

Her sultry looks and sexy voice add an extra dimension to Sky Sports' news coverage. But could the TV temptress become a GP swingin' siren?

No. 28 Georgie Thompson

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I'm perched on a barber's-style swivel chair in the Sky Sports make-up room in west London, being puffed and powdered by a dark-haired beauty who wouldn't look out of place alongside Heidi Klum at the Paris Fashion Show. I'm about to audition for a presenter's job on Sky Sports News. Inside I'm calm and controlled, but my quivering voice, as I engage in flirty small talk with the girl who's desperately trying to apply a youthful freshness to my well-worn features, betrays the nerves.

Seated to my left is the seasoned presenter, Georgie Thompson. In stark contrast to the nervy new boy to her right, Georgie exudes confidence and beauty, and possesses an air of authority that resonates across a room that's packed with familiar faces to satellite subscribers. Her big, bold and bubbly personality more than makes up for a lack of inches – she's five feet tall in heels – and it's a disposition that readily transfers to the big screen. What you see is what you get with the gravelly-voiced siren, and that, apparently, is the secret to being a top-drawer presenter...

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I can't believe Georgie Thompson isn't in the FHM Top 100 this year," says our testosterone-fuelled Editor-at-Large. "I've always fancied her. Blonde hair, sexy voice, great smile," he coos. At this point I regale the above anecdote, with a few embellishments that stop just short of me taking her to a penthouse suite in Mayfair for the night. "You've got to get her in Celebrity Swing School then – simple as..."

A month later, on a sunny summer's morning, I'm in the car park at a sparsely-populated Wyke Green Golf Club in Isleworth. I'm admiring a beautifully-manicured 18th hole when, bang on schedule, Georgie bounds out of her funky Mini in black leggings and a sporty, figure-hugging white top. She's a bundle of fun, with a warm smile and more energy than a Duracell bunny in mating season. I hand her a set of clubs that the kind chaps at Cleveland have donated, and she becomes as excitable as Fred Trueman with the scent of Lancastrian blood in his nostrils. "Oh my God, pink clubs and a pink bag. Brilliant."

Within seconds of being introduced

to club pro, Neil Smith, the two of them are hurtling off towards the practice area in the one buggy in use today. Miss Thompson's always been a girl in a hurry...

After studying broadcast journalism at the University of Leeds, Georgie cut her teeth as a production assistant at GMTV in 1999, before landing a job at Sky Sports two years later. A keen tennis player, who represented England as a junior, she swiftly climbed the ladder, and is now one of the jewels in the presenting crown at Sky. As well as her regular slot on Sky Sports News, Georgie has also presented big events such as the US Open tennis, the Americas Cup and the A1 Grand Prix Series. On top of this, she's just launched her own fitness website, *Superchick*, for the 'cardio and cocktail' generation of career-minded girls who seek to balance a hectic lifestyle with the odd work out.

As hectic lifestyles go, Georgie's is right up there with a world leader who's taken on an evening job in a packed West

WE'D LIKE
TO TEACH
THE WORLD
TO SWING

GOLFPUNK INSPIRES THE MASSES
TO HIT THE FAIRWAYS...



Georgie Thompson,
Camberly Heath GC,
Surrey



'And by using this foot pump, you can see I have grown by three feet...'



SWING THOUGHTS
Neil Smith
 - head pro at Wyke Green GC, Isleworth, Surrey

"When I first saw Georgie practise her swing, I thought, 'wow, this will be easy.' She's got a swing that's aesthetically very good, but fundamental-wise, it's imperative to compress and hit down on the ball, which is what she didn't do initially. When she first tried the game six months ago, she was practising with the ball on a tee, and she got used to scooping, so getting her to lean the shaft on impact, and hit the ball off the turf was what I got her doing. Once she got it, she was hitting the ball a lot further with much less effort. I put the ball in the palm of my hand and asked her to visualise how she'd get the ball in the air when it was on the ground, and there was no air underneath it like on a tee. Up on a tee, easy. Put it on the floor, and she's got to do something else. Once she got that idea of leaning the shaft on impact, she started to hit it better. To start with, she was putting in a lot of wasted effort, because she didn't know how to hit a golf ball and get it moving. Learning and having a lesson off a tee peg really doesn't help, but she's only round the corner at Sky, so she can come down any time she likes and hit the ball off the grass. Her set up was really good; she's got potential."

By Georgie, what a shot...



Swingin' Siren

End bar. Finding a spare couple of hours in Georgie's diary is no mean feat, but, judging by her first attempts at a golf swing, it's a real shame that she's not in a position to devote a regular chunk of time to the game. She's played sport all her life, and golf seems to come naturally. Whoever taught her the basic principles of the game appears to have done a sterling job. Her swing, with her gun-barrel straight left arm, perfect weight transfer and elegant rhythm, could be mistaken for a tour pro – at first glance anyway. But, unlike her TV persona, what you see isn't quite what you get when it comes to golf...

"I had a couple of lessons about six months ago," she tells Neil, "but I've only ever hit the ball off the tee." He looks aghast. "That'll only encourage you to scoop the ball rather than hit down on it," he says. "You have to learn to lean the shaft and squeeze the ball, and you can't learn that by hitting off a tee peg." He

now knows he's got work to do...

Neil watches Georgie hit her first ball off the ground with her beloved new 8-iron. It's not bad – a decent flight, but the ball veers off to the right. Her second shot is a mirror image; a promising start. However, three ugly slices follow. "I really didn't want to embarrass myself," she rues.

Neil explains the importance of hitting downwards by placing a ball in the palm of his hand and asking our guinea pig to visualise generating upward movement when the ball is on the ground as opposed to a tee peg. He works on shortening Georgie's backswing, and her distance immediately improves through swapping power for technique. "I genuinely love to hit the living daylights out of the ball, but I need to take some of the aggression out of my game," she admits.

Georgie is thorough and meticulous – she regularly spends days on end researching her subject matter for her TV

shows, and she brings the same approach to the golf course. She's determined to learn, and admonishes herself for any poor shots. "That was a bit snatchy," she says, after another slice.

Neil introduces the smack bag in an effort to coax Georgie into swinging the shaft at the ball rather than just the clubhead. Georgie takes to it with relish, pummeling away with the type of intensity Ricky Hatton reserves for trainer Billy Graham's body-bag. "The Pocket Rocket doesn't know her own strength!" she says, after smashing the bag off the floor.

Her first shot after swapping bag for ball sails into the air in a perfect arc. "Result. I'll be on tour next year." She's turned a corner; she's focused and full of beans.

But, just when you think you've cracked this game, it has a habit of kicking you in the shins and nicking your dinner money... Three shockers follow. "Oh bollocks. Sorry about the swearing," she says. We're half

