



## Fit For Sisters

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Columnist

### Golf Fitness for a summer of great rounds

Golf is a popular activity in Sisters Country — but it brings with it some aches and pains.

A quick review of the statistics reveal a common trend: Low back pain, elbow tendonitis, plantar (foot) tendonitis, knee pain, and shoulder pain. The repeated stress of twisting and explosive swinging put unaccustomed stress on the joints and surrounding tissues. These aches and pains can be avoided with a little preventative maintenance.

To understand how to avoid these injuries one must first understand the mechanics of a golf swing. Local physical therapist Matt Kirchoff, who has a penchant for working with golfers, says the most important factors are the flexibility of the upper and middle back (shoulder area) as well as the hips.

“With many of the golfers that I work with I see two key areas that lead to injuries, and those are limited mobility of hips and thoracic spine,” he said. “Good mobility here is essential to not only prevent

injuries but also to increase club head speed and power into the ball at impact.”

Without diligence in exercises and constant upkeep of mobility, it is a challenge to maintain the level needed for an unencumbered swing. That’s especially true considering the day-to-day position many work in — seated, with the shoulders forward and the hips in a chair position. Both of these do not promote the mobility desired for effective swing mechanics.

George Anderson, DPT, of La Grande says:

“What I see with some recreational golfers is their sedentary-job-related postures lead to tightness of all regions of the shoulders, spine and hips. Inflexibility will adversely affect a golfer’s back swing and swing speed. If not addressed through proper conditioning (this) can lead to an overuse injury.”

How does one go about preparing oneself for the golf swing? Simple exercises which work on flexibility, core stability, and rotational strength are all important.

Kirchoff says, “If you watch some of the top golfers of the PGA tour, their drives look effortless, and that is a result of sequenced hip and thoracic spine mobility.”

This can be achieved with a well-thought-out

and executed regimen of exercises.

In order to know what the right exercises are, seek out a specialist to help. To start, Kirchoff recommends the Titleist Performance Institute webpage as an excellent resource to explore. This is a database of golf-related exercises lead by leaders in the game. Although this is a great way to start, it is important to remember that instruction and demonstration are crucial to help make sure proper form is used.

A person-to-person lesson on exercises is the best approach. A specialist can assess what areas are immobile and need the most work. This person can assist in demonstration, talk a person through the exercises, and ensure that they are being done correctly.

There are many, many people who can offer such a service in Central Oregon.

Once these exercises have been mastered, the golfer will find new potential in their game, they will avoid injury, and find themselves playing more often. All with a few sessions a week performing specific, targeted exercises.



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Pamela Underwood assists Kaitlynn Davenport, 8, sewing a patchwork beanbag while young assistant Grace Finch, 10, looks on.

### QUILT SHOW: Education is an important component

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Artists, crafters, and quilters from around the world donated hundreds of hand-crafted fabric postcards for sale and auction during quilt week and during the quilt show.

Sally Rogers from Eagle Crest was on hand volunteering for the Wish Upon a Card project. She has been volunteering for the quilt show for 15 years. Rogers also had quilts on display, including

one inspired by a Jean Wells’ pattern, “Log Cabin With an Amish Twist.”

“I love seeing what people put together using different patterns and colors,” Rogers said.

SOQS continued on Sunday, sponsored by FivePine Lodge & Conference Center. FreeSpirit Fabric presented guest speaker Kathy Doughty with a self-guided tour of her quilts.

Each year hundreds of volunteers and businesses pitch in to help in any way they can before, during, and after the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show, and each year the show continues to evolve and grow.

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