



FOR YOUR GAME

'100 percent Ollie'

The student Ollie Schniederjans

Age: 21

Height/weight: 6 feet 1 inch,
168 pounds

What's in the bag: Titleist 913D2 driver (10.5 degrees, with Mitsubishi Rayon Diamana Kai'li 70X shaft), Titleist 913F.d 3-wood (15 degrees, with Mitsubishi Rayon Diamana Blue Board 82X shaft), Titleist 913H hybrid (19 degrees, with Graphite Design Tour AD DI 105X shaft), Titleist 714 CB forged irons (4-PW, with Nippon N.S. Pro Modus 3 Tour 130X shafts), Titleist Vokey SM5 wedges (54, 58, 62 degrees, with Nippon N.S. Pro Modus 3 Tour 130X shafts), Titleist Scotty Cameron Newport Fastback Select putter. He plays a Titleist Pro V1x ball.

Credentials: Runner-up in 2014 NCAA Championship, '14 first-team All-American, finalist for '14 Ben Hogan and Jack Nicklaus awards, member of '14 Palmer Cup, winner of '14 Mark McCormack Medal as No. 1 in World Amateur Golf Ranking, won '08 Future Masters, '09 AJGA Polo Junior Golf Classic, '09 Jones Cup Junior Invitational, '10 AJGA first-team All-American, '10 U.S. Junior Ryder Cup and Junior World Cup teams.

SCHNIEDERJANS SCRAPS THE MODERN-SWING BLUEPRINT AND BUILDS A UNIQUE ACTION

By Adam Schupak

Ollie Schniederjans is not an engineering major at Georgia Tech, but he has designed a golf swing that works for him. Though he credits learning the game's fundamentals from Mark Anderson, who taught him at Bentwater Golf Club in nearby Acworth, and appreciates the watchful eye of Jeff Patton, the director of golf at Golf Club of Georgia, Schniederjans has pieced together a swing that is his own.

That makes him in many ways the antithesis of the modern-day mechanical young golfer who is obsessed with swing plane, video and TrackMan numbers.

"I was just like that at one time," said Schniederjans, who enters his senior year as the No. 1 player in the *Golfweek/Sagarin* College Rankings and the World Amateur Golf Ranking. "I didn't like my swing and tried to

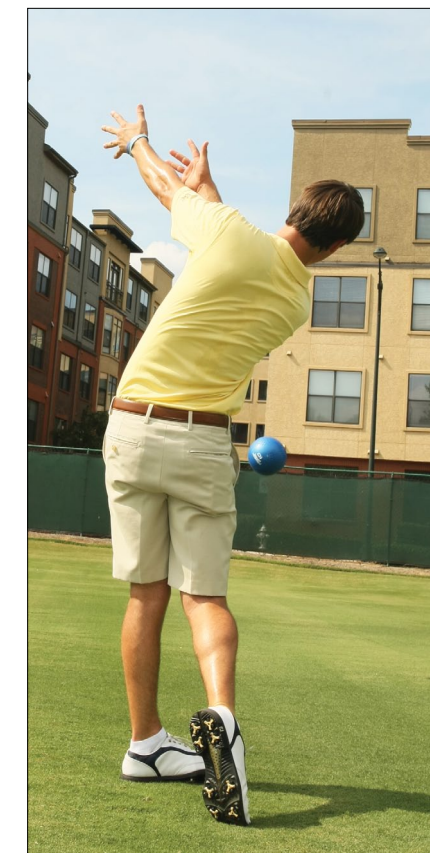
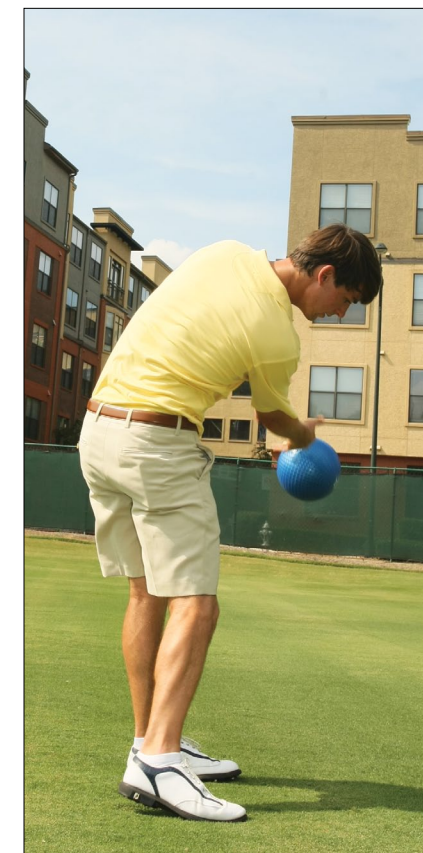
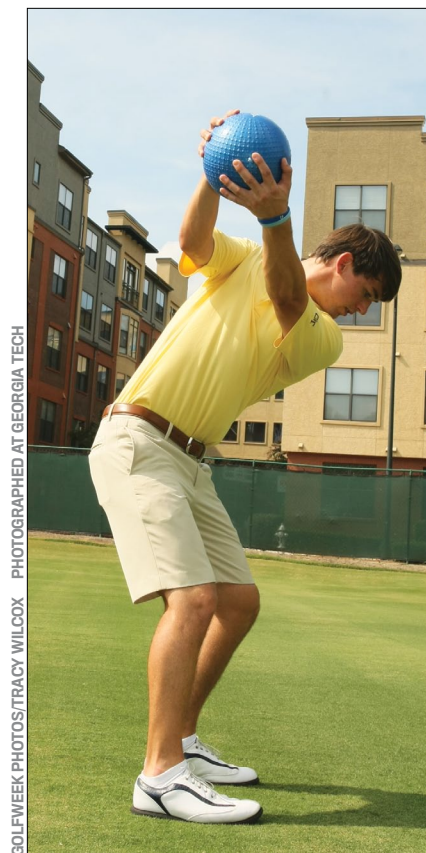
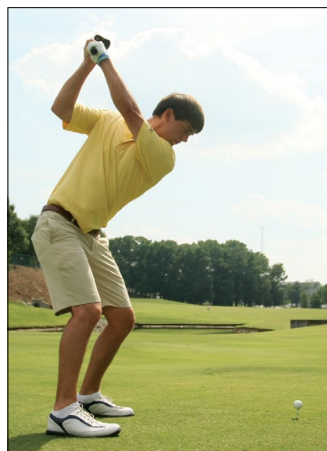
Atlanta

make it all perfect. I didn't really know what the fingerprint of my golf swing was until this last year. Mine is a swing that is fundamentally sound, but it is unique."

That's a trait Schniederjans accepted when he realized none of the best players had the ideal swing he wanted; what they shared was something extraordinary in their swings.

So what makes Schniederjans' swing unorthodox? "I don't rotate my forearms with the clubface," he said. "I keep it really square, and I have a lot of shaft lean and I hit it really far, even though my swing is very short."

Despite that short backswing, Schniederjans makes a full turn and generates what he calls "effortless power." His use of "quiet hands" is reminiscent of Tour star Steve Stricker, but as Seth Reeves, a former Tech teammate, put it, "His swing is 100 percent Ollie."



GOLF WEEK PHOTOS/TRACY WILCOX PHOTOGRAPHED AT GEORGIA TECH

Medicine-ball drill: 'Swing like I throw it'

Schniederjans works on his golf swing at the gym, too.

His exercises for core, stability, balance and posture include standing on one foot on a BOSU ball with his eyes closed and making a full backswing turn.

In one of his favorite drills (pictured above), he uses a 10-pound medicine ball to ingrain the motion and sequence of the swing using his "big muscles." He

sets up as he would over a golf shot. He holds a medicine ball at its sides with both hands, fingertips pointing toward the ground. He tosses the ball toward his target and tries to keep it in the air as long as possible.

"I literally try to swing like I throw it," he said.

Schniederjans credits this drill with helping create speed and stability.

"Before, the club would get too far

behind me and my body would outrace my arms," he said. "Now I feel like I'm completely aware and in control of where the clubhead is and feel like I have control of the face. A big theme in my backswing is, I never let the club get away from me and get deep behind me. When I'm swinging my best, a full swing almost feels like a chip shot."

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'White-knuckle' grip on the putter

Perhaps the most improved part of his game since arriving at Georgia Tech is his putting. As a freshman, Schniederjans had an ongoing dispute with his short stick. He was overcome by fear, especially on testy knee-knockers.

But through repetition of several drills designed to hone a more reliable

stroke and a grip change, his putter has become friend, not foe.

"I'm fearless now when I putt," he said. "I accept what the result is and focus on giving it the best chance I can every time."

His secret to holing short putts is a sort of death grip.

"I white-knuckle it, like eight or nine

out of 10 grip pressure with my left hand," he said.

The right-hand grip pressure is closer to one, he says, and on short putts he floats the right hand away from the putter completely.

"The most nerve-racking putts in the world and I don't have any problem now," he said.

Alignment: Reflections on a spot-on drill

Schniederjans combines two popular putting aids into one drill. He places the EyeLine Putting Alignment Mirror on the ground, running parallel between him and the TPK Golf Putting Stick. He uses the mirror to check his forearm and shoulder alignment and eye position. The goal of the Putting Stick is to roll the ball down the yardstick for the first 3 feet. For an extra challenge, he tries uphill putts.

"The most important thing you can do is roll the ball on your line to start off," Schniederjans said. "After the first few feet, the outcome of the putt is out of your control."

Schniederjans has been training with these devices for the past year. The beauty of the exercise, he says, is he can practice on the 46-inch stick, which is 1-inch wide, indoors or outdoors. During a tournament, Schniederjans spends five minutes practicing the drill before bed.



Schniederjans uses an EyeLine Putting Alignment Mirror and a TPK Golf Putting Stick to make sure his body is aligned and that he is hitting putts that start on a straight line.



Alignment stick shows the proper path

Schniederjans takes a run-of-the-mill alignment stick and points it on the line of his putt. He places a ball so that the toe of his putter touches the edge of the stick. The point of this drill is to work on his

path and line.

"I tend to have trouble visualizing where I'm lined up and the path that I need my putter to go on," he said. "It's helped on that."

The key to this drill is to stroke the ball on an

arc so that the toe of the putter never touches the alignment stick again.

"It's like there is a wall on the toe of my putter, so my putter never touches the stick and my putter just glides along the wall,"

he said.

Schniederjans attempts to simulate the same feeling when he plays.

"Even on the course," he said, "I imagine I'm putting along an alignment stick."

Surest point to make a putt: A straight line

Every putt is a straight putt until the break takes it. With that in mind, Schniederjans determines his line and picks the spot where he can stroke a straight putt.

"I don't want to curve it in," he said. "I make sure I hit a stroke just like any straight putt and let gravity do the rest."

To practice this technique, Schniederjans uses the Dave Pelz Putting Tutor (pictured). He aims for the straight part of a breaking putt, and has become an expert at rolling the ball between the beads at the end of the aid and toward his target.



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