

Unique Golf Study - Core Training Improves Driving Distance

Effects of Sling Exercise Training on Maximal Clubhead Velocity in Junior Golfers.

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Abstract

Junior golfers were divided into two groups where one group was training S-E-T while the other group did traditional strength training. The intervention period lasted for 9 weeks. Both S-E-T and control group increased maximal clubhead velocity significantly after 9 week training period. The increase in velocity averaged 1.2% for control group and 3.7% for S-E-T group. The improvements observed in the S-E-T group was significantly greater than observed in the control group ($p < 0.001$). To our knowledge this is the first controlled trial quantifying the impact of a specific core stability training program on golf driving performance, a movement involving segmental summation of velocity. Only the abstract has so far been published.

Purpose: To determine the impact of a Sling Exercise Training (SET) core stability program on maximal club-head velocity in competitive junior golf players. **Methods:** 2 teams of junior golfers (SET 15±2 yr 13 handicap, CON 15.8 yr 6 handicap) performed either 9 wks x 2·wk⁻¹ specific core and rotational stability training (SET, n=10), or standard strength training 2·wk⁻¹ (CON, n=10). Maximal club-head velocity was measured over 10 trials before and after the intervention period using a dedicated velocity measurement system. **Results:** Preliminary within-days learning effects trials showed very stable stroke to stroke velocity (CV 1.6%). Between days (~7 days) reliability for maximal club-head velocity was also excellent ($r = 0.99$, mean diff = 0.1 m·sec⁻¹). Baseline performance was similar in both groups (SET 42.1±4.1 m·s⁻¹, CON 42.7±5.7 m·s⁻¹). However, at post-test SET increased club head velocity 3.8% (95% CI 2.6-4.8%, $p < 0.001$) compared to 1.2% in CON (95% CI 0.0-1.0%, $p = 0.05$). Standing balance in the golf swing position was also measured using a computerized balance platform. However, no significant balance changes were observed in either group. **Conclusions:** A unique functional stability program consisting of progressively unstable, closed kinetic chain exercises for the hips and torso appears to improve rotational power in a highly specific performance task. **The magnitude of the improvement (Effect Size = 0.4) is small but meaningful from a performance standpoint (equivalent to 10-15m increase in drive distance).** This is to our knowledge one of the first studies to demonstrate a transfer of generalized core stability training to a specific performance task.



The improvements observed in the S-E-T group was significantly greater than observed in the control group

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