

# ADIDAS GUIDANCE ON OVERCOMING PRESSURE IN GOLF



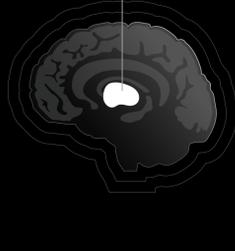
With the ambition to disarm pressure in sport – a feeling experienced by athletes of all levels – adidas has teamed up with leading sport neuroscientists, neuro11, to understand the impact it has within the game of golf – in particular putting.

Working with **Ludvig Åberg** and **Rose Zhang**, as well as amateurs in the game, adidas and neuro11 delved into their minds to identify and analyse where pressure peaks.

From this data, a toolbox of techniques has been developed to help enable athletes to overcome it and access the optimal zone – the brain state in which athletes perform at their best.

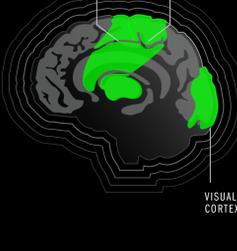


NEURO11'S STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGY, WHEN CONNECTED TO AN ATHLETE IS ABLE TO IDENTIFY WHEN THE BRAIN IS...



## TOO LOW

Brain frequency is in the state associated with **relaxation and/or tiredness** – this is deemed as too low for optimal performance



## OPTIMAL ZONE

Brain frequency is in the state where it is **mentally focussed and psychologically efficient** – this is deemed **ideal** for optimal performance and is often referred to as being 'in the zone'



## TOO HIGH

Brain frequency is in an **over analysis state** – this is deemed as **too high for optimal performance/pressure is having a negative impact** – your brain is falling out of the optimal zone and losing focus

NEURO11 SAY

**"The 'OPTIMAL ZONE' is the sweet spot between relaxation and over thinking.** This is where the athlete's brain is in a state which is physically relaxed but mentally focussed, leading to optimal movement and performance.

Training with pressure (e.g. a high-stakes putt challenged by distractions) can help athletes learn how to stay in the optimal zone for the big moments."

KEY TERMS



### BRAIN FOCUS INDEX

Individually calculated value which indicates **how deeply the athletes brain is in the optimal frequency zone** during performance and moments of pressure



### BASELINE

Athlete's brain focus index pre training – **serves as a reference value.** The brain is not doing exercise and is under no pressure, so it allows for comparisons to be made when training and moments of pressure occurs



### 'ADDING' PRESSURE

Implementing a tactic to the athlete's training session which **intentionally puts pressure** on them – i.e. requirement to make a certain amount of putts from a specific distance



### IN THE ZONE

Brain focus index shows **athlete is in the optimal zone for performance** – a perfect balance of being mentally focused and yet physically relaxed

## PRESSURE IN GOLF

Whilst **pressure** looks and feels different for each athlete some of the **contributing factors** can be:



Self-expectation



Critical shots



Adverse weather conditions



Final moments of the round



LUDVIG ÅBERG

### PUTTING PRESSURE

A STUDY SHOWS:

AT A TOURNAMENT



SUCCESS RATE CAN DECREASE BY

**6.5%**

IF PUTT VALUE IS **\$100,000** OR MORE

"Putting is definitely one of the most challenging, because it's a short shot, and ultimately half of your score is dependent on it. So, this is where the real mental focus is needed to commit to your line and make a good stroke – even the slightest nerve can cause you to three-putt or do something that you don't really want to do on the golf course"

- ROSE ZHANG

"I think putting is the most exposed part of the game, 'cause what really separates a good round versus an average round is the putting. You can have a decent ball striking round and then a good putting round, and then suddenly, it's a good score and then you can hit the ball really well and putt not very well, and it's a poor score."

- LUDVIG ÅBERG

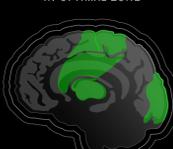
### ROSE ZHANG VS GRASSROOT GOLFER PRESSURE

2.4M PUTT →

INCREASE **27%** IN OPTIMAL ZONE

10M PUTT →

INCREASE **10%** IN OPTIMAL ZONE



ROSE ZHANG



GRASSROOT GOLFER

5M PUTT →

INCREASE **52%** IN OPTIMAL ZONE

15M PUTT →

INCREASE **15%** IN OPTIMAL ZONE



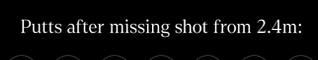
ROSE ZHANG



GRASSROOT GOLFER

"When the grassroots golfer missed a shot or misjudged the speed of their ball from 2.4m, they consequently missed seven putts in a row and struggled to get back into the 'Optimal Zone'. Meanwhile, Rose missed three putts in a row from 2.5m, but by adapting her routine to include fewer analytical steps she successfully putted the next two holes" - NEURO11

Putts after missing shot from 2.4m:



GRASSROOT GOLFER STRUGGLED TO GET BACK INTO OPTIMAL ZONE



ROSE ZHANG BACK IN OPTIMAL ZONE BY ADAPTING HER ROUTINE

When intentionally interrupted:

INCREASE 'OPTIMAL ZONE' **15%** ROSE ZHANG

INCREASE 'TOO HIGH' ZONE **11%** GRASSROOT GOLFER

"My dad used to distract me during training. So, every time I was in the middle of a practice session, he would call me over to demonstrate a golf swing or a technique to a friend or a junior. He purposely disrupted my practise to put me in high intensity, high pressure situations."

- ROSE ZHANG

### LUDVIG ÅBERG VS GRASSROOT GOLFER PRESSURE

2.4M PUTT →

'TOO HIGH' ZONE **20%**

9M PUTT →

'TOO HIGH' ZONE **42%**



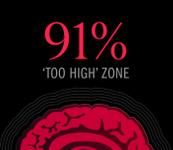
LUDVIG ÅBERG



GRASSROOT GOLFER



LUDVIG ÅBERG



GRASSROOT GOLFER

"The grassroots golfer's measurements were driven by the weight of expectations from themselves and others. Ludvig going into the 'Too High' zone was caused by how quickly he switched from analysing the putt to shooting." - NEURO11

"My pace of play is quick, but sometimes a little too quick. Whenever the pressure amps up a little bit, I tend to get a lot faster in basically everything that I do, so I walk faster, I talk faster, all these things and everything goes a little bit quicker."

- LUDVIG ÅBERG

## NEURO11'S TIPS FOR TACKLING PRESSURE



### MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS:

Know your statistics for making a putt from a certain distance so you don't get frustrated if you don't.



### PERFECTION IS AN ILLUSION:

In reality, there is no perfect golf game – even the best make bogeys. Acknowledge that playing a flawless game isn't a reality for any golfer – because no one plays perfectly.



### TRUST YOUR PROCESS:

Once you have chosen your club and are clear on the technique you'll use, don't doubt your decision – just focus on the execution of the stroke.



### FOCUS ON THE NOW:

Focus on your target instead of the areas of the course you want to avoid – if you worry about hitting areas like a lake, it often leads to the ball flying exactly there.



### MOVE ON FROM MISTAKES:

If you make a bad shot during a game, don't dwell on it, instead focus on how to hit the next shot instead of overanalysing what went wrong. You can do that after the competition.

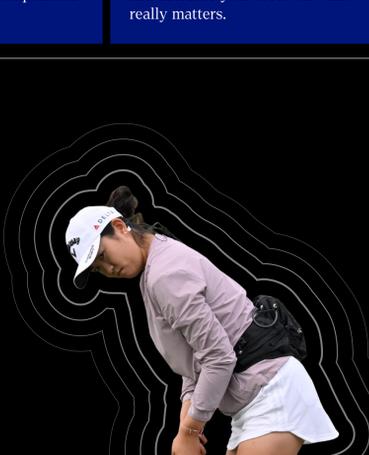


### ZONE OUT YOUR OPPONENT:

Play the course, and not your opponent – avoid thinking about their score as you can activate irrelevant brain circuits calculating their scores and decrease your focus on what really matters.

### INSIDE ROSE'S PUTT ROUTINE

- 1 I get to the green and read my putt from all sides
- 2 I go around the centre of my putt to find a breaking point
- 3 I walk back, line up to the breaking point and to a point in front of my ball
- 4 Pausing momentarily, I feel what my speed will be so my tempo remains consistent
- 5 Align putter to my line, set up, ensure hands are soft and square – putt



### INSIDE LUDVIG'S PUTT ROUTINE



- 1 At a 10 or 12 foot putt, I try feel how much break there is with my feet
- 2 I hold the putter over the line on the ball – practice two strokes and visualize it going in
- 3 Before the shot, I realign the line on the ball to the one on the putter
- 4 I take a breath, focus and aim to put a good stroke on the ball for the putt