**Editorial – International Journal of Golf Science:**

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Title: Editorial: a call for greater collaboration between the golf industry and academia in 2025 and beyond

**Background:**

The *International Journal of Golf Science* is the official journal of *Golf Science* and the *World Scientific Congress of Golf.* The journalis well-recognised in the golf science community as a source of contemporary and novel information on a variety of topics relating to golf. The aims of the journal are broad, but principally it seeks to publish information that advances the game of golf across multiple disciplines including sport and exercise science, technology, data analytics, economics and business, and agronomy as a limited selection.

The history of the *World Scientific Congress of Golf* extends back to 1990 and a thorough history is available at the journal’s website. However, the journal itself was founded in 2012 and has since published ~130 open-access, peer-reviewed articles. The free to submit, free to publish, and free to read nature of the journal ensures that there are no barriers to entry or to readership and allows the journal to be a truly open space for all aspects of golf science to flourish.

I have recently taken on the role of Editor-in-Chief at the journal and felt it appropriate to introduce myself to readers and contributors to the journal, and also to outline some thoughts on publication and avenues for development going forward. However, at this time, it is warranted, and also important to me on a personal level, that fitting recognition is made to the outstanding leadership of the journal by Dr. Martin Toms. Martin was Editor-in-Chief for 11 years, from 2013-2024 and oversaw the transition of the journal to its current platform on Scholastica and as an open access journal in 2018. He has developed the journal to a strong position in the field and I aim to carry on his excellent work. Martin will remain close to the journal as Emeritus Editor-in-Chief and I thank him for supporting me in the early days of my tenure and for the detailed handover he provided.

As a brief introduction to me, I would describe myself as a “pracademic”, having foundations in both research and applied practice. I have been supporting golfers since 2009 and publishing research in golf since 2015. My research and applied backgrounds are in physical training methods to improve golf performance. I published “*Strength and Conditioning for Golf”* in 2022 and I’ve been an accredited strength and conditioning coach (United Kingdom Strength and Conditioning Association) and Sport and Exercise Scientist (British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences) for over 10 years. Alongside my academic roles, I consult for England Golf and have worked with high-performance golfers across a range of tours and elite amateur competitions. I’ve been working in higher education since 2010 and am currently Associate Professor for Strength and Conditioning Science at St. Mary’s University, Twickenham, UK.

Leadership of the journal was an exciting proposition. I value the space the *International Journal of Golf Science* occupies as the only entirely golf-focused research publisher and there have been some excellent articles in the journal over the years, attracting a keen and informed readership. It has an outstanding group of Associate Editors and reviewers who support the work submitted here. I’d like to thank them at this juncture for their continued and diligent support of the works considered at the journal. I look forward to leading the journal to continue to attract high-quality submissions going forwards that help improve golf for all.

**A call for greater and improved collaboration.**

In order to better understand how golf science can continue to be impactful for the development of golf and to benefit golfers, the golf and scientific communities need to coalesce more frequently. Applied practitioners (golf coaches, club fitters, biomechanists, S&C coaches, nutritionists, psychologists, medical staff, performance analysts etc.) in their day-to-day activities regularly collect quantitative and qualitative data to inform their decision-making processes and to aid the golfers they support. Research academics can help to either: a) prospectively shape data collection processes to answer pre-determined questions or b) help to curate and analyse pre-existing data sets that have been generated as part of standard operations in applied practice to answer questions. Regardless of the approach taken, there are abundant data being produced in applied practice by virtue of day-to-day support procedures. Applied practitioners have access to golfers and, crucially, possess contextual and experiential evidence. Researchers possess research strategy, design, and analytical skills, with some individuals or organisations possessing both skillsets concurrently. Researchers can also ensure that published data remain compliant with data protection laws (such as GDPR in the European Union) and ethical standards. Together, collaboration between these researchers and applied practitioners can enable high-quality data to become available to the golf science audience. However, it requires communication and a collaborative effort, and an awareness and desire for these data to be utilised in this way.

To this end, I am encouraging, in addition to traditional scholarly works, those in applied practice to correspond with scientific researchers to bring real-world golf data to life and vice versa. While there are challenges inherent with this approach, particularly around ensuring quality communication within and between multidisciplinary teams in golf which can be complex (e.g., Bliss & Langdown, 2023, 2024; Shaw et al., 2023; Watson et al., 2025), this will allow for research published in *International Journal of Golf Science* to continue to make a real impact in the real world, and for science to be meaningful for the wider golf community.

Another method by which golf science research can help to improve understanding may be the submission of manuscripts concerning longitudinal analyses or case studies. This could be individual golfer support from a variety of disciplines over one or multiple seasons, or wherever there are groups of golfers (university and college teams, golf centres, professional tours and amateur events as examples) then the practitioners and coaches in these fields and academics could co-work for mutual benefit, the benefit of the golfers they support, and the benefit of the wider scientific and golfing communities. While there are some longitudinal support examples (e.g., Gould et al., 2019) or reviews incorporating longitudinal evidence (e.g., Murray et al., 2016), most published golf research, particularly around training or other interventions supporting golfers, are either cross-sectional and acute (one day to one week), or relatively short term (four-to-eight weeks typically). Applied practitioners from various fields have regular contact with their golfers and as such, collaboration between them and researchers can help to publish data captured during longitudinal support.

**Concluding remarks:**

The *International Journal of Golf Science* is a well-established and important platform in our field by which to share the latest scientific understanding of the sport to help improve the game of golf for all. The journal represents a “Diamond Open Access” model whereby there are no financial restrictions for submissions, reviews, or publication and all papers accepted at the journal are published to allow anyone to read the work without a paywall. With the increase in the use of data to support coaching and tuition and assessment of golfers, the development and manufacture of golf equipment and technology, the management of golf courses from both business and agronomy perspectives, and to understand injury, health, and wellbeing of golfers, I am using this editorial, my first in post, to encourage practitioners working in golf to collaborate with academic researchers. Attempts to either bring existing data to the scientific community, or to work together prospectively to design research projects and answer important questions are crucial to improve golf for all. I will look forward to 2025 and beyond, supporting accessible golf research to flourish at the *International Journal of Golf Science.*

**References:**

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