

SOUTHERN CHAPTER • SOUTH FLORIDA PGA

Coaching Elite Players

Finding the next advantage
when there is less juice to squeeze



Dan "DMAC" McCarthy

Grande Oaks Golf Academy • August 28
9:00 AM-12:00 PM



Three hours. One coaching system.

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- 9:00–9:20** ● **CONTEXT + PHILOSOPHY**
Set the coaching lens
- 9:20–10:25** ● **FIVE PILLARS + “LESS JUICE”**
Measure what moves scoring
- 10:25–10:35** ○ **BREAK / TRANSITION**
Reset the room
- 10:35–11:35** ● **LIVE PLAYER DEMONSTRATION**
Observe decisions in real time
- 11:35–12:00** ● **APPLICATION + Q&A**
Commit the framework
Hold questions for the end – write them down.



FRAMEWORK

01 DETERMINE

Determine what needs to be improved.

CONTOUR 01 / PHILOSOPHY + PERFORMANCE MODEL

DETERMINE • MEASURE • APPLY • COMPETE



Do not paint the race car.

“ Great coaching is delivering the right information in language the player can feel, trust and repeat.

01

DIAGNOSE

02

PROTECT

03

CONNECT

04

PREPARE

4 RESPONSIBILITIES → 12 ESSENTIAL COACHING BEHAVIORS → 1 INDEPENDENT COMPETITOR



Five pillars are the scoreboard.

1

APPROACH PLAY

GIR +
proximity

2

TOTAL DRIVING

Distance +
accuracy

3

WEDGE PLAY

125-50
yards

4

SCRAMBLING

Save the round
(defense)

5

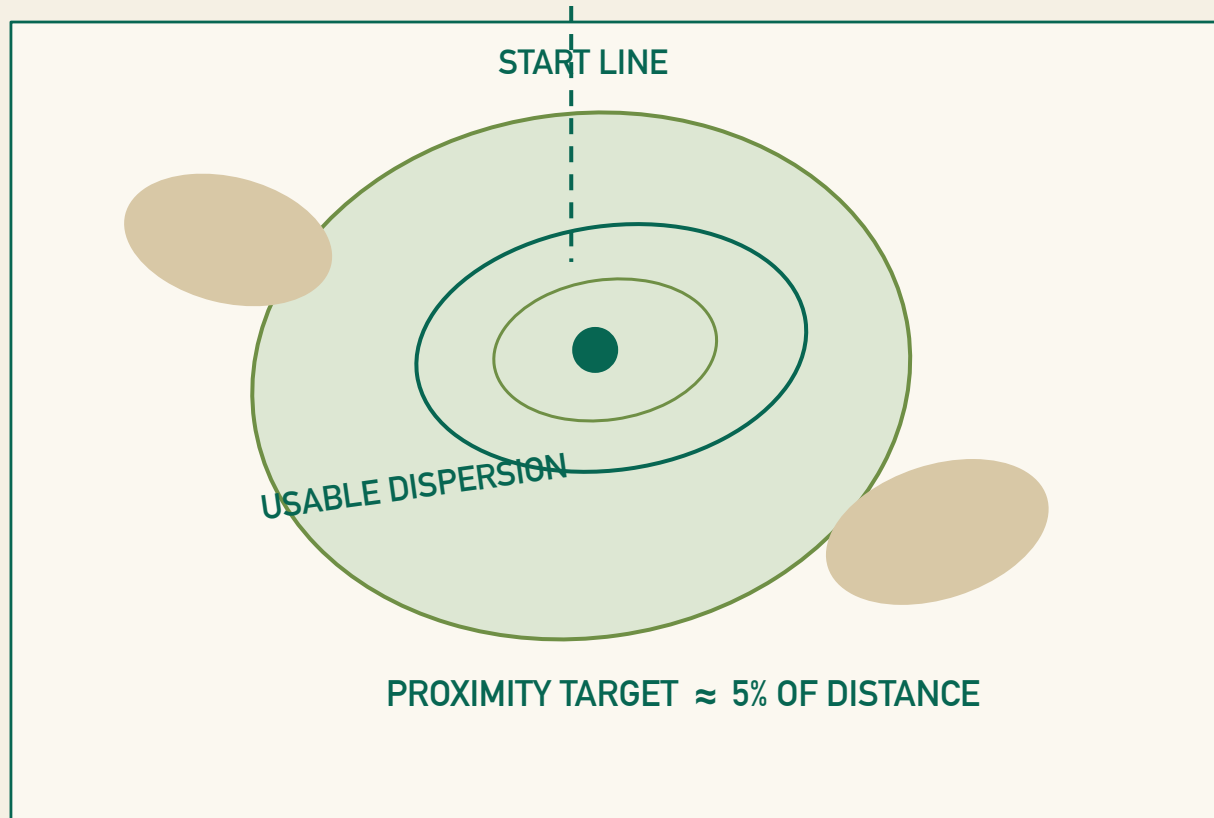
MENTAL GAME

Access skill
under pressure

Technique is the delivery system. Skill trumps technique.

The greatest separator.

PILLAR 1 / APPROACH



APPROACH WINDOW

150–200 YARDS

STANDARD

GIR + proximity
Vertical control

COACHING LENS

Start line • curve • carry
Trajectory vs. landing angle

Track the pattern—not only the average.

Handling high speed.

PILLAR 2 / DRIVING

LAUNCH MONITOR / PLAYING SPEED		PLAYER-SPECIFIC BASELINE
BALL SPEED	LAUNCH	SPIN
175	13°	2400
CARRY	TOTAL	NO GENERIC TOUR TEMPLATE
298	321	

SPEED

Club + ball speed
Launch • spin

CONTROL

Clubface • COH
D-plane • spin axis

Severity of miss.



Distance wedges.

PILLAR 3 / WEDGE

01

CALIBRATE

**Stock • BFS
(hook)
Chippy (cut)**

.....

.....

.....

02

CONTROL

**Launch • spin
landing angle**

.....

.....

.....

03

MATCH

**Trajectory to
pin +
conditions**

.....

.....

.....

04

STANDARD

**Inside 20 ft
as a target**

.....

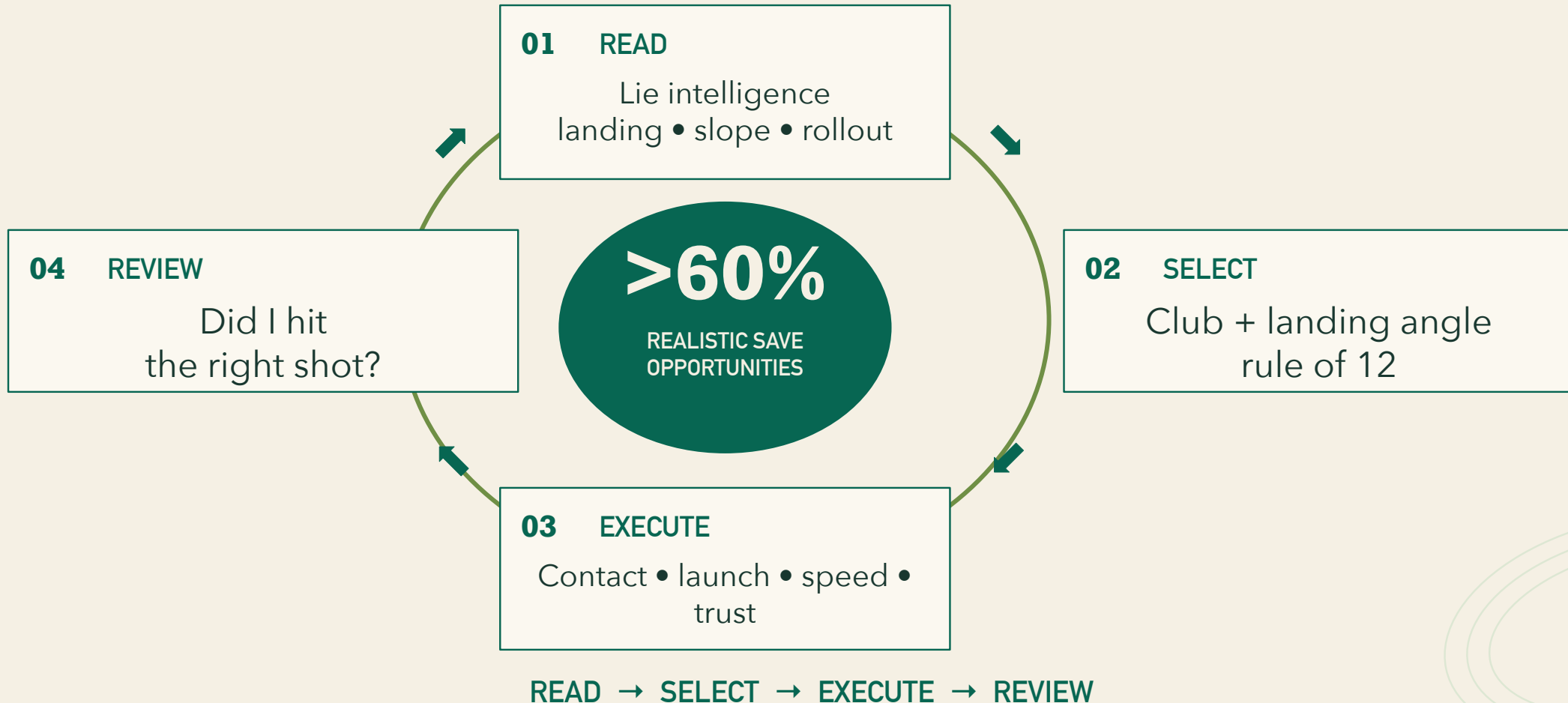
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LIE • WIND • ADRENALINE • PIN POSITION

Golf's defense.

PILLAR 4 / SCRAMBLING



Four questions return the player to the present.

PILLAR 5 / MENTAL

AWARENESS

“What is the player feeling?”

COMMITMENT

“What shot are they choosing?”

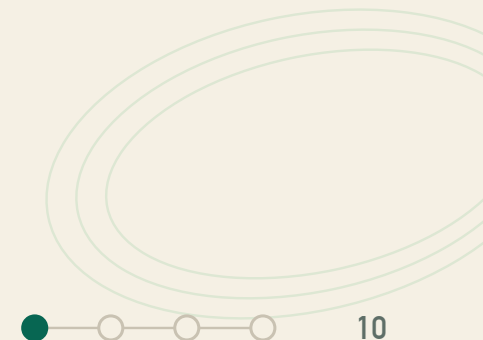
ROUTINE

“What keeps the player present?”

RESPONSE

“What happens after?”
Acceptance.

Confidence is earned through proper preparation.



02

MEASURE

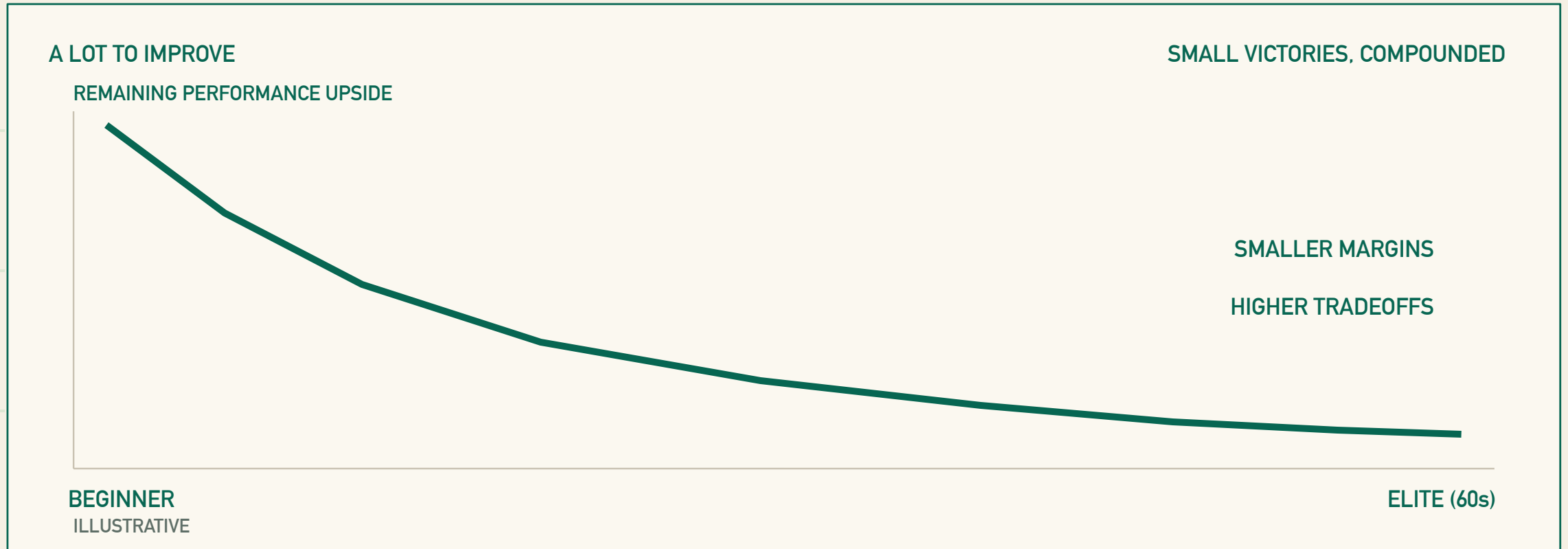
At the elite level, a wrong change is expensive.

CONFIRM THE WHY.

DETERMINE • MEASURE • APPLY • COMPETE

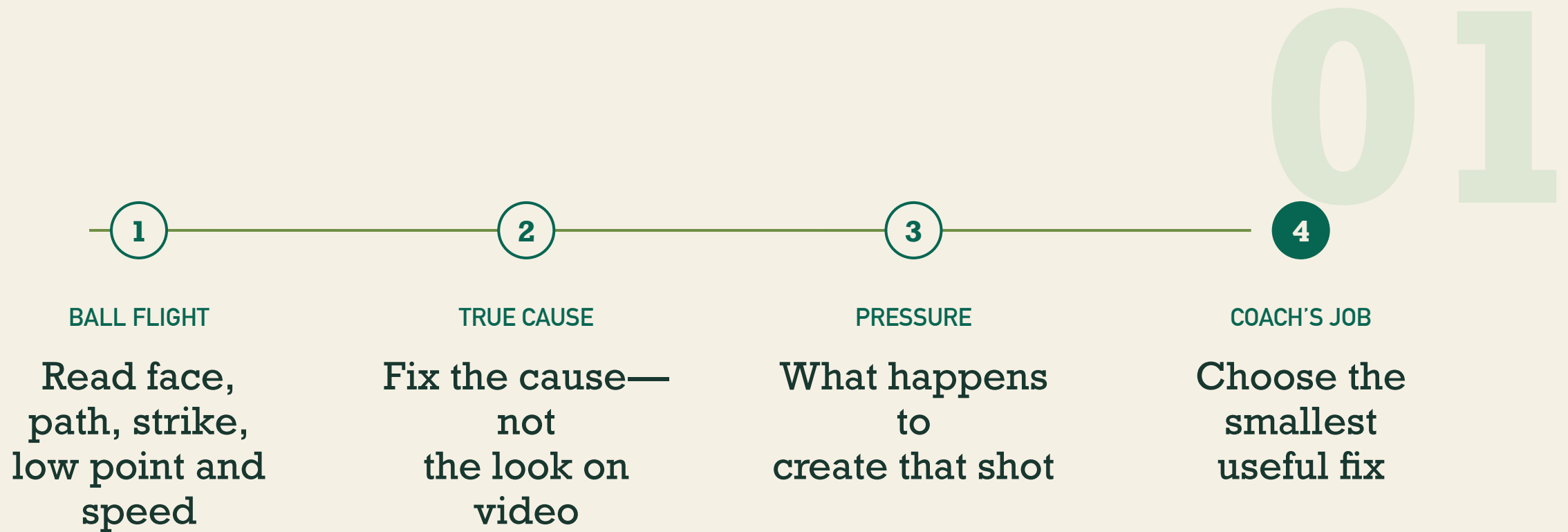


There is less juice to squeeze.



RESTRAINT IS A COACHING SKILL.

Paint on the race car.



With elite players you have to kill four birds with one stone.

Protect strengths. Simplify the change.

- 
- 
- 01 Preserve strengths** Protects confidence
 - 02 Establish a clear plan** Creates improvement + organization
 - 03 Know when to say less** Protects the ego

Write down what cannot be damaged. Keep the strengths.

Connect the dots.

DRIVING

More distance =
more aggressive play

FLIGHT

A predictable flight
under pressure

APPROACH

Closer proximity =
more birdie
opportunities

THE FILTER

**Will this change
lower scores?**

03

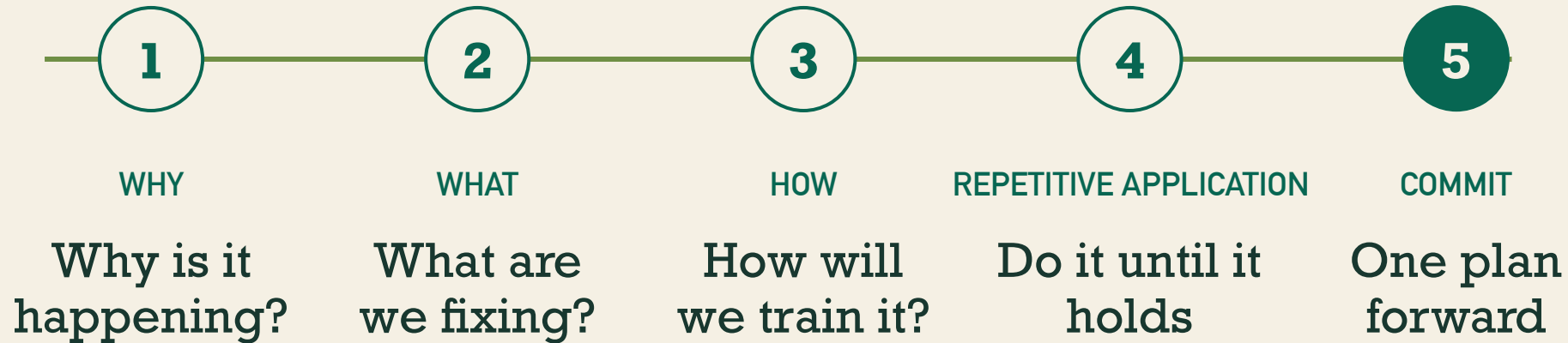
DOES IT MOVE THE NEEDLE?

03 APPLY

Take it to the course.



Time to get to work.



TASK • DOSAGE • FEEDBACK • TEST

How to make it matter.



Use practice to earn trust. Narrow the corridor of acceptance.

Prepare for solo flight.

- 
- 01 Calibrate the four pillars competition demands

 - 02 Develop a predictable miss and better shot management

 - 03 Pit crew alignment — everyone on the same page

 - 04 **Solo flight.**

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Live player demonstration



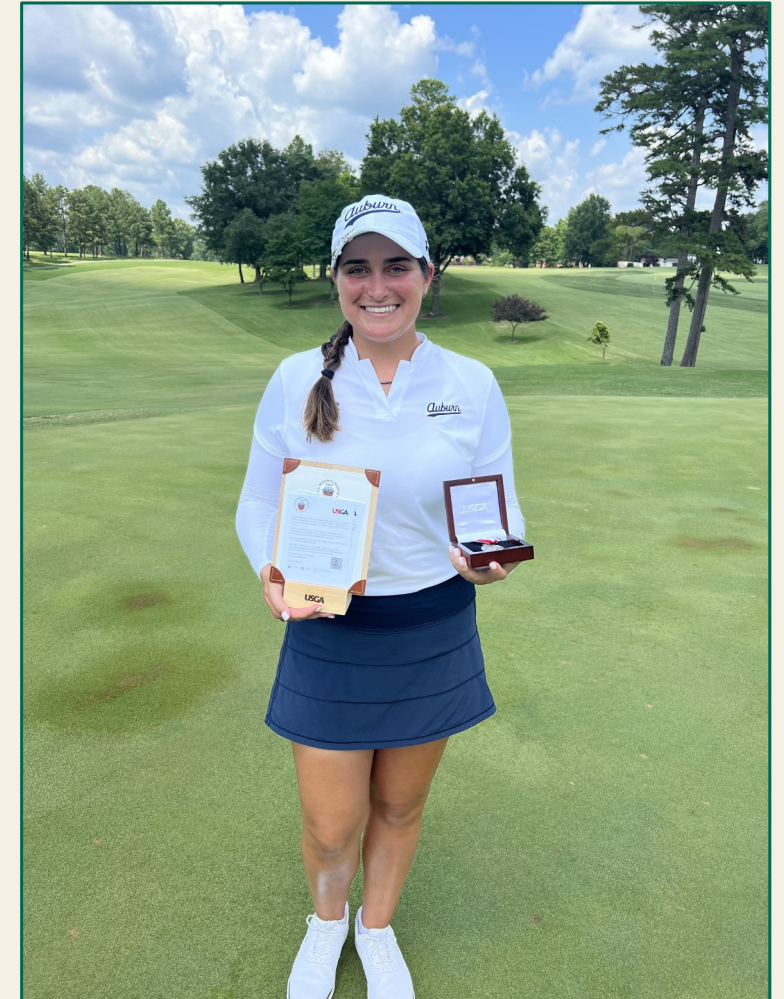
We move to the academy: TrackMan data, the player's own read, and how I would coach it.

04 COMPETE

Change evolution complete.

CARD 04 / DECIDE + COMMIT + REVIEW

DETERMINE • MEASURE • APPLY • COMPETE



The evidence points to the scoring constraint.

ELITE PLAYER PROFILE

Long enough • predictable fade • strong wedges • poor scoring from 170–200 (8-iron to 6-iron) • anxious on demanding par 3s with back-left pins



Rebuild the backswing



Add speed



**Improve long-iron window
+ target process**



Increase short-game variety

CHOOSE / DEFEND / DISCUSS

Before you change an elite player

DMAC / ELITE PLAYER CHANGE CARD

DATE _____ PLAYER _____ EVENT WINDOW _____

- ☐ **01** What shots are actually costing strokes?
.....
- ☐ **02** What already makes this player elite?
.....
- ☐ **03** What needs to change to increase performance?
.....
- ☐ **04** Can the player commit to the change process?
.....
- ☐ **05** **How will this improvement move the needle?**
.....

PHOTOGRAPH THIS CARD. USE IT BEFORE THE NEXT CHANGE.

2020 / 120TH U.S. AMATEUR, BANDON DUNES

The victory party.



TYLER STRAFACI • 2020 U.S. AMATEUR CHAMPION

He did the work.
We kept the strengths and
stayed out of the way.

THE PLAYERS

Players who did the work.



WE BEAT THIS DEAD HORSE ON PURPOSE.

Coach the player— not the swing.

DETERMINE	Do not paint the race car.
MEASURE	Confirm the why. Move the needle.
APPLY	Repetitive application. Change takes time.
COMPETE	Solo flight.

Less juice to squeeze. Small victories, compounded.

