

Off Season Golf Training: Phase One Regeneration

The first phase in an off season golf conditioning program is the regeneration phase. The second phase is the strength and power phase and the third phase is the preparation phase. Today we are going to focus on phase one recommendations. This first phase will focus on getting your body ready for the more intense workouts to come but more importantly it is the time to recover from any nagging injuries or aches and pains from the season. This phase should also be used if you have never exercised or are just starting up again after a long lay off. During the season you probably spent more time actually on the golf course or driving range than you did working out. The most common injury for golfers is low back pain but many golfers also will experience hip, shoulder, knee, elbow, or wrist pain. The golf swing puts a lot of stress on the low back due to the high rotational forces. During this training period we will avoid any rotational exercises to allow your spine time to recover. If you have been exercising regularly during the season and you do not have any injuries you could skip this phase but I would still recommend doing two weeks of this phase. If you live in an area where you can golf year around it would be extremely beneficial to take 2-3 weeks off from the course and perform this phase. One 2-3 week session every six months should make a huge difference in your injury risk and overall performance. Now lets get into the details of phase one. The first component is the warm-up. This is essential and should not be skipped. Proper warm-up increases the temperature of the tissue which makes it more resistant to stress and less likely to fail or be injured. A good warm-up also will improve your flexibility and mobility. The warm-up should target all the major muscle groups and put your joints through a variety of movements. Examples are walking lunge, inchworm, overhead squat, forward and backward bear crawl, and side lunge with overhead raise. The next component would be foam roll techniques. This is great for releasing stubborn trigger points and tight muscles. Main areas to focus on are the glutes, quads, hamstrings, back, and lats. When you hit a sore area try to stay on it for about 30 seconds with small oscillatory movements. Also perform self mobilization on the thoracic spine by lying on the roll about shoulder blade level. Cross your arms in front of you to keep your shoulder blades clear and roll up and down your spine. Good thoracic mobility will decrease your risk of low back injury and increase your swing arc. You also want to work on hip mobility which is addressed partly in the warm up. In standing tighten your stomach, place your hands on your hips and rotate back and forth in a slow controlled fashion. There should not be any twisting in your low back. The motion should occur through your hip joints. Now we want to begin some strength exercises. Never do an exercise that causes you pain. Start with about 3 sets of 10-15 repetitions. You have some flexibility here on the exercises you do. I recommend a circuit of several exercises that focus on the big muscle groups. An example would be alternating a set of push-ups with a set of pull-ups or bent over rows. You also need a good leg exercise such as a dumbbell squat with overhead press, split squat or a one leg bench squat. No seated leg extensions or curls. A couple core exercises like the bird dog, side plank, and prone plank will round things off nicely. Finish your workout with flexibility exercises. Main areas to target are the chest, hamstrings, glutes, lats, and posterior shoulder. Hold the stretches about 30 seconds. A good chest stretch is placing your hands about shoulder height in a door way and lean into the door way. You should be able to get this routine finished in about thirty minutes. Try to get in two to three workouts a week for at least two to three weeks. Feel free to incorporate some supplemental exercises like curls, crunches, lat pulls, etc as you wish but make sure you get the main exercises done first.

About the Author

Rob Siclair is a Physical Therapist with a degree in Movement & Sports Science. He recently released Ultimate Performance for Golf as the first in a series of sports training videos for all skill levels. For more information go to <http://www.ultimateperformanceonline.com>

Source: <http://articlesongolf.com>