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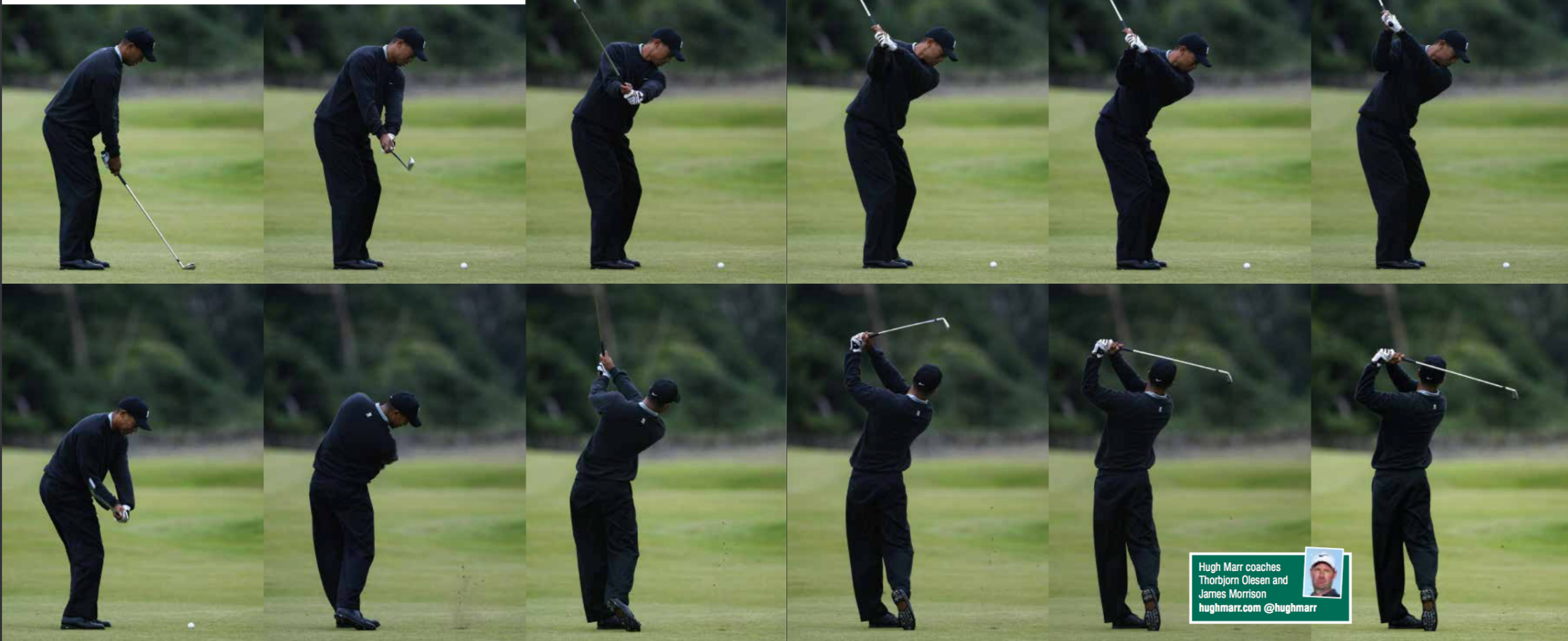
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THEN: 2002

TIGER THEN AND NOW

European Tour coach Hugh Marr looks at the evolution of a swing



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THERE is no getting away from the fact that the way Tiger moves in 2017 is very different to 15 years ago. This comes as no surprise as we're clearly dealing with a very different athlete – 2002 was the year that he won two majors, his

sixth and seventh, and was one of his great spells.

Before we say anything I fully acknowledge that these sequences are shot from different angles and with Tiger using different clubs.

The first thing that strikes me is how much more relaxed his

set-up is. Aged 26 he was more over the ball, bending from the pelvis and with slightly straighter legs. It is all so much softer than the Tiger we see today and, in my eyes, he looks like someone prepared to move.

The most obvious difference between the two swings is how

much more dynamic it was back then in 2002.

As he approaches impact his hips are working left, the chest is behind the ball and there is definitely some stretch and separation between his lower and upper body. This is clearly someone who is moving in a

dynamic fashion and creating speed.

The swing of 2002 has so much more speed and flow about it with the legs, body and arms complementing each other beautifully.

In those days he just stood up and swung it, he had great

lines but the legwork, footwork and the way one segment of the swing reacted to and fed off to the other was just beautiful.

He was hitting it harder than anyone else but, at the time, was still able to find the sweet spot.

I think back to the Canadian Open in 2000 when he hit that

6-iron from a bunker. He was on an unstable surface and had 218 yards to go yet he moved so well that he could still get the club to the back of the ball.

It was the sort of effortless speed and power that can only come from great dynamics and great mechanics. I worry that

he is at risk of losing some of the mystique that he had. This next generation doesn't really understand how spectacular he was. We've lost that sense of awe and wonder about how much better he was than everyone else. Very simply if he was at his best back then he won.



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NOW: 2017



I WAS in Dubai last month and what struck me is how much less dynamic he appears now. At set-up he looks more rigid and doesn't look ready to move in that free-flowing, dynamic manner of years gone by.

He looks like he is moving gingerly, my interpretation of this is that either his swing is being dictated by his physical state or that he is trying to move in a certain way to protect himself. Because his body action is less dynamic the hand and club path are compromised. The

shaft is a little steep because of this less than dynamic action.

Through impact the legs, pelvis and rib cage are all moving at a similar speed. There is much less of that separation and spring in this action and that subsequently affects how he puts the club on the ball.

Through impact the hands appear a bit wrapped around the club: yes it is still Tiger's swing but, to my eye, this appears to be a player trying to place the club on the ball rather than letting impact take care of itself.

To create speed different parts of your body need to be

moving at different speeds at different times. Segment A will stop rapidly which will pass on the speed to segment B, and that will stop rapidly and pass on to segment C and so on and so forth. If you can imagine cracking a whip really loudly and quickly, you have to stop and

recoil the wrist to get the end of the whip cracking. That is what happens in a dynamic, efficient swing and this to me is the biggest difference with 2002.

Watching Tiger he appears to be trying to hit squeeze cuts all the way round so maybe there is a degree of mental scar tissue

compounding the physical issues. Just looking at these images, it is still Tiger's swing. Yes the posture is a bit tight and rigid, but it's a fairly good swing in terms of positions. The whole, though, is less than the sum of the parts. The engine that powers the swing is not moving

dynamically.

Finally, one key indicator is his left foot. If you look at the final three frames it gets increasingly more onto the outside heel. In 2002 that left foot is just planted, it's rock-solid. This is a good sign of less-than-optimal dynamics.