded, and Hartly exited quickly, probably embarrassed by his own greed.

The phone on the bar rang suddenly. In that quiet room it sounded like an explosion in a siren factory. Jasmine Dowalski, one of the Griffon Lakes lounge waitresses, who had been pressed into service as part-time bartender, picked up the receiver. Rather than try to pronounce her last name and screw it up, everyone just called her "Ski-Doo" most of the time.

"Lounge," she said. "Yea, wait just a minute." She pointed the cellular phone toward Horace. "It's Doc Cook," she said.

The receiver was passed down to Horace.

"Yes, Doc, this is Horace. Officially? When? Okay, I'll try to keep everyone here. Yes. Thank you." He looked around and shook his head. "Bruce has been officially pronounced dead. Cause of death is unknown at this time, but the hospital suspects

ingestion of some fast-acting poison. They won't know for sure until the autopsy. In other words, they think Bruce may have been murdered."

I can't describe the shock that bombshell laid on this group of friends. In retrospect, it was obvious that Bruce didn't just keel over and pass away, but absolutely no one, not even Luke with his police training, had suspected foul play.

Horace continued. "The police are on their way over. They request that everyone remain here so they can interview as many eye-witnesses as possible."

Eloise was sobbing. "Oh, poor Suzi," she cried softly, "this is going to devastate her."

Every single person in the room instantaneously realized that no one had thought to tell Suzi, Bruce's wife, what had happened.

"Jesus," exclaimed Horace, "has anyone called her?"

Eloise stood up. "I'll do it," she offered, "it might sound a little easier if it comes from another woman. I'll use the office phone." She hurried off to accomplish the sorrowful task.

Luke called after Eloise. "Tell her I'll come by later."

The room was quiet again. Then someone said the inevitable. "Hartly."

A dozen conversations began immediately. The din got louder and louder. Finally, Luke pounded on the table. "Guys, guys," he said, "come on. No one gets murdered just for a golf championship."

Niles Bonnano, who disliked Hartly even more than the rest, stood up. "He wanted to win awful bad. That's why he cheated Skipper out of the semis."

"Now wait a minute, Niles," Luke Samuel answered. "You can't really be serious about this."

"Well," interjected Horace, "the police will be here soon. Let's let them do their job."

The conversation died down once again. Eloise re-entered the room and sat down next to Nick Adena. "Suzi's on her way to the hospital," she said. "I - I didn't tell her about the police suspicions, just that Bruce collapsed on the course, and ... and ... passed away before he reached North Summit."

It was only 10 minutes or so before the police arrived. Summitview, being the county seat of Summit County, has a unique system of law enforcement. There are only two city policemen, plus a chief. It wasn't until last year, as a matter of fact, that they even got cars, thanks to Hartly Haroldson's E-Z Finance Auto Sales. Since the Summit County Court House sits on the opposite side of Benning Park, or maybe Haroldson Park, there's not only a county police station, but a state police station, too. As a result, little police work is done by the local guys. The county patrols through town, officially on their way to and from county roads. The states cruise the interstate. Everybody overlaps everybody else, but most of the time the county cops take precedence.

That's why three county mounties, one in civilian clothes, walked into the clubhouse, along with Jack McGarvey, Summitview's police chief, in tow. Jack pointed Horace out to the investigators. "Gentlemen, this is Horace Chamberlain, owner of the Griffon Lakes Golf Course."

Horace stood and extended his hand. The un-uniformed short one took it. "Mr. Chamberlain, my name is Devlin. I'm in charge here. Please sit down."

Horace did so. Everyone waited to see what Investigator Devlin was going to do. Maybe because of his background in police work, maybe because he's just a suspicious old shit, maybe just because he didn't like Devlin's looks, but for some reason, this whole scenario bothered Luke Samuel.

Devlin looked around the room and cleared

his throat. "As you know, a suspicious death occurred here today. I and my men are going to break you down into groups and ask you some questions about what you saw, what you know, and even about what you suspect. Please answer our queries as completely as possible. Is there anyone here who was not present when the fatality occurred?"

Ski-Doo raised her hand. "I was here in the lounge, sir," she said, "along with the kitchen staff."

Horace interrupted, "The clubhouse is manned by a staff of 12, Mr. Devlin. None of them were watching the match."

Devlin made a note in his little black, spiral notebook. "That's Inspector Devlin to you," he said abruptly. "Is there anyone who witnessed the match who is not here in this room?"

"The caddie master and the caddies should still be in the caddieshack," replied Horace, who then turned to Nick Adena. "Nick, call over to Putts and have them join us right away, please."

Skipper Lodge answered quickly. "Hartly Haroldson left already."

"The Cassenbergs were here," interjected Eloise, "but they left hours ago."

Devlin wrote something down again in his book. Devlin looked down at Luke, calmly. "What is your name?"

Luke returned his stare. "Goodyear. Luke Samuel. Private Investigator. Course member. Private citizen. I help pay your goddamn salary."

Devlin made a note in his book again. "You have your license on you?" he asked.

"Sure."

Devlin smiled smugly. "Good. I may want to look at it later."

Luke thought about burying the aggravating, sawed-off inspector in sarcasm, but thought better of it. It was probably just as well, he thought. Devlin was just one of those sarcastic types who thinks he sees something shady

in everything. Probably double-checks his kids' Sunday School lessons for subversive literature. And makes notes in his goddamn black book. Luke settled back into the chair, making mental notes of his own.

The next couple of hours were interesting. Devlin and his cronies broke everyone up into groups, just as he had said. They proceeded to shuffle those groups between all three of them, so the net result was that everyone got interviewed three times. Except Luke. He only got interviewed twice. When it came time for Devlin himself to talk to him, all he asked for was Luke's license. He scribbled something down in his book and handed the license back to Luke, then told him he could go.

First, though, he had a word of advice to dispense. "If this ends up as a murder investigation," he told Luke, "I want to make sure that you stay out of the way."

"This already is a murder investigation, or you wouldn't be here asking questions and taking notes," Luke replied. "And you sure as hell wouldn't be worried about a small town PI like me getting in the way."

Devlin made no physical response. "Just a word of advice," he said. "Take it to heart. You can go now."

Fuming, Luke vacated the room. Horace stopped him just as he was leaving the lounge.

"Luke," he whispered, "can I talk to you for a moment?"

Luke followed him into his office. Horace sat on the edge of his desk. "You have some experience in these matters, Luke. What do you think is going on?"

Luke thought for a second. "I'm not sure, Horace. If there's no proof yet that Bruce was murdered, these guys are going to an awful lot of unnecessary trouble."

"What if there is proof of murder?" Horace asked.

"Then I still don't understand where Summit county dug up this Devlin character. I've never seen him around here before. If they brought him up from down-state, they sure didn't waste any time." Luke leaned closer to Horace. "To tell you the truth, I don't think he's county. I think he may be Fed. There's more going on here than just a small-town murder."

Horace nodded, stood up and wandered over to the picture window to the right of his desk. He gazed out toward the putting green, his hands clasped behind his back. He slowly shook his head. "Luke, when I purchased this course, it became a part of my life. When my first marriage ended so badly, it seemed that I'd never focus again, never find anything worth caring about." He brushed back his hair and sighed. "But then this course became my life. Even after meeting Eloise and remarrying, Griffin Lakes is my real reason for carrying on. Now this terrible thing has happened and my life is once again touched by a death – a needless one. I can't let this go without knowing exactly what happened. Do me a favor, will you?"

"Sure, Horace. Just name it."

Horace turned to face him. "Consider yourself officially on retainer, employed by Griffon Lakes Golf Course, to conduct an investigation of your own. I would greatly appreciate it."

"Devlin told me to keep my nose out of it."

"Yes, I suspected as much. But if you're hired by me to look into it, then it's official, isn't it?"

Luke smiled. "Bruce was my best friend, Horace. No one can keep me out of this one."

Luke turned to the door.

"By the way," Horace added, "did you notice that neither of the caddies have appeared for questioning?"

"How about Putts?"

"Nor the caddie master."

"Hmmm, I wonder if they skipped town

along with Phil Philo?"

"That's the kind of thing I've hired you to find out," smiled Horace. "Let me know if there's anything I can do to assist."

Luke nodded. "I'll send over a contract form for you to sign a little later. Just in case Devlin doesn't believe me."

"Fine."

"I'll be at the hospital if you need me, Horace. I'm going to try and find Suzi Benning."

"I'll go with you," said an unfamiliar voice.

Luke turned to see a vision in red and green standing by Horace's door. She had honey auburn hair, the kind that glows without looking like there's a neon light somewhere underneath; a pixie nose, green eyes; Maureen O'Hara, only with longer legs. He couldn't help but stare.

Horace couldn't help but notice that the vision was staring back. Horace cleared his throat. "Uh-hum-mm," he said. "Luke, this is my daughter, Ellen. She just arrived here today during the match. Ellen, this is Luke Samuel Goodyear, a dear friend and, fortunately for us all, a champion of justice and a golfer."

Ellen held out her hand. Luke sorta bowed a bit at the waist and took it, held it, gazed into her eyes, then jumped like he'd been poked with a cattle prod. "Uh, I didn't know Horace had a daughter ... I mean, it's nice to meet you, uh, Ellen, uh, where in the hell have you been hiding?"

Ellen laughed, her hazel-flecked eyes dancing. "In Gainesville, Mr. Goodyear, at college. May I call you 'Luke?'"

"Sure."

Ellen turned to her father. "Do you mind if I help Luke at the hospital, Daddy?"

Horace nodded his assent and Ellen took Luke's arm. "Thanks, Daddy," she said.

Next month, chapter 6, "Monday morning."

Brassies, mashies and niblicks, oh my!

Test your knowledge of historical golf clubs

The numbering of golf clubs did not begin until the early 20th Century, when manufacturing capabilities reached the point that full, matched sets could be produced.

The golf clubs of old, prior to the introduction of matched sets, were a hodgepodge of often home made clubs that bore little resemblance to a modern set. But they were the forerunners of modern clubs, and they were clubs whose forms and purposes were built upon over the decades.

Can you match the historical club with the modern one?

1: The modern equivalent of the mashie is the ...

- a. Driver
- b. 5-iron

2: The modern equivalent of the niblick is the ...

- a. 9-iron
- b. Putter

3: The modern equivalent of the baffie is the ...

- a. 4-wood
- b. 7-wood

4: The modern equivalent of the spade mashie is the ...

- a. 3-iron
- b. 6-iron

5: The modern equivalent of the brassie is the ...

- a. 2-wood
- b. Pitching wedge

6: The modern equivalent of the mashie niblick is the ...

- a. 2-iron
- b. 7-iron

7: The modern equivalent of the cleek is the ...

- a. 3-wood
- b. 1-iron

8: The modern equivalent of the mid mashie is the ...

- a. 5-wood
- b. 3-iron

9: The modern equivalent of the spoon is the ...

- a. Fork
- b. 3-wood

10: The modern equivalent of the mid iron is the ...

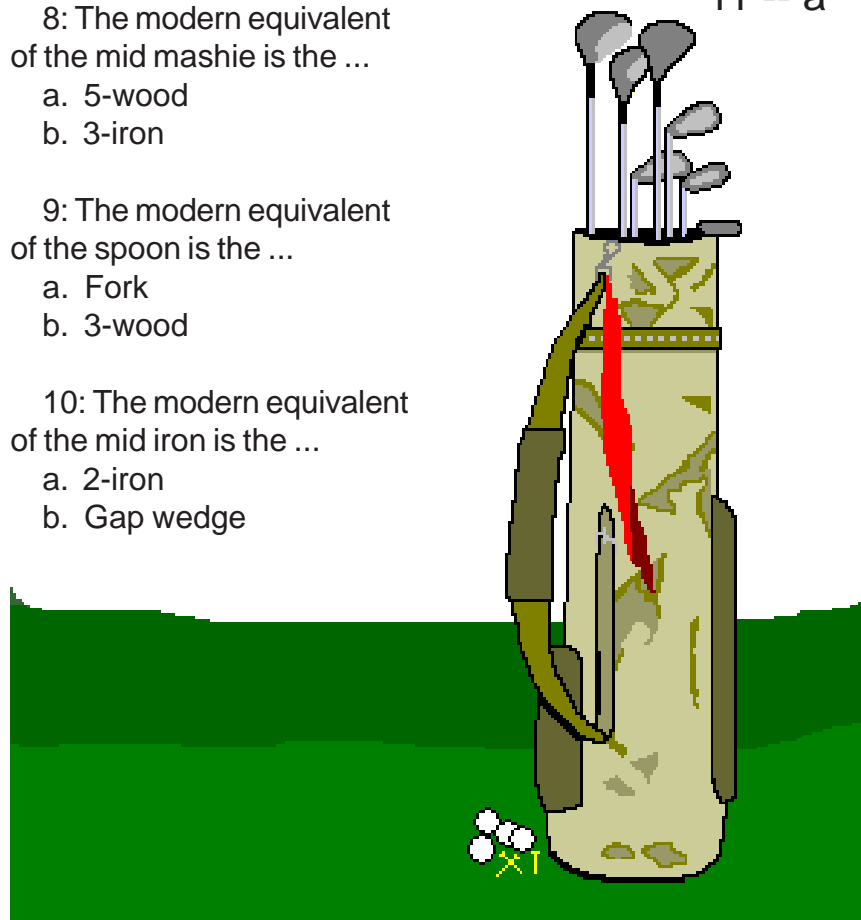
- a. 2-iron
- b. Gap wedge

11: The modern equivalent of the mashie iron is the ...

- a. 4-iron
- b. 8-iron

Answers

1 -- b	6 -- b
2 -- a	7 -- b
3 -- a	8 -- b
4 -- b	9 -- b
5 -- a	10 -- a
	11 -- a





Dan VanWert

Iron Thong member profile



NAME: Dan VanWert
NICKNAME: Mr. Holmes
HANDICAP: Hispanic women -- I just can't stop myself

CLUBS IN MY BAG: All of them. Most are bent, broken, and borrowed, and they all have a mind of their own!

MY HISTORY OF PLAYING GOLF: I started playing golf when I was around 13, but stopped soon after once I realized that there was so much more to this game than just crushing it off the tee. I started up again because I found that no matter how many bad marriages or psycho girlfriends you have, there's nothing greater than chasing a little white ball all over the course and enjoying some space with friends for a few hours. This is how I manage to stay sane through it all, and I have all my fellow thongers to thank for stopping me from climbing the steps of the U.T. tower and wreaking havoc on the world every week!

MY GREATEST MOMENT WHILE PLAYING GOLF: I picked up the drink girl at Cedar Creek once. Hitting the Chinese restaurant across from the Ft. Sam Golf Course was always fun, but my best moment playing golf was at Willow on number 18. I hit the straightest shot ever, ball wound up somehow behind the cup inches away, best shot I ever hit!

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BEING AN IRON THONGER: I like the fact that no one takes themselves too seriously, and you can joke and laugh with someone new every week, I played in a group every week that only cared about skin money and that really put a strain on everyone. This is the greatest group I have ever played with, makes me look forward to Saturdays for even more than the golf.

THE BEST AND WORSE PARTS OF MY GOLF GAME: Best part of my game would have to be the tee shot. There's something about watching my ball fly over most of the others in the group that gives me something to brag about (that is until I shank my next shot into the woods or the water!)

The worst part of my game would have to be: everything that follows my tee shot, from the chili dips to the three putts, makes you wish you had taken up a different sport altogether, that is until that one shot, the one shot every round that everyone has, when the club strikes the ball perfectly, and for just a few minutes, you actually look like you know what you are doing, that is until the next shot.

But that one shot brings us back every week, and so here I am in my own private golf hell, addicted to that one perfect shot every week!

ANYTHING ELSE: Fairways and greens everyone, see you at the turn and in the clubhouse!