

**US Open "What club do I use for an elevated tee shot?"**  
A closer look at Torrey Pines South Course Hole#3



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The 3rd hole on the Torrey Pines South course is prominently featured on the live internet video stream and televised coverage. It's a majestic and beautiful hole. It leaves players guessing what club to use.

Each day a different set of tees will be used. Today it was short at 146 yards. Later in the tournament, it can stretch out another 30-40 yards to keep the players out of their comfort zone.

Holes like these are a headache. There is little opportunity to practice them fully. You're constantly drawing in your experience with the elements and trying to gauge and adjust for the elevation.

Golfers or caddies can do their 'homework' and use GoogleEarth and get a feel for actual elevation changes and jot down notes. However, this information is often incomplete because it is missing weather and the player's launch conditions. Picking the wrong club can easily add 2-4 strokes to the score.

The problem statement is: "**What club do I use?**"

How to solve it:

Step 1) Gather launch monitor data on your irons, using the average of 3-4 similar shot strikes.

Step 2) Key in data into OptimalFlight and input actual tournament playing conditions.

Example:

GoogleEarth the hole.

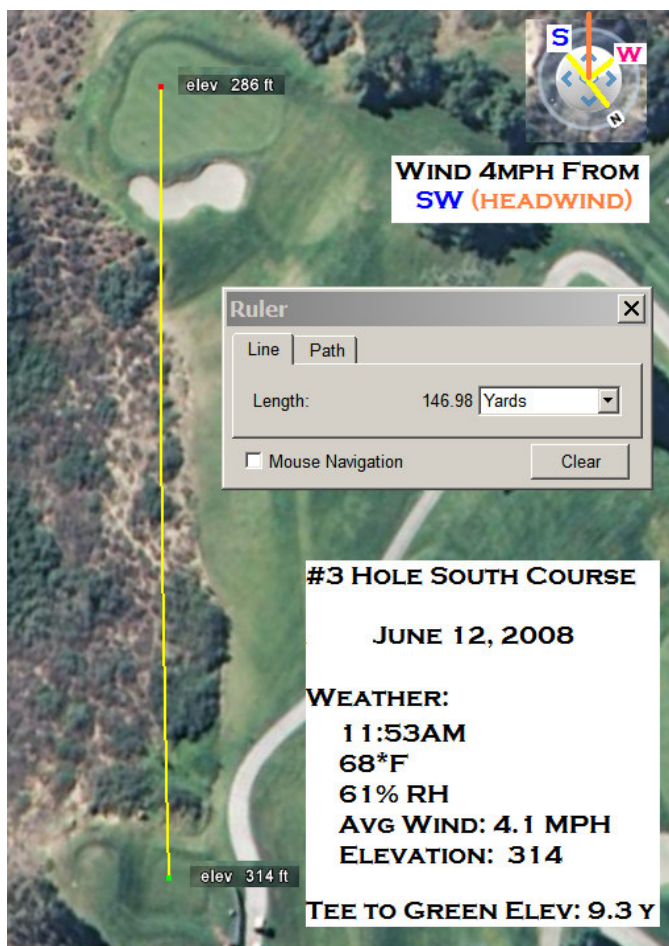
a) Make a note of tee box elevation (actual altitude) and elevation where the hole is.

Tee elevation = 314 feet, Flag elevation = 286 feet, or 28 feet difference or 9.3 yards.

Weather information - a great site is

[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com), enter in ZIP code and retrieve weather history. It says wind is coming from the southwest. Sync the picture as shown above and you'll realize the shots are hitting into a slight headwind.

Launch monitor data from PW-7iron was gathered and here are results at sea level and no wind. The **target distance is 146-147 yards**. We can easily see if we were playing a course without any wind, elevation, or tee to green elevation effects, that the 7iron would be the perfect club to use.



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SUMMARY REPORT

Name: Short Iron Distance Profile

Report ID: 900

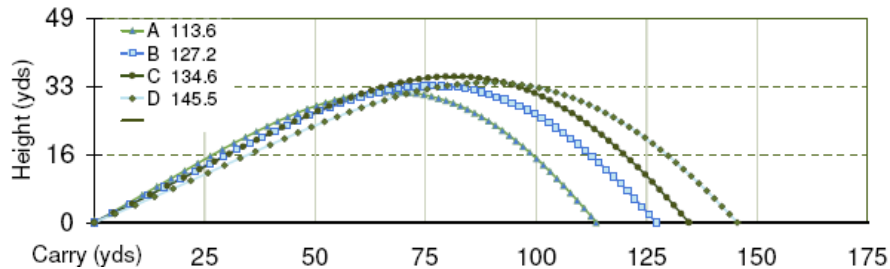
Notes: 7I-PW - Normalized launch conditions, sea level, no wind, tee and green same elev.

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Club/Shaft:	PW	9I	8I	7I
FLIGHT:	A	B	C	D
BALL SPD (mph):	90.5	97.8	101.9	106.1
LAUNCH (deg):	31.3 <small>Push/Pull</small>	27.9 <small>Push/Pull</small>	27.4 <small>Push/Pull</small>	24.1 <small>Push/Pull</small>
BackSPIN (rpm):	7,925 <small>SideSpin</small>	7,534 <small>SideSpin</small>	6,695 <small>SideSpin</small>	5,621 <small>SideSpin</small>
Carry (yds):	-	-	-	-
<b>OPTIMALFLIGHT</b>	<b>113.6</b>	<b>127.2</b>	<b>134.6</b>	<b>145.5</b>

Flight Time, Wind, Altitude: 5.58, No Wind, Sea Lvl 5.8, No Wind, Sea Lvl 6, No Wind, Sea Lvl 6, No Wind, Sea Lvl  
 Landing Angle, Roll, Apex: 50.9 3.4 31.3 49.8 3.6 32.7 50.5 3.7 34.9 47.9 3.9 33.5

OPTIMALFLIGHT validation of CARRY:



Now, let's dial in the environment conditions of altitude, hitting into a slight headwind of 4.1 mph. These factors translate into a 7 yard loss in carry distance.

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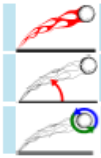
Notes: 7I-PW - 11:53am PST launch conditions, 314ft, 4.1mph headwind

Location:

Date:

Club/Shaft:

	PW	9I	8I	7I
FLIGHT:	A	B	C	D
BALL SPD (mph):	90.5	97.8	101.9	106.1
LAUNCH (deg):	31.3	27.9	27.4	24.1
BackSPIN (rpm):	7,925	7,534	6,695	5,621
Carry (yds):	-	-	-	-
<b>OPTIMALFLIGHT</b>	<b>107.3</b>	<b>120.2</b>	<b>127.1</b>	<b>138.5</b>



Flight Time, Wind, Altitude: 5.71, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 5.94, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 6.15, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 6.15, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314

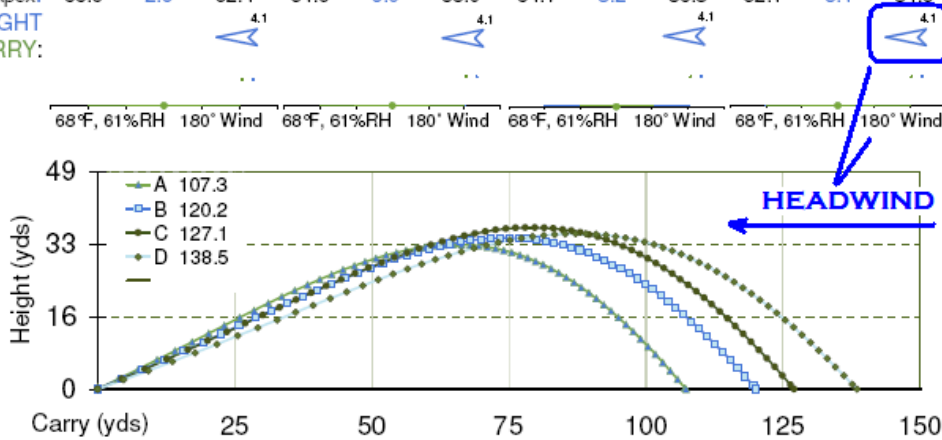
Landing Angle, Roll, Apex: 55.0 2.8 32.4 54.0 3.0 33.9 54.1 3.2 36.3 52.1 3.4 34.9

validation of CARRY:

WIND (mph): 4.1  
WIND Angle: 180

ALTITUDE (ft): 314  
TEMP: 68.0  
RH%: 61

Roll Adj: 25%  
TEE BOX Elev. (yds): 0.0



WEATHER CONDITIONS MATCHED TO LOCAL RESULT

The final step is to factor in the tee to green difference with the environment effects. 9.3 yards is comparable to a 2-3 story building drop. It can play with your mind a bit to take a higher lofted club (ex: 8 or 9 iron)

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Notes: 7I-PW - 11:53am PST launch conditions, 314ft, 4.1mph headwind

Location: 28 feet or 9.3 yd tee to green diff.

Date:

Club/Shaft:

PW 9I 8I 7I

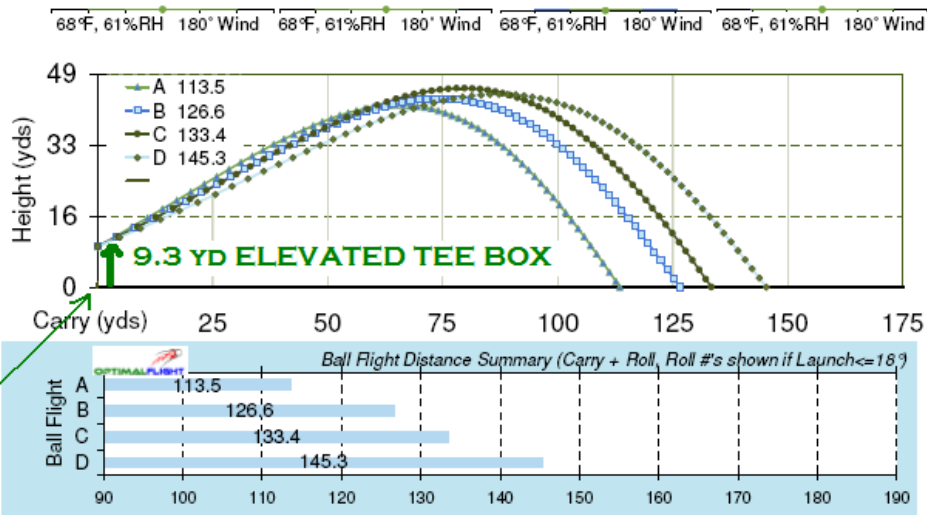
FLIGHT:

A B C D

BALL SPD (mph):	90.5	97.8	101.9	106.1
LAUNCH (deg):	31.3	27.9	27.4	24.1
BackSPIN (rpm):	7,925	7,534	6,695	5,621
Carry (yds):	-	-	-	-
<b>OPTIMALFLIGHT</b>	<b>113.5</b>	<b>126.6</b>	<b>133.4</b>	<b>145.3</b>

Flight Time, Wind, Altitude: 6.16, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 6.39, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 6.58, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314 6.6, Wind: +4.1, Alt: 314  
 Landing Angle, Roll, Apex: 56.3 3.1 41.7 55.3 3.3 43.2 55.3 3.4 45.6 53.7 3.6 44.2  
 OPTIMALFLIGHT validation of CARRY: TEE BOX +9 TEE BOX +9 TEE BOX +9 TEE BOX +9

WIND (mph): 4.1  
 WIND Angle: 180  
 ALTITUDE (ft): 314  
 TEMP: 68.0  
 RH%: 61  
 Launch \* to show Carry+Roll Info: 18  
 Roll Adj: 25%  
 +9.3 TEE BOX Elev. (yds)




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**Answer:** The club to use is a normal 7iron.

Why? The slight 4.1 mph head wind causes a shorter ball flight. The 28 ft elevated tee cancels out the effect of the headwind. This golf hole is a brilliantly designed hole. It forces you out of your comfort zone but in reality, your typical club for the actual distance solves the problem.

In closing, Henry Hartman says: "Success always comes when preparation meets opportunity." Today, the technology to better understand these elevated tee and wind scenarios are available. Saving 2-4 shots with the right club selected keeps top golfers and professionals in the hunt and on top of the leaderboard.

zbarqain Jun 14 2008, 11:35 AM Post #23



I've had the opportunity to play the hole a bunch. And I'd say your conclusion is pretty accurate. The wind normally cancels out the elevation change. A good starting point is to just play the yardage normally. On any normal day for the public the tees are always up higher on the left @ 145'ish. The longer tees on the right are a good 6-10 feet below the tees on the left. I've only seen the tees on the right used in a tournament.

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Here are some pictures to illustrate the challenge Torrey Pines South course Hole #3 - par 3 is creating for golfers at the **US Open**.

Friday 6/13: **What a 14.6yard drop looks like**



Tight target players are shooting for:



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Ernie Els is being shown teeing off. The pressure on the tee is not something you can 'feel' out. Players are aiming for a spot close to the cliff. Els shot nearly went over and lucked out big time.

