



adding the time taken to the number of shots taken.

**I'M A GOOD ALL-ROUNDER.** In the 2016 Championships, the winner ran six minutes faster but took five more shots. The guy in second was seven-and-a-half minutes slower than me but shot eight better. I was in third and just one point separated the three podium places.

**REMEMBERING TO WATCH THE BALL** is a big challenge. It's so easy to smack it, grab your bag, and sprint off but then you suddenly realise you have no idea where it landed, and losing time looking for a ball is the last thing you need.

**MOST GOLFERS THINK I'M CRAZY.** They watch me blast round the course and are a bit stunned. But you don't have to start off like that – your first round could just be a promise not to take practice swings and to walk more quickly. People are often surprised to find their golf isn't much worse than it would be in a regular round. Duff shots are part of it though. I've never had an air shot, but I have had a few that didn't get airborne.

**PITCHING AND PUTTING ARE THE HARDEST** because your heart's beating fast and your breathing is erratic – that's where being a good golfer really helps. Three deep breaths will only take five seconds so it is worth it.

**CHOOSING CLUBS IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST DECISIONS.** You can take up to seven and I usually take them all because I am a decent golfer, but if you're more of a runner you might only take two or three, so you have less weight.

**IF SPEEDGOLF TOOK OFF I COULD GO PRO.** But I like what I'm doing. I have a decent job, I play golf and I run – what's not to like?' [britishspeedgolf.co.uk](http://britishspeedgolf.co.uk)



MY RUNNING LIFE

# 'MOST GOLFERS THINK I'M CRAZY'

GEORGE BOXALL, 25, ORPINGTON, KENT, SPEEDGOLFER

→ Electrician George Boxall hasn't looked back since he discovered that the two sports he was passionate about – running and golf – could be combined in a single pursuit. With his low handicap and steady marathon pace he finished third in his first British Speedgolf Championships, in 2016. He was competing in the 2017 event as we went to press.

**'I'D NEVER HEARD OF SPEEDGOLF TWO YEARS AGO.** My boss saw a poster and he'd heard me talk so much about running and golf that he encouraged me to go for it. I never expected to come third on my first attempt.

**I WAS NEVER HAPPIER** than when doing something sporty as a kid. I played a lot of football, but golf took over as soon as I hit my first ball at the age of 13.

**KEEPING FIT WAS MY MOTIVATION** when I took up running in 2012. I entered the Brighton Marathon just for the experience, and got hooked. I've done three marathons now. My personal best is 3:33:32. Everyone asks why I didn't slow down to get the perfect run of threes. It would have looked good but who thinks that clearly at the finish line?

**I'M A BETTER SPEEDGOLFER THAN GOLFER** because I don't have time to overthink my shots. It's always been my weakness in regular golf, which is why I haven't got below a four handicap.

**DISTANCE ISN'T AN ISSUE IN SPEEDGOLF** because you'll only cover about five miles for 18 holes. But it's challenging because it's stop-start and you don't really get to switch off. The game is scored by



George Boxall finished third in his first British Speedgolf Championships last year. It seems the speed required means he doesn't overthink his shots.

## TIME FOR TEE George's Speedgolf success strategy

**PLANNING IS EVERYTHING**  
As you run toward your ball keep looking forward to see what your shot might be to save time when you get there.

**PACE YOURSELF**  
It's always tough when you have set off too fast but trying to run and take tricky golf shots can be nigh on impossible.

**USE CHEAP CLUBS**  
It's worth getting a set of second-hand clubs so you won't care when you hear them clanking together as you run.