



PAUL 'HAMMER TIME' GLAZIER

CURRENTLY NUMBER ONE IN THE LONG DRIVERS OF EUROPE ORDER OF MERIT, PAUL 'HAMMER TIME' GLAZIER ON 450 YARD DRIVES, 150 MPH CLUB HEAD SPEEDS, 200 MPH BALL SPEEDS AND "PUTTING...WHAT'S THAT?"

WWW

When did you first realize you could drive long?

I can remember going to a demo day at Dartmouth Golf & Country Club when I was a teenager. The rep had a swing speed monitor and said that my swing speed was comparable to those of long drivers. I didn't think too much of it at the time and it was only when I finished playing competitive cricket a couple of years ago that I turned my attention back to golf. I went to the London Golf Show in 2006 and managed to win the Nike and Mizuno Long Drive Challenges, I picked up a few invitations to some long drive events and the rest, as they say, is history!

What's your long drive record?

In practice I've hit 450 yards, it was hard and fast with a down breeze of about 10 mph. The fairway was fairly level. In competition I've hit 380. It is virtually impossible to compare distances hit at different events, at different venues, on different days because the atmospheric conditions play such a massive role. 360-380 yards typically wins long drive tournaments in neutral conditions.

Is the range where you play at Dartmouth long enough to cope with your game?

No! The range is only about 280 yards long and, although the practice balls are only 70-80% distance, I'm always smashing them out the back of the range. Jamie Waugh, Managing Director at Dartmouth Golf & Country Club and my coach, is always threatening to buy me a strimmer and a pair of Wellington boots, but he hasn't made me venture out into the undergrowth... yet!

Are people amazed when they see you give it a good smack on the range?

Yes! People love to see balls flying out the back of the range. I'm always getting people coming up to

me for a chat to find out more about what I do. Technique and equipment are the always the main talking points - people are always removing my headcovers and giving my drivers a good waggle!

It must make an awesome sound when you hit the ball?

My Cobras make a very distinctive and satisfying sound when I get them out of the middle, particularly on enclosed driving ranges! If people haven't noticed me making some crazier than normal swings, the almost deafening noise certainly turns their heads!

How many drivers have you broke?

I've snapped a few shafts and cracked some heads. Long drivers are typically generating clubhead speeds of around 140-150 mph and ball speeds of over 200 mph, so heads and shafts take quite a battering over a period of time.

What's your best tip for long driving?

It's an old adage but you must tee them high to see them fly! Backspin is a killer in long driving and the most affective method of reducing it is to decrease the loft on your driver, tee the ball higher than normal and strike the ball on the ascent. You're typically looking for launch angles of 10-14° and backspin rates of 2000-2500 revs per minute for an optimal trajectory.

This is all gobbledegook to us, you are a sports scientist though, this must help you understand all that stuff?

Yes. I specialise in motor control and biomechanics or, put simply, the science of human movement, especially sports techniques. My expertise in these areas certainly helps me to iron out any technical faults that creep into my game. I also have access to some fabulous motion analysis equipment at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, where I work, so I'm able to examine my technique in the finest of detail as and when necessary.

UKGOLFER INTERVIEW

Does the driver play a massive part then?

I currently have several 8.5° Cobra XX Speed drivers, which are great for launching golf balls high with low spin. Cobra UK are sending me some of the new Cobra X Speed Pro D drivers in low lofts, which I cannot wait to get my hands on! I'm also currently playing 50 inch, UST ProForce V2 LD-4 (XXX) shafts. These are great because they flex more progressively than other long drive shafts and virtually never snap! John Whitehead at Strike Right Golf Ltd expertly custom fits and assembles all my drivers.

What about practicing?

I go down to the driving range probably two-three times a week in winter but a bit less during the season when there are back-to-back tournaments. I normally warm up with some wedges, and then go to a mid-iron before turning to the driver when I am thoroughly warmed up. I probably spend more time in the gym than on the range as my strength and conditioning is so important to me.

What's the rest of your game like, putting etc?

It's not bad, I'm about a six-handicapper. Driving is probably my strongest suit although it can be my Achilles heel if my timing is out. It's not bad in this day and age if you can bomb a driver; I've normally only got a short iron in so, as long as I've managed to keep it on the estate, I should be okay! Putting... what's that!

Have you ever considered going pro?

As every junior golfer probably does, I did when I was younger, but you've got to be so good in all aspects of the game to be even remotely successful. I love my long drive - it's short, sharp and focused. The guys out on tour are smashing blokes too, so it's always good fun and there's always a story to tell.

Sean Fister (last month's long driver) said he could do a Happy Gilmore style shot? Can you?

Everyone asks that! I've never actually tried and have yet to branch out into trick shots. Rather embarrassingly, I've never actually seen the film - I must do so, though, so I know what everyone is going on about!

Have you got any anger issues which you have worked out through long driving?!

Not really but smashing golf balls down the range is a good way to release any pent up tension and aggression. It's also good just hitting balls and not having to worry about them wrecking a score card! ■



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