

Teaching Teachers

Instruction academies make a statement



EXPANDED CONTENT

See page 128 for *PGA Magazine's* Business of Instruction content, additional teaching coverage now being offered in this section each month.

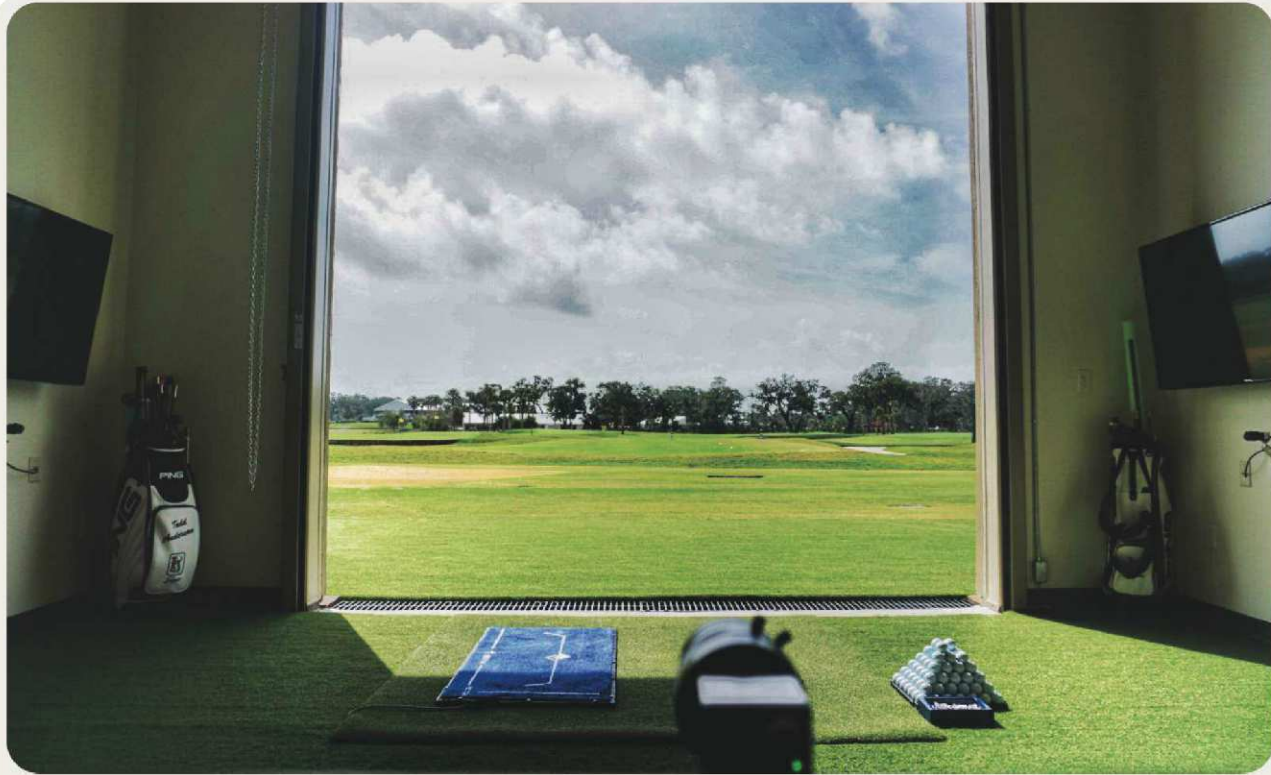


PGA Professional **Todd Anderson**, the 2010 PGA Teacher of the Year, is the PGA Director of Instruction at the PGA TOUR's Performance Center at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

RYAN YOUNG

By **Todd Anderson**, PGA with Don Jozwiak, Senior Editor

As most people in the industry know, dedicated golf academy facilities have been the backbone of my career as a golf instructor, both in my time at Sea Island (Georgia) Resort and now at the PGA TOUR's Performance Center at TPC Sawgrass – which just reopened after an extensive expansion and upgrade of the previous practice facility. I'm a huge supporter and advocate for clubs to incorporate this amenity on property, because they benefit not only the course itself, but also the players who keep it in business. When a golfer's game improves, they want to play more golf.



The benefits of being indoors

I often hear PGA Professionals commenting on indoor facilities' ability to provide a safe and productive environment during inclement weather, which is certainly a huge benefit. But my favorite advantage of an indoor facility is allowing students to slow down, step away and look at the big picture, as opposed to just feeding them one ball after another on the practice tee. Instruction facilities add a layer of control to the process – what information is being dispersed, and how it's being communicated – largely thanks to technology.





TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TECHNOLOGY

When technology is used correctly, it's a very powerful tool. It allows you to gather data, develop a plan, test again and then quantify whether there's improvement. Think of it this way: If you put someone on a diet and said, "We're going to lose 10 pounds over the next two weeks," but you never weighed them over that period, they might feel like they're losing weight—but you don't know for sure. Golf technology is the same. It provides a full report of how a player's body, club and ball are performing. You're able to look at that data holistically to dictate where time should be spent, developing a plan to improve the weaknesses and build upon strengths. It's not meant to confuse people, but rather to create enthusiasm and passion that inspires them to want to keep working on their game.

Creating holistic improvement

At the newly redesigned PGA TOUR Performance Center at TPC Sawgrass, everything we do is designed around each individual person. It's important to take this holistic approach, finding one or two areas where you're able to make the biggest impact to help students improve, and to help them reach their specific goals. By using this strategy, you're almost guaranteed to keep them coming back for more. And taking the added step of establishing a dedicated teaching academy at your facility sends the message that you're serious about instruction, and about helping your golfers play better. ■



RYAN YOUNG