

# AUTOMATIC GOLF

M A G A Z I N E

Edition #4 - March 2013



**FEATURE:**

**The Path To Golfing Success...**

**How To Snap Out Of Your Golf Slump**

**BONUS:**

**World's Best Golf Exercise Revealed**

# Golfing Success

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*Cameron Strachan has written 500 + articles on the golf improvement process - check out [Golfgooroo.com](http://Golfgooroo.com) for more*

In this edition I'm going to go a little deeper into the process of success. This is a subject I've been fascinated with since I took my first golf lesson. That lesson was one of the best and worst things that has happened in my golfing career.

It was the worst because that one single lesson destroyed my game. I developed a slice and lost my confidence all in around 45 minutes. Basically, I had my flair, confidence and enthusiasm tarnished.

It was also one of the best things because I was forced to learn how to play better golf. Learn to learn if you will. It took me years to work out how to play golf well when it mattered. While I was always able to have some success on the practice fairway, and even in smaller events - I was typically hopeless when things truly mattered.

I'd get nervous and make lots of mistakes. I was self-sabotaging and it got mighty frustrating.

One minute you can be flying, hitting the ball sweetly and accurately and the next, have no idea how to take the club away from the ball. A good shot (not even a great one) can seem all but impossible.

When I started working things out, I was able to play better under pressure and even managed to win some events around town. My greatest achievement in golf has been to play to my potential - to play golf to a level I'm truly satisfied with.

I'm going to share a story that helps highlight the true path of success (it's hardly ever what you think). It's a little different, mixing business, life and success. Many might not like it because it gets to the heart of reaching your goals and is far removed from some sort of standard golf quick fix.

## The real path to success (not just golf)

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Rick runs a multi-million dollar business. And he has done it without any formal business training or education. In fact, Rick has defied the odds, and created an amazing business selling random, strange and ancient fitness training tools. He has a throng of raving fans and has become a leader in his niche.

Rick is one of my heroes. I love people that follow their passion and who are not afraid to walk their own path. His story is also a useful one for any golfer looking to step up their performance and unlocking that better game that they know exists inside.

Rick wasn't always successful. In the early days there was a lot of self-doubt and the temptation was there to stay a personal trainer and eke out an honest living training people morning and night. But something burned inside Rick - he wasn't happy doing what everyone else was doing - and he knew there were better and more effective ways of getting people fit.



*Rick - a fitness pioneer and all round good guy*

So while the typical personal trainer was out socialising or watching TV, Rick spent many months surfing the web, reading books and chatting to people outside his industry (and he still does).

Sidenote: sometimes you need to look outside the normal places to find the answers you want. Doing what everyone else does typically leads to mediocrity.

He knew the answers had to be somewhere, it was just a matter of finding them.

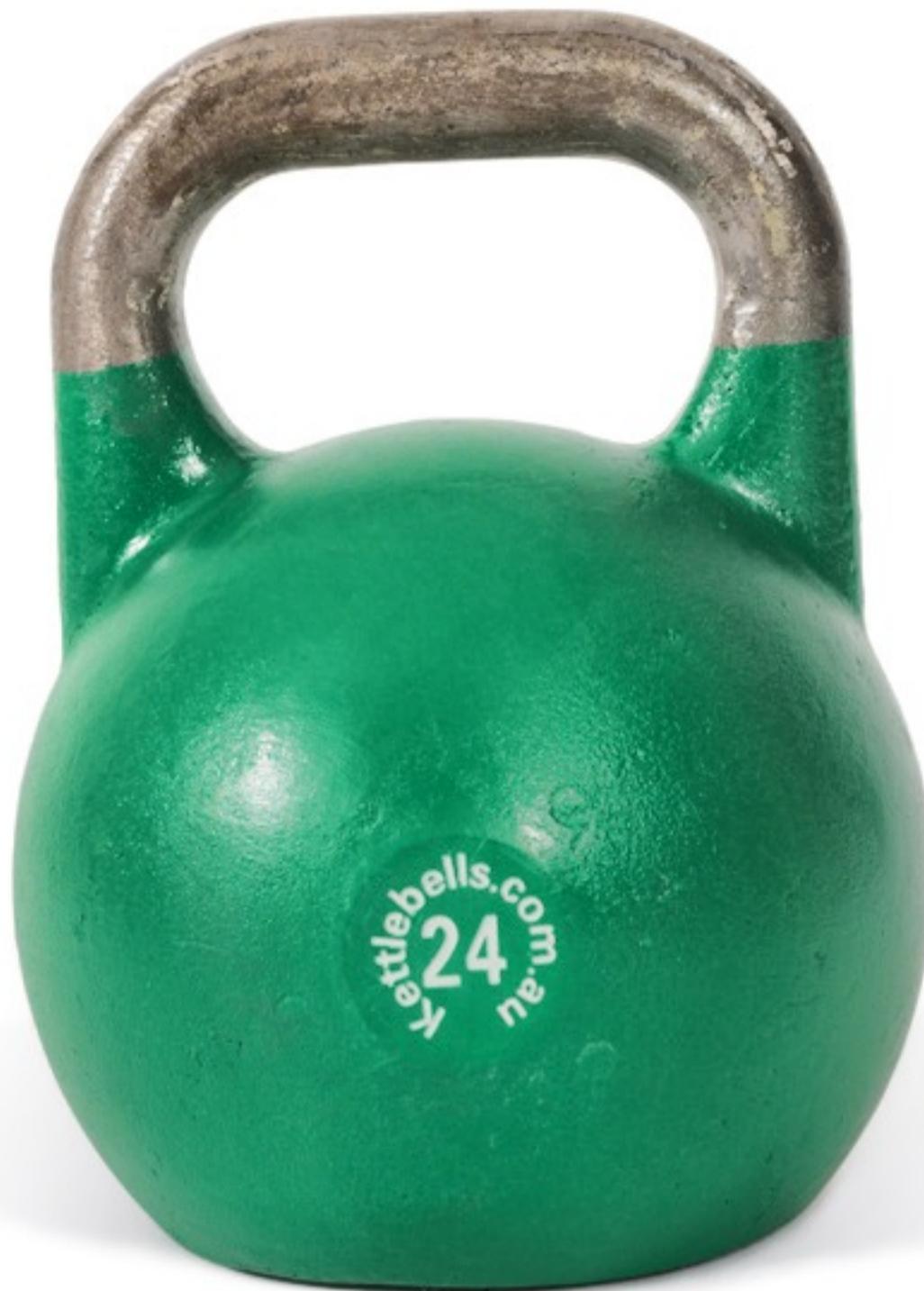
One night he stumbled across an overseas fitness forum and there was talk of a thing called a "kettlebell". A kb is a strange looking tool, a bit like a cannonball with a handle atop. This weird looking thing has a story all of its own - it originated in Russia and was used as a counter weight for grain. When the Russian farmers got sick and tired of lugging heavy grain bags around, they'd pick up these kettlebells and swing them around - before long, the farmers were having contests on who was stronger and who could do the most repetitions.

These pioneering farmers soon learned they were fitter and stronger than all of their other friends who weren't handling the bells. They had developed extra strength without putting on weight - a huge advantage in wrestling and boxing contests which were the order of the day in nineteenth century Russia.

Now you might be thinking that this article should be about golf fitness. It's not, but kettlebells do offer golfers genuine fitness benefits unlike most other training methods. (there's a bonus section in the back)

Rick was fascinated by kettlebells and wanted more. His searching took a more focussed approach as he looked deeper - learning everything he could about this hand-held gym. He went the extra mile, even tracking down a local Russian man who had grown up with them. Rick's next step was to order some from the only place that sold them in the western world - it was a new website based out of the USA. And because kettlebells are heavy (the starting weight for a man is usually 16kg) the postage was ridiculous. Rick's first tribe of kettlebells cost him over \$2000 - this was an extraordinary amount of money for a young personal trainer.

But he wasn't going to let a money get in his way of learning more and becoming the best fitness person he could be. Where many would see this as a hurdle, Rick took a leap of faith and trusted his gut.



*The amazing kettlebell. It's essentially a hand-held gym, allowing you to perform a multiple of exercises with a full range of fitness benefits. The workouts are usually short and sharp - giving you a lean, strong and athletic tone.*

*And yep, it will work for golfers too. Check out the last page for a sample exercise - maybe the best exercise of all.*

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Rick went into KB training with vigour. He and his Russian friend would train 4 times a week - along the way, Rick picked up all sorts of handy tips and techniques for better training. He also got into incredible shape - despite a light build, he was able to out train, out lift or out perform older and bigger athletes. Word spread and before long, others around town wanted a piece of the kettlebell action.

Once again Rick wasn't scared to step up to the plate. He traveled to a metal foundry and learned he needed to get a mould made before any work could be done. Where does one get a mould for a kettlebell? He let his fingers do the walking and tracked down a random woodworker who thought he could do the job. Mr Random did a great job and Australia's first kettlebell mould was born.

Now you'd think it would have been plain sailing from here. It wasn't. The kettlebells were prohibitively expensive - around \$250 each. Also, despite Rick talking about them on other forums and websites, almost nobody in the fitness world had heard of them. To be honest, there would be a band of PTs today that haven't heard of them.

So Rick changed gears and built a website. I can speak from experience here, when you don't know one end of a computer from the other, websites and all the garbage that goes with them are daunting. But Rick was on a mission and determined to follow his dream. With a website built, he started getting more interested people finding him and placing orders. Over time, he traveled to rural China (another daunting experience), to find a metal foundry there that would be able to make his brand of kettlebell for a much lower price.

But still Rick wasn't safe. By now he was thousands of dollars in debt, his parents worried, he was told to give up on his dream. At the lowest point, his older brother was summoned from the UK to talk some sense to him. Rick was undeterred. He had the fire burning and wouldn't let anything get in his way.

It's this dedication to his cause that I find so admirable. A few years after Rick was established I became his first full-time employee. We worked hard and had a tonne of fun along the way. It is almost indescribable to explain the excitement when you're part of something like that - when business is flying it's a wonderful thing. When I left (to pursue my own thing) the business was selling a whole range of high performance and innovative training products.

So what has all this got to do with golf? Everything. Rick's story is no different from how we should approach our golf game.

The improvement process is not an event - it's more of a process and there's no hurrying it. Rushing, the equivalent of a quick-fix, is destined for failure. But the lure of instant gratification is too much for some.

Take Reed. He was a one-time kettlebell customer turned competitor. He saw Rick's success and thought he could emulate - he was smarter (he had a degree of some sort - or so he told us), was fitter (was a champion martial artist) and was a little bit older (he had been around the block a few times).

But he didn't make a scratch on the market. And this is despite having access to the same products and marketing tools we had. Reed's real mistake was thinking he'd be able to use his brain over all else. He couldn't and paid the penalty for a lack of passion - he wasn't doing it for the right reasons - he was after a quick-fix and a way to make a fast buck. Along the way we saw a lot of Reed types - greedy, lazy and pretty stupid. They all failed.

(Check this article about a golfer I feel is playing golf for the wrong reason)

Rick never flinched once. He kept trucking despite competitors stealing product ideas and even marketing material. He was confident in himself to not panic and stay true in what he really believed in.

He could have sold Pilates machines, supplements and treadmills but didn't like them. He only sold the stuff he wanted and believed in - despite the millions more he could have made.

And his clients love him for it. Everywhere we went people would want to speak to Rick, shake his hand or pat him on the back. Rick hated the attention, but he became a celebrity in his field. I always laughed when he'd get mobbed at fitness events but people couldn't get enough of the guy who stood tall and did what he believed in.

Rick's funny little tools came along at just the right time and maybe he was a little lucky, but for me, his true success resides in the fact he wasn't in a hurry and showed the patience of a saint. He hung tough when many others would have quit.

I think we tend to give up too quickly and stop following our gut. We're too quick to listen to others and all the negativity that comes our way.

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Golf is life. And a lot like business. When I was thinking about Rick's story there's a definite relationship to my golfing story.

- I had a passion to be the best player I could be.
- I struggled. Badly.
- I tried all sorts of things to get better. Failed at most.
- But I hung in there, determined that I'd eventually find the way.
- Little by little, through constant study, practice and research, my game took shape.

And then, one day, I realised I could play the game. And I'm not saying I played like some sort of superstar, far from it. But I eventually realised that I was able to play the game in a way that satisfied me and matched my potential. I got as much out as I put in. For me, the success is not always obvious to all others, but the feeling of inner achievement is hard to beat.

There was no magical event. It was a process, a patient process that took years to get right.

And the pineapple farmer near my house understands the same thing that Rick and I do. Success is not a quick fix. The sweetest, tastiest and biggest pineapples take all year grow. There are no shortcuts. But with love and constant attention, he is able to yield the most amazing pineapples I've ever tasted. And then he repeats - he goes back to work with a dedication and focus that can't be broken.

Successful people all over are like this. But when it comes to golf, many approach it like Reed. Get greedy and really aren't playing golf for the right reasons. They get distracted and will jump from tip to tip or rush out and buy the latest driver. They lack real trust in their game and don't yet understand that the skill, talent and potential for improved performance lies inside them. They don't need to keep searching. The answers lie within and usually it's a matter of learning to stop getting in your own way - to play golf how you really want.

I know many golfers aren't going to like hearing this. That they'd rather hit the next website and find the latest quick-tip or swing theory. They believe that success is just around the corner and they're only one, lesson, new club or DVD from playing their best golf. But they'll fail, like the millions of other golfers that follow the same approach.

So this message isn't for everyone. Only for those who are convinced there's more to golf than just your swing or a good score.

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If Rick's story resonates with you. If you think there's more to golf than just swing technique, your handicap and shooting lower scores then I encourage you to be brave and follow your own path. Stand up and play golf in a way that excites you;

- grip the club in a way that feels good to you
- hit the ball how you want (not the way the pro tells you to)
- don't be scared to explore and try something new
- forget about your swing plane and smash the ball instead
- stop worrying about embarrassing yourself or caring what others think
- practice in a way that you find fun
- ignore your handicap and play the game
- turn up and hit the ball like you know you can't fail

I'll finish off an email I received. It came from a regular reader who updated me about his progress and young son. It highlights what I've been talking about here and what can happen when we play with passion, flair and enthusiasm.

When I don't play at the club I try to take my 4 y.o son to the Par 3 course or the range to hit a few balls.

He is really starting to play well now and it is exciting to see it is all his own doing. I am actually learning things from watching him play. He plays totally without consciousness or awareness. I think because of this he has no negative emotions after a poor shot. He simply walks to the ball and hits his next shot. If it is a good one he gets excited over it, but a poor one is just accepted. I have never seen him once in nearly two years show one sign of anger or negativity after hitting a bad shot.

The challenge for me is to keep him in that blissfully ignorant state as he gets older. Last time we played he parred 4 of the first 10 holes but is totally without a clue on scoring. The holes range in distance from 40m – 90m so are ideal for a pipsqueak.

Wouldn't you like to play this way? Wouldn't it be great to hit that ball and not be concerned about score or par? I think too many of us have forgotten why we play the game - we get carried away with all the little things and as a result miss out on the true enjoyment. Sad, because it really can be a tonne of fun.

Good golfing,

Cameron

# Instruction: 3 Ways To Unlock Your Golfing Potential

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Unlock your potential



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Sack your coach



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Fun



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Carefree

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# Unlock your hidden potential

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Golf can be a nasty sport.

We can get bogged down with how poorly we are playing. We get worried about what we're doing wrong. There's also panic about what others are thinking and the feeling of embarrassment can hit hard.

This is not a good time and golf can feel like the worst sport in the world. Working seems like a better option when you're game is down in the dumps. Never a good thing.

I once received an email from a reader who was so frustrated with his game he was contemplating switching sides. Yep, he was going to go from a right-handed player to a lefty. A pretty radical move...

I know how he feels. I've been there. About 10 years ago I contemplated switching to playing right handed. I became so frustrated with my coach that I seriously started hitting balls from the other side of the ball. But luckily common-sense prevailed and not long after I found a true path to golfing happiness.

Here's the process I used to get my confidence back and find a game I'm now **NOT** going to change in a hurry.

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**Sacked my coach:** I had become bored with coaching and felt it wasn't leading anywhere. At the time, every young player had a coach and would take weekly lessons. But things had started to sit a little awkwardly with me.

He was trying to get me to do things that I simply couldn't do. I spent hours trying to conform but I wasn't able to. Each lesson was a drain of time and energy. It became a stalemate. I couldn't do what he wanted and he didn't (or couldn't) change his teaching model.

When I stopped bogging myself down with his inflexible rules I was able to reignite my natural game. It was almost like I gave myself permission to play the game - instead of playing "golf swing". Success didn't happen straight away but bit by bit I started feeling better about my game. Next came the confidence and after that the fun and success flowed.

Controversial bit: When I told my coach that I had had enough of his coaching ideas, that I hadn't improved and I was struggling to do what he wanted, he made a startling admission. He told me that what he was teaching me was unlikely to have a major impact on my game anyway. That at the very most I would improve only a fraction of a stroke a round. What a waste of 18 months!

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**Played for fun:** This was an important step. For the first time in a long time I realised that trying so hard and attempting to be perfect was not the right thing to do. This was a time when I let go and played golf like I was a young kid.

I stopped playing competition rounds and I left the practice fairway alone. The golf course became my friend. I played golf and attempted to hit the shots that most interested me. If I wanted to smash a 3 wood from the tee that is what I did. If I decided to swing super smoothly that was fine too. I removed the straitjacket and unlocked my inner flair and enjoyment.

Another way of saying this: I started playing golf like I knew I couldn't fail. I stopped worrying/stressing/panicking about doing something wrong. I simply played the game in a way that satisfied me.

And I had all sorts of success with it. I freed up. I hit the ball longer (gained a lot of yards) and hit the ball more consistently than I thought would be possible.

**I played all rounds with this carefree attitude:** And when I was ready, I took this same game to competition and realised that a reliable game was with me all along. I just needed to let it loose.

It didn't matter if I was playing a social round or a competition game – I played with freedom and flair. I didn't allow myself to get bogged down with technique, rules and self-doubt.

This was the first time I realised that to play great golf I needed a carefree attitude. In the past, important rounds meant I would tighten up, try too hard and get in my own way. The realisation that remarkable golf was possible by trying less and mimicking less important rounds was a big one. At this point golf became a totally new sport for me.

It became fun. Gave me greater enjoyment and I started learning and growing with each game I played. Scored better too.

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This all might sound a bit airy fairy because this mindset is a departure from traditional golf instruction. For me it was profound. By learning to get out of my own way and swing the club naturally and instinctively helped reignite my passion for the game.

The other good news is that the above steps require little skill or talent. The most important ingredient is an open mind and a level of discipline. Mixed with commitment I believe you can unlock that A-game of yours – no matter how much of a rut you think you're in, there's always a way out.

Go for it – what have you got to lose?

# Bonus: Kettlebell Magic

I thought it would be a good idea to give you some more info on kettlebells. Some fitness experts believe they are almost the perfect tool for fitness;

- you get a cardio, strength and flexibility workout all at once. So the workouts are really short, no need to spend hours at the gym.
- you target the larger stabilising muscles of the back, core and legs, often neglected by traditional exercises.
- gives you a serious workout and can help you lose weight (I really need to get back into them)
- you get stronger without adding unnecessary muscle bulk. You look lean and strong, like a real athlete, not some meathead.
- Ideal for golf. Helps with flexibility of the hips, amazing strength in the forearms and will give you a shoulder workout you're unlikely to forget

A disclaimer: I'm not a fitness professional - far from it. I worked as the marketing man for Rick's kettlebell business and I saw first hand how good these things are. When I was a good boy and working out, I managed to lose around 12 kilograms really quickly.

I also got to work closely with some of the world's best kettlebell practitioners, these guys and girls were incredible - their strength, endurance and power something to behold.

But please be careful. Don't jump in and be careless. Seek medical advice prior to any exercise and be sure to get proper supervision - these things are heavy!

# One amazing exercise

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## Kettlebell Swing

The swing is an all-round exercise that will target almost all of the main muscle groups. It is ideal for golfers because it targets the major core muscles, while also giving your arms and shoulders serious attention.

A few minutes of kettlebell swinging will give you a complete workout and have you ready to take on the golf course. Some sports scientists and exercise experts believe the kettlebell swing could be one of the most beneficial exercises you can do.



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The kettlebell swings back between your legs while you keep your back straight and eyes forward. From here you drive the kettlebell forward by thrusting your hips and mid section.

While this is a smooth action, you'll be firing all sorts of muscles you never thought you had. Your body is working how it is supposed to, and this exercise may help balance any misalignment problems you may have.



# The kettlebell swing

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You swing the kettlebell up to eye level and then return it back towards the ground.

It's a dynamic action, you really don't get a rest and this will get your heart pumping. Kettlebell training's biggest benefit is you are also training for strength and endurance simultaneously. Workouts can be short, but devastatingly effective.

The other benefit for golfers is your grip gets a serious workout. Just holding onto the bell for the duration of each exercise will test and strengthen your grip to the limit.

Repeat on both arms.



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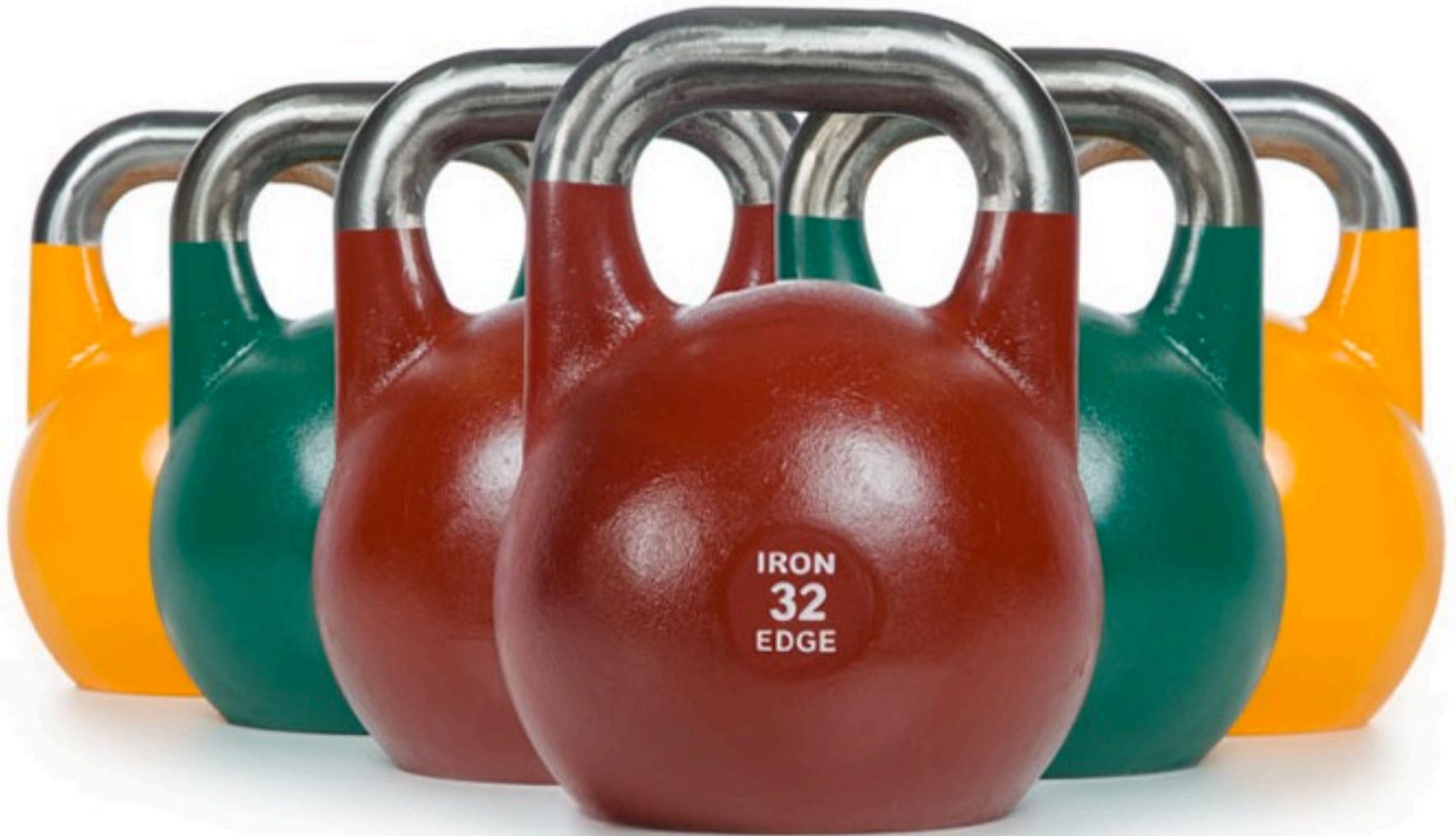
Kettlebells offer a world of options. There are literally thousands of exercises that can be tailored to all sorts of people of any age. A popular variation is adding a second bell. If you're fit and strong and looking for something more, add another bell and that should keep you out of trouble.

When you think you've mastered a kettlebell exercise you can always upgrade to something heavier. Kettlebells start at 4kg and go right up to 80kgs!



# The Kettlebell

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If you're looking for a different kind of exercise, then kettlebells may be for you. If you're in Australia check out the link below for Australia's best kettlebell company. If you're not in Oz, then try a Google search.

Please note: I'm not affiliated to any fitness company and this information comes from my personal experience. Make sure to start any fitness program with caution and care.

[\*\*Learn More\*\*](#)

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# Resources

Thanks for stopping by and reading this edition of Automatic Golf Magazine. If you like what you've read be sure to subscribe so you don't miss any editions. If you get a second, please leave a review of the mag in the App store. Please see extra links and resources below



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Kettlebells something you may be interested in? Check out Rick's site [over here](#).



Come and see me for a private golf lesson. I'm now offering private coaching for those golfers looking to master their golf game - [click here](#)



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