

# Feline Flexibility

In the first instalment of an exclusive series for *Asian Golf Monthly Singapore Edition*, yoga master **Yogi Sukhdev** shows us how to loosen the muscles in the back – lower, middle and upper – for improved strength and flexibility of your spine. Pictures by **Luvin A. Lim**.



To check if you're doing this right, make sure your spine is pointing towards the ceiling. Just think of a cat that has got up to stretch after waking up from a long nap.

Another added benefit of this position is the ability to stretch the neck muscles. To do so, straighten your back once again. Pushing again with the tops of your feet, look up to the ceiling while inhaling (picture 2).

**A**re you among the many golfers who are plagued by a stiff back that detracts from your enjoyment of the game? Or do you find a stiff swing is preventing you from moving to the next level?

Unfortunately, in today's world, long hours behind the desk sitting down are one of the major reasons behind this.

Supple back muscles are essential in creating a powerful turn. If you take a look at some of the best golfers in the world they have such supple bodies that allow them to turn in one smooth motion that creates a lot of power.

I'm going to show you a simple exercise, which I call the 'Cat Pose' that you can do at home to help create more supple muscles in the lower, middle and upper back for improved overall strength and flexibility.

Firstly, go down on your hands and knees and place your hands directly under your shoulders, spreading your fingers wide apart so that the entire palm presses onto the floor.

Next, press the tops of your feet into the floor – which will also help create more flexibility in the feet and support more push off power in your swing – and inhale to draw your navel towards the spine. Then tuck your chin into your chest (picture 1).



The final step of this exercise is to once again press the tops of your feet to the floor and then exhale deeply. Be sure to pull your abdominal muscles to the floor and curve your spine into a 'U' shape (picture 3).

For maximum results, do this daily and hold each position for as long as you can with repetitions of 20.

True Yoga, together with Yogi Sukhdev – yoga master to top athletes including golfer **Mardan Mamat**, Formula One driver **Mark Webber** and members of India's cricket team – is offering a complimentary session to readers of *Asian Golf Monthly Singapore Edition*. Simply call True Yoga at **6536-3390** and quote *Asian Golf Monthly Singapore Edition* to make your booking.