

The state of AI in golf

October 2026 edition

22 developments from August 2025 to October 2026, each dated and each with its source.

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In short

For a club golfer, AI in golf currently means three things: phone apps that turn swing video into body positions and a list of faults, launch monitors that now add a coaching layer to ball and club data, and governing bodies starting to use it for rules questions. A lot was launched in the past year. Sportsbox changed hands, FlightScope, Uneekor and NeoPace all moved towards coaching software, and money went into camera-based AI coaches. Independent evidence has not kept pace. The best published measurements still show errors of several degrees in joint angles, and most of the app rankings golfers will find are written by vendors. Use these tools to spot big, obvious faults and track your positions over time. Do not treat their fine-grained diagnosis as settled.

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- ➔ Phone-only swing apps now promise 3D body metrics from a single camera, but the accuracy behind those claims comes almost entirely from the vendors themselves.
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- ➔ Launch monitor makers are adding AI coaching layers on top of ball data, but several are prototypes, pre-orders or features locked behind paid add-ons.
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- ➔ Published research puts phone and wearable joint-angle estimates at roughly 8 to 9 degrees of average error, which is fine for big faults and too coarse for fine positions.
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- ➔ Investors and buyers are backing camera-based AI coaching: Sportsbox was bought by a DeChambeau-led group, and two Chinese AI coaching start-ups raised angel rounds in 2026.
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- ➔ The USGA has put a generative AI rules tool into a live pilot and says it should not replace a human official, and we found no equivalent announcement from the R&A.
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Phone and camera AI coaches: launches and money

5 developments

This is the category most readers already use: point a phone or camera at your swing and get positions, metrics and drills back. Over the past year, established apps added 3D and conversational features, and new entrants raised money on the promise of radar-free coaching. None of the launches below came with independently published accuracy figures.

22 Jul 2026

PathFinder raises angel funding for camera-based AI coach BirdieSense

PathFinder, a start-up founded out of the University of Pennsylvania, raised a multimillion-dollar angel round led exclusively by Jinqiu Capital. BirdieSense uses RGB cameras and the company's AI models to track shots, reconstruct ball flight and evaluate swing mechanics, without radar or an indoor simulator. Global pre-sales were planned for mid-July 2026, and the company expects to show the technology at the 2027 PGA Show.

Why it matters If camera-only ball flight works outdoors, it could undercut radar launch monitors on price. Until independent tests appear, treat the ball-flight claims as unproven.

Source: [Tech Startups](https://techstartups.com) techstartups.com

1 Jun 2026

Beijing's XintLabs closes angel round backed by Hillhouse Ventures

XintLabs, based in Beijing, closed an angel round worth tens of millions of yuan, backed exclusively by Hillhouse Ventures. Its system combines computer vision, sensors and biomechanics to analyse swings and give real-time coaching.

Why it matters Large Asian investors are funding AI swing coaching, so expect more hardware-plus-app systems to reach UK retailers. Each one will need judging on evidence, not on its pitch.

Source: [Dealroom](https://app.dealroom.co) app.dealroom.co

29 May 2026

SwingSmith launches AI swing analyser app for iOS and Android

SwingSmith released an app that takes phone video, lays out the swing in ten positions (P1 to P10) and gives a swing score and one priority fix. It says it tracks more than 50 metrics and offers side-by-side comparison with tour players.

Why it matters Giving one priority fix rather than a long list of faults is a sensible design for a mid-handicapper. The metric count tells you nothing about whether the readings are accurate.

Source: [openPR](https://openpr.com) openpr.com

7 Apr 2026

DeChambeau-led group buys Sportsbox AI and announces SAMI coaching agent

A group of investors led by Bryson DeChambeau acquired Sportsbox AI, whose app builds 3D motion data from a single phone video. The company announced SAMI, an agentic AI coaching layer. It said agentic features would roll out through the second quarter, starting with AI-generated highlights for 3D Player and 3D Player Plus subscribers on iOS.

Why it matters Sportsbox is one of the best-known phone 3D apps, so a new owner and a chat-style coach on top will affect what many readers already pay for. The conversational layer adds no accuracy that the underlying 3D capture lacks.

Source: [Business Wire](https://www.businesswire.com) businesswire.com

30 Sep 2025

OnForm launches markerless 3D swing analysis from a single iPhone or iPad

OnForm added AI-powered 3D swing analysis that runs from one face-on iPhone or iPad, with no markers or sensors and no internet connection needed. It reports torso and hip rotation, forward and side bend, pelvis and torso lift, thrust and sway. OnForm says it trained and tested the models in its own OptiTrack lab and published a model card, but this page gives no accuracy figures. Coaches pay \$30 a month after a 14-day trial, and students linked to a coach get the app free.

Why it matters Publishing a model card is a step towards transparency that most rivals have not taken. Ask your coach to show you the error figures before you work on a few degrees of sway.

Source: [OnForm](https://onform.com) onform.com

Budget and mid-range launch monitors have long measured the ball well. Makers are now competing on telling you what to do with the numbers. Most of these features are new, some are still prototypes or crowdfunding campaigns, and several sit behind paid software packages.

6 Oct 2026

FlightScope adds AI 'Smart Data Margins' to FS Golf app

FlightScope released a free FS Golf update with a redesigned home screen, practice targets, a new trajectory view and a wind-normalising button. Its AI-powered Smart Data Margins set per-club target ranges from a chosen skill band and your mapped distances, then flag shots that fall outside them. They require the one-off Pro Package on the Mevo Gen2, X3 or X3C. A reviewer found most features worked but reported bugs, including tile reordering doing nothing and swing video not being saved.

Why it matters Mevo Gen2 owners get handicap-appropriate dispersion targets for practice, but only if they buy the Pro Package. This is practice structure, not swing diagnosis.

Source: [Golf Simulator Videos](https://golfsimulatorvideos.com) golfsimulatorvideos.com

6 Oct 2026

Garmin launches Approach S72 watch with on-wrist swing metrics

Garmin announced the Approach S72 golf watch from \$799.99. It records hand speed, backswing length and wrist rotation on the wrist, plus heart rate around each shot. Green reading and putting analytics need a Garmin Golf membership. Garmin's release does not describe any of this as AI.

Why it matters Wrist-worn sensors are a practical alternative to filming every swing, and research below suggests they may eventually estimate full-body positions. Today the S72 measures the wrist and hands only.

Source: [Garmin](https://garmin.com) garmin.com

1 Oct 2026

Rapsodo unveils MLM2XPRO launch monitor and Rapsodo Studios simulation

Rapsodo announced a new golf line-up led by Rapsodo Studios, a 4K simulation experience, together with its first PC app and a new mobile app, all launching on 15 October. The new MLM2XPRO is billed as its fastest and most advanced personal launch monitor yet.

Why it matters The MLM2PRO is one of the most common budget units among club golfers, so an upgrade path matters. The announcement leads on simulation rather than AI swing coaching.

Source: [GlobeNewswire](https://globe.newswire.com) [globenewswire.com](https://globe.newswire.com)

17 Sep 2026

NeoPace opens Kickstarter orders for AI launch monitor G10 Pro

NeoPace's G10 Pro combines three cameras and radar with an AI analysis system called TrainerIQ. It uses 22 ball and club metrics and 27 body metrics to identify swing issues and build a training routine. Early-bird pricing starts at \$899 against a planned \$1,499.99, and 3D Replay and TrainerIQ have monthly usage limits unless you pay for Premium. Golf Monthly's article is sponsored content, not an independent test.

Why it matters Combining ball data with body data is what you need to link faults to outcomes. This is a crowdfunded product with only paid-for coverage so far.

Source: [Golf Monthly \(sponsored\)](https://golfmonthly.com) golfmonthly.com

13 Mar 2026

Uneekor shows AIMY AI coach prototype; tester says AI 'confidently makes mistakes'

At the 2026 PGA Show, Uneekor showed AIMY, a prototype that uses at least two cameras to analyse the swing, flag flaws and suggest corrections, with release slated for later in the year. Jon Sherman, who covered the show, called it a possible future 'killer feature' once it combines ball, club and 3D data. He also warned that AI 'confidently makes mistakes' and said swing advice 'requires a lot of judgment that I'm not sure AI has yet'.

Why it matters This is a fair summary of where AI coaching stands: promising when tied to measured data, and unreliable as a standalone judge of swing faults.

Source: [Golf News Net Clubhouse](https://clubhouse.thegolfnewsnet.com) clubhouse.thegolfnewsnet.com

2 Jan 2026

Laon Swing Craft brings Swing EZ AI Pose Coach to PGA Show

Laon Swing Craft announced it would show Swing EZ at the 2026 PGA Show. It is an AI training platform whose Pose Coach splits the swing into eight motion stages, identifies technical issues and generates personalised lessons. It also exhibited VTrack, a ceiling-mounted launch monitor that measures ball and club data without stickers.

Why it matters Splitting the swing into phases and auto-generating drills is becoming standard. The value depends on whether the phase detection and fault calls are right, which the company has not shown publicly.

Source: [First Call Golf](https://firstcallgolf.com) firstcallgolf.com

Peer-reviewed and preprint work on golf-specific pose estimation is still thin, and most of it is not about the apps you can download. What exists points to errors measured in degrees, sensitivity to camera angle, frame rate and lighting, and models that are best at broad rotation. Hands and depth are their weak spots.

4 Sep 2026

Stirling University hosts demo of GGRIP AI club, agrees joint research

The University of Stirling's Golf Studio hosted South Korea's KITECH and the sports technology firm SGLAB to demonstrate G·GRIP, billed as an AI-powered golf club that analyses grip pressure and club motion in real time. Stirling researcher Dr Sungkyung Kim said the parties agreed to take forward collaborative research.

Why it matters This is one of the few UK university links to AI golf hardware. Grip pressure is something cameras cannot see, but this is research collaboration, not a product you can buy.

Source: [University of Stirling](https://www.stir.ac.uk) stir.ac.uk

22 Jun 2026

Preprint: smartwatch sensor reconstructs full-body swing angles within about 8.5 degrees

Researchers posted WIT-KinNet, a deep-learning model that estimates full-body joint angles from a single wrist-worn sensor. Tested on 36 golfers hitting full, half and quarter swings with seven clubs against optical motion capture, it reported a mean absolute error of 8.53 ± 2.05 degrees. Skill level, club and swing length all affected the error. It is a preprint, not yet peer reviewed.

Why it matters It shows where watches could go: whole-body feedback without filming. An average error of 8 to 9 degrees is too coarse for the fine positional changes many apps tell you to make.

Source: [arXiv](https://arxiv.org) arxiv.org

1 Nov 2025

Sensors paper proposes pose-based swing comparison and flags motion-blur limits

A paper in Sensors set out a framework for analysing golf swings by comparing pose-estimated movement from side-view video recorded at a practice facility. The authors note that vision-based approaches are cheap and portable compared with sensors. They also note that fast swing motion causes blur and sparse sampling of key transitions, which adds noise to pose estimates.

Why it matters This is the reason frame rate matters. A standard phone video at the bottom of a fast downswing gives an AI app less to work with than a slow-motion clip.

Source: [Sensors \(via PubMed Central\)](#) pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

28 Aug 2025

CaddieSet dataset links single-video joint data to ball outcomes

A team posted CaddieSet, a dataset that pairs joint positions extracted from a single swing video with ball information from the same shot. Each swing is split into eight phases and scored on 15 key metrics defined with expert input. The authors report that interpretable models built on it gave swing feedback consistent with established golf knowledge.

Why it matters Tying body positions to ball flight is the missing link in most phone apps. Open datasets like this are how that link can be tested rather than asserted.

Source: [arXiv](#) arxiv.org

12 Aug 2025

Frontiers review: 2D markerless pose tools cheap but weak out of plane

A mini review in Frontiers in Physiology by Edriss and colleagues compared commercial vision sensors and AI pose frameworks such as MediaPipe, OpenPose and AlphaPose against gold-standard systems in sport. It found 2D systems economical and simple but unable to capture out-of-plane movement, with accuracy dependent on video quality, frame rate, lighting and camera angle. It concluded that no single framework is clearly best.

Why it matters Rotation and depth are exactly what a single down-the-line phone clip struggles with. Film from the angle your app specifies, in good light, at the highest frame rate your phone allows.

Source: [Frontiers in Physiology](#) frontiersin.org

Away from the practice ground, AI is reaching golf through governing bodies, club operations and the chatbots golfers now use to research kit and courses. The USGA has made the biggest institutional move so far. Studies of AI recommendations show those chatbots give inconsistent answers.

15 Sep 2026

foreUP research finds golf operators see AI value in reporting

foreUP published research among professionals at private clubs, public courses and golf organisations. More than half of respondents said reporting and analytics is where AI could add the most value over the next 12 months. The release does not give a sample size or an overall adoption rate.

Why it matters Clubs are looking at AI for back-office work first, not member coaching, so do not expect your club to offer AI swing tools soon.

Source: [foreUP](https://foreupgolf.com) foreupgolf.com

28 Jun 2026

Study scores which golf equipment brands AI chatbots recommend

5WPR tested more than 60 buyer prompts on drivers, irons, putters, wedges and hybrids across six AI engines, including ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Gemini, Copilot and Google AI Overviews. PING (94), TaylorMade (92), Callaway (88) and Titleist (85) formed the top tier. Eight outlets accounted for a disproportionate share of the sources the engines drew on.

Why it matters If you ask a chatbot which driver to buy, a handful of brands and review sites shape its answer. That is not a fitting.

Source: [5WPR](https://5wpr.com) 5wpr.com

26 Jun 2026

UK study finds ChatGPT and Perplexity disagree on which golf clubs to recommend

AI Score tested ChatGPT and Perplexity with prompts such as 'best golf club in Cornwall' for four UK operators: The Club Company, Crown Golf, Mytime Active and Get Golfing. St Mellion was missing from Perplexity's Cornwall answer and ranked fourth of four by ChatGPT. Orpington Golf Centre performed poorly on both platforms.

Why it matters Chatbot answers about where to play or join vary by platform and do not reflect course quality. Check them before you rely on them.

Source: [The Golf Business](https://thegolfbusiness.co.uk) thegolfbusiness.co.uk

21 Jun 2026

AI rules avatar and AI round summaries feature at the U.S. Open

At the U.S. Open, the USGA ran an AI-generated rules official on a 7-foot interactive screen near the third hole, staffed by Deloitte. It also published AI-written round summaries that compare each player with the field. USGA rules director Craig Winter said Rules AI aims for answers 'as good or better than our own experts'.

Why it matters A governing body is putting its name behind generative AI answers in public. That sets expectations for accuracy that consumer swing apps have not been held to.

Source: [NBC News](https://www.nbcnews.com) [nbcnews.com](https://www.nbcnews.com)

27 May 2026

USGA pilots Rules AI in GHIN app, built with Deloitte

The USGA launched a pilot of Rules AI through the GHIN app at selected clubs. It was trained on more than 25,000 rules queries handled by USGA staff and draws only on verified USGA content. The USGA hopes to roll it out nationwide by spring 2027, and its landing page warns that it should not replace a human official's ruling.

Why it matters This is US-only for now, and we found no equivalent from the R&A. UK golfers should keep using the R&A's own rules resources.

Source: [USGA](https://www.usga.org) [usga.org](https://www.usga.org)

6 Mar 2026

GOLF.AI launches AI phone concierge for pro shops, voiced by Faldo

GOLF.AI launched an AI agent that answers pro shop calls around the clock, takes tee-time bookings and handles questions on rates, lessons and cancellations, using a digitised Sir Nick Faldo voice. Plans start at \$99 a month for up to 200 calls, and the first 100 US courses were deploying. Tee-time bookings made up 38% of calls handled.

Why it matters The first AI many golfers meet at a club may be on the booking line rather than the range. No UK deployments are mentioned.

Source: [Golf Business Technology](https://www.golfbusinesstechnology.com) [golfbusinesstechnology.com](https://www.golfbusinesstechnology.com)

What to watch next

↑ Whether Uneekor's AIMY actually ships

Uneekor showed AIMY as a prototype at the 2026 PGA Show with release slated for later in the year. Watch for a release date, pricing and whether it works on older Uneekor units. It is the clearest test yet of AI coaching tied to measured ball and club data.

↑ Independent accuracy testing of phone apps

OnForm has published a model card. Most other apps quote metric counts, not error figures. The published research puts single-sensor and 2D estimates at several degrees of error. Watch for any app willing to publish validation against motion capture, and be wary of fine positional advice until one does.

↑ Sportsbox under new ownership

The DeChambeau-led group promised SAMI and agentic coaching features through 2026. Watch whether the conversational layer is offered to UK subscribers, how it is priced across tiers, and whether it changes the advice or only how it is presented.

↑ Rules AI beyond the US

The USGA is aiming for a nationwide rollout of Rules AI by spring 2027. The R&A administers the rules outside the US and Mexico, and we found no announcement of a comparable tool from it. Whether one follows, and how it would handle local rules, is open.

↑ Camera-only coaches from new entrants

PathFinder plans to show BirdieSense at the 2027 PGA Show after mid-2026 pre-sales, and XintLabs is newly funded. If camera-only ball flight and swing analysis hold up outdoors, prices could fall. None of these systems has yet been tested independently.

How this report was made

Every development here was found in a public source dated from August 2025 to October 2026: trade press, regulators, journals and company announcements. Each one names its source, so you can read the original.

All 22 source links were checked on 12 Oct 2026; 2 of those sites do not allow automated checking, so those links were not opened by the check. Nothing here is advice; it is a record of what happened.

The next edition, and the guides behind this one, are at aigolfer.co.uk/report/