

Find Another Gear

Learn the key exercises that LPGA Futures Tour Player Melissa (Mo) Martin utilizes in her pre-season, and how she is making her move into the top 10 in 2011.

By Daniel Farley and LPGA Futures Tour Professional Melissa Martin

For the past twelve weeks, Melissa incorporated a rigorous strength and conditioning program designed by Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) Certified Golf Fitness Instructor Daniel Farley, C.S.C.S. Melissa's program consists of a series of golf-specific exercises to ready herself for the Futures Tour, which began in March. Strength coach, Daniel Farley, switches up her program every two weeks, which keeps the body guessing and heart rate pumping. The use of kettle bells, battle ropes, medicine balls and plyometric drills are incorporated into a "strength overload" modality to help her reach optimum performance.

Exercise 1: Spider Plank

Muscles Worked: Core and Shoulder Complex

Start the exercise in the push-up position, drawing in belly button toward the spine. While in the 4-point stance, pick up the right arm and touch right hip. Place the hand down back in position and repeat the drill with left hand. Next, extend right arm (with thumbs-up) directly in front of you, keeping the arm straight. Repeat with your left arm. Continue this drill for four complete rotations.

The Direct Golf Benefit: With core stabilization being a major factor in golf, shoulder flexibility is incorporated into this drill to maximize efficiency. The ability to maintain the 4-point plank position and move the arms freely creates a rock solid base of support and function for your golf swing.



Exercise 2: Foam Roller Push-Up

Muscles Worked: Chest, Triceps, Shoulder Complex and Core

Start the exercise in the push-up position with both hands on two foam rollers shoulder width apart, drawing in the belly button toward the spine. Initiate the push-up sequence, only allowing the elbows to reach a 90-degree angle. Complete four reps, then elevate right leg eight inches off the floor for four more reps. Repeat the drill with left leg. Complete the exercise for a total of twelve repetitions. (To increase the difficulty level, extend legs on an exercise ball or TRX suspension system.)

The Direct Golf Benefit: Foam rollers add additional stability to the exercise. Increased demands on the core and wrist stability are the result. The shoulders act as stabilizers, while the chest and triceps are able to properly fire in sequence for the golf swing.



Exercise 3: Wood Chop using the Adjustable-Pulley

Muscles Worked: Back, Spinal Rotators and Core



Place left knee down on pad and right knee up in a 90-degree position. (Use pad or folded towel as a knee cushion.) Reach up and grab the tricep rope or dual strap. Begin the exercise with the adjustable pulley machine set to the highest position. With right arm, completely extended upward, and right knee stabilized, pull the rope down

just past right knee and pause. Slowly return to the top position and repeat. Switch knees and repeat the exercise. As an added shoulder/core exercise, lower the pulley machine to its lowest set point and repeat the drill. (The rope should end up just above the shoulder.) Keep posture upright and stomach drawn in throughout the exercise. Aim for 10-12 repetitions.

The Direct Golf Benefit: The ability to independently rotate the torso from the pelvis is paramount during the swing sequence. The Wood Chop exercise focuses on the golfer's ability to maintain a quiet and stable lower body, while the upper body is allowed to turn and fire, much like the transition period during the down swing.

Exercise 5: Plank Matrix

Muscles Worked: Core Stabilizers, Shoulder Complex and Hip Complex

You will need a stopwatch for this drill. Begin in the plank position, elbows on the ground with forearms flat. Transition from one drill to the next by switching from plank to push-up position. (During the transition periods, the knees never touch the ground.)

Plank for 15 seconds, keeping abdominals drawn in. Alternating Knee Cross for 15 seconds. Rotate the knees from side-to-side, keeping shoulders square. Plank position for another 15 seconds.



Daniel Farley, CSCS, TPI-CGFI is a trainer for PGA, LPGA Futures, European Tour players and top ranked SCGA amateurs, and the founder of Focal Point Fitness, Inc. He is also the author of "Building the Tower of Strength". For more information visit www.focalpointfit.com.

Exercise 4: Hip Drive w/single leg jump

Muscles Worked: Hip Complex

Stand just in front of a 12-17 inch step bench. Place left foot in the middle of the step. Push off left leg and drive right knee toward chest. This will add height to the left leg as it separates from the step platform. Land softly on the left leg. Aim for 10-12 repetitions, then repeat the drill with the right leg.

The Direct Golf Benefit: Individual leg strength and power, especially the hip complex, is vital for the sequences of the golf swing. This explosive hip drive sequence allows the lower body to fire on all cylinders needed to drive the ball farther.

