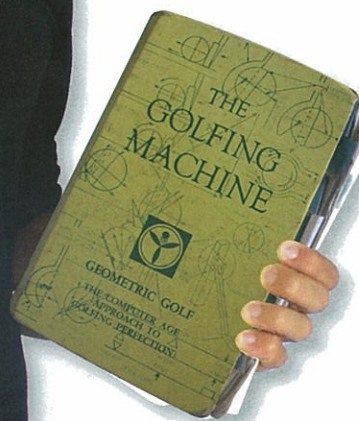




# Justin Tang: Bringing “The Golfing Machine” to Singapore



**T**he Golfing Machine” (TGM) textbook has been used worldwide since 1969 for teaching the game of golf. Created by Homer Kelley, The Golfing Machine golf instruction system gained a devoted following which has continued to grow for over 35 years. Homer’s vision was to create an Authorized Instructor network, so instructors could share the knowledge contained in his book and ensure its proper instruction for golfers worldwide. Up to his death in 1983, Homer worked diligently to realize that vision.

Today, The Golfing Machine is under new ownership and Homer’s work continues through The Golfing Machine, LLC owner, Joe Daniels. Joe and his staff are dedicated to the mission of upholding Homer Kelley’s legacy by creating the premier instructional program for Professional Golf Instructors worldwide.

In Singapore, Justin Tang continues Homer Kelly’s golf instruction philosophy at Fairway of Palm Resort’s driving range. Where2Golf managed to meet him in between his hectic daily schedule to discuss “The Golfing Machine” methods of instruction and gain some insights about how Justin himself drastically improved his golf by following Homer’s teachings and through formal training based on “The Golf Machine” curriculum.

**Where2Golf: How old were you when you took up golf? How old were you when you started to take golf seriously?**

Tang: I was actually forced into golf when I was nine years old with golf lessons every Sunday at 3pm. As a kid, I could think of many other more interesting things to do than hang around a driving range like swimming, computer games or just hang out with my friends. By the time I was 12, I hated golf. Then around 1997 after seeing Tiger Woods win the US Masters, I realised that golf was not just old dudes whacking balls around a course. And when Ernie Els won the US Open of the same year, something struck me. I thought that even though golf was not as cool as football, it seemed to be useful for business in future. From June 1997 to February 1998, I was at a driving range every night hitting 300 balls each session. Though I was not practicing the best way possible, I became acquainted with my physical abilities though consistency was really lacking.

**Where2Golf: What attracted you to Homer Kelly’s theories about the golf swing?**

Tang: After I obtained a 14 handicap, I did not seem to get better from 1998 through 2005—seven years of inconsistent scores! I am a scientifically minded person; I like to know how things work. After reading a lot of instructional articles and buying some instructional videos, I was still confused as there was contradictory advice given by the so-called experts of the golf swing. By 2004, I came close to giving up golf (again) as I was playing so erratically and not lowering my handicap at all.



**Where2Golf: What specific incident happened to keep you interested in golf?**

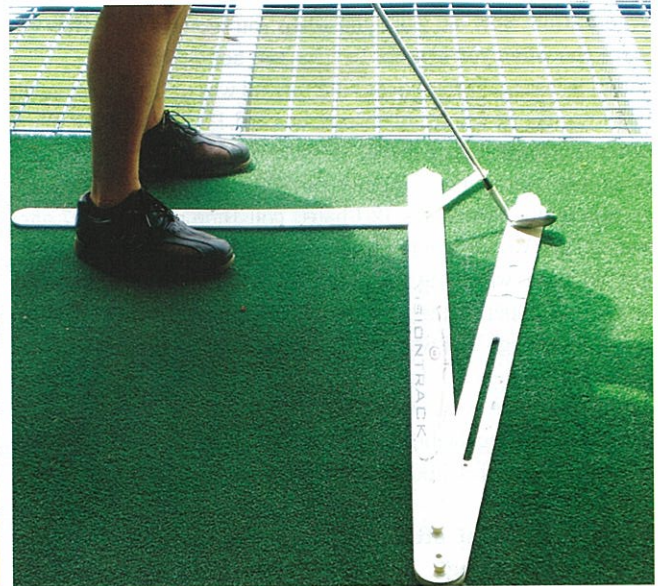
Tang: After seeing an advertisement in a golf magazine selling a video and accompanying book guaranteeing 50 yards added distance, I thought I would give it a try. If it did not help me, I would give up golf permanently. Surprisingly, every time I did what the video and book told me to do; I saw an immediate improvement to my golf swing in terms of accuracy, consistency and distance. When I applied what I learned to my golfing family members and friends, it worked also because I was treating the cause not just patching-up a symptom.

**Where2Golf: What formal training in TGM methodology have you received?**

Tang: In 2005, I travelled to the US to study under TGM coaches for three months and received official TGM certification. What I learned was how to use TGM book effectively; and how to pass on that information clearly to students. I first started teaching at Keppel Club and Sembawang CC, and eventually ended up at Fairway Club’s driving range.

**Where2Golf: What is your current handicap?**

Tang: I play with a USGA handicap of five, but I spend much more time teaching at the driving range than playing on a golf course. My journey to obtaining a single-digit handicap was a personal need to know—not to become a touring professional golfer. Nowadays, I enjoy helping struggling golfers by teaching TGM methods and seeing them improve.



**Where2Golf: What are some of the common misperceptions about the golf swing?**

Tang: One common misunderstanding concerns the 'swing plane' which is actually a relationship between the club and the shoulders. This can be seen visually if one thinks of a clock with the base line the bottom edge of the clock. At any point in time, the end of the club will be pointing at this base line until the shaft is parallel to the plane line. There are also plane angle variations based on whether a golfer has a more upright or flatter swing, but the club must follow the plane line within tight margins for optimum effectiveness.

Another misunderstood term is 'lag' which is simply the clubhead trailing the hands and does not stay straight with outstretched arms. Many golfers try to over-power the club which leads to many problems, especially on the downswing. Over-the-top moves, casting, shanking, slicing usually are a direct result of 'steering' or trying to manipulate the clubhead using only arms and hands without maintain enough lag for true power at impact.

**Where2Golf: The Golfing Machine has been criticised as over-complicating what is basically an intuitive and simple movement. Why should a golfer try to be so technical and specific learning a proper golf swing?**

Tang: What a golfer thinks he or she is doing is rarely what is actually occurring—this is one of Homer's best insights of the golf swing. Videos and mirrors can only aid a beginning golfer so much as the correct movements must eventually become ingrained in the muscles and the mind. That's why The Golf Machine emphasises technique first, then feel later. The proper golf swing will never feel right for beginning golfers as it is a very uncommon movement. Only after a golfer is confident that his or her swing is following the correct plane will he or she be able to swing a golf club without effort and with full extension of the arms by feel alone. We talk about 'learning by association' and the 'principle of exaggeration' to instill a proper idea of the golf swing in our students because old habits will often re-appear whenever a golfer is under pressure.

## "The Golfing Machine" – 7th Edition

Building on the previous editions to provide a greater understanding of the geometry and physics behind the golf stroke and hailed as "The Player's Handbook" and "The Instructor's Textbook", "The Golfing Machine" or the "little yellow book" as it has affectionately become known, has had a profound impact on the world of golf. This book can support "My Way" procedures but not "The Way" theory first published in 1969, the book – releases in its 7th edition – has been embraced by thousands of players and professional golf instructors worldwide as the most detailed book on the golf stroke.

As new golf instruction books and breakthrough teaching fads have come and gone, "The Golfing Machine" has maintained its premier status as the most widely used textbook on golf instruction in the world. Its main idea is to "Learn feel from mechanics rather than mechanics from feel".

"The Golfing Machine" offers a unique approach to the golf learning process. Homer Kelley lays out the facts, then the supporting information to apply the facts, followed by a pathway to incorporate them into your way of playing. This state-of-the-art system is now applied by golfers of all ability levels all over the world, from major champions to club champions to common duffers.

The guidance supplied in the book doesn't stop within its pages. Coupled with the network of authorised instructors around the world, "The Golfing Machine" offers something found nowhere else – a support system for continued golf improvement.