

Review: Swing Speed Radar / Tempo Timer from Sports Sensors, Inc.

By Don Fisher at Golf Gear Review, www.golfgearreview.com

The SWING SPEED RADAR/TEMPO TIMER, (called the SSR/TT) is a doppler radar unit that measures swing speed of any club in your bag. It can also be used to measure the ball speed, with the addition of a protective cover, (BALL SHIELD), that you place over the unit to protect it should you decide to hit a worm burner with your favorite driver. The unit also measures your TEMPO TIME. There is also another unit that doesn't measure tempo, only speed, this is the SSR.

To use either of the units, all you have to do is press the button on the front of the unit. You don't have to worry about pressing the correct button, because there's only one button, how's that for simple? If you are using the SSR/TT, you do have to press the button a few times to select what mode of operation you want. Your choices are, SWING SPEED: TEMPO TIMER: or DUAL MODE. You can have it display your speed in mph, or km/h, your choice. Switching between modes is pretty simple, you just press the button and look at the display, and it will show you what mode it's set for. Again, it's quite simple, and if all else fails, there is a nice instruction manual that comes with each unit with full details of operation. To make things even more simple for you, when you turn it off, it remembers what mode it was in, and the next time you press the button to turn it on, it goes back to that mode for you. And don't worry about forgetting to turn it off, as it will do that for you if you don't make a swing in 5 minutes. Power is provided by 3 AA batteries, installed in the back of the unit. After you turn it on, all you have to do is place the unit on the ground about 8 to 10 inches from the ball, outside of the ball, so it's not in the way and can't be hit by your club or ball. The unit comes with a simple wire bale, that folds down for storage. When you extend the wire bale, the unit will stand up on end, and it's ready to use. Now all you have to do is hit the ball, and the unit will display your swing speed and tempo time, depending on how you are using the unit. The SSR will measure speeds from 40 to 200 + MPH. The SSR/TT will measure tempo time from .50 to 4.00 seconds, and speeds from 10 to 200 + MPH.

There are two good reasons to get this unit. First, it's a great way to measure your SWING SPEED and TEMPO. Even if you think you know your swing speed, it's a great way to work on different aspects of your swing, to try to increase your speed, which is something most all golfers are looking to do. Who doesn't want to increase their swing speed, and hit the ball farther with that new driver? You may be asking yourself if this unit will help you increase your swing speed. Well, let me tell you what I've learned by using the SSR/TT. The first time I tried the unit, I hit a few balls with my driver, and my swing speed averaged 97 MPH. Now, a few months later, the last time I measured, my swing speed, it averaged 108 MPH, with a high of 111 MPH. How did I manage this increase? Simple, I tried everything I had ever heard about the golf swing, and checked what it did for my swing speed. I'm sure most of you have heard that, "tension is a killer of speed". Well I checked it out with the SSR/TT, and I found out the truth. After that I tried a few things that I had wanted to try with my woods, something that I had started doing with my irons. What I found was that what worked for my irons, (I gained 15 yards per club), also works with my woods. Especially with my driver.

Second, it's a great way to find out which ball best suits your game, in terms of how much ball speed you can generate with your driver. This is where the BALL SHIELD comes in handy. What you do is place the SSR/TT about 3 feet in down range from the tee, place the BALL SHIELD over the unit to protect it, and hit a ball. In this setup, you will be measuring BALL SPEED, rather than SWING SPEED. If you really want the best setup, you will want to purchase 2 units, and a ball shield. What I'm doing is using the SSR/TT setup next to the ball, and a second unit, the SSR, 3 feet down range of the ball. This allows me to measure both the ball speed and the swing speed at the same time. What this does is it allows me to figure out what I call the "Transfer Ratio", what some call the "smash factor. All you do is

divide the ball speed by the swing speed for each ball you hit. Just like drivers, each model of golf ball will react differently at different impact speeds. With two units you can find out which ball will give you the highest ball speed for your swing speed. You can of course measure ball speed one time, swing speed the next by moving the SSR/TT, but that's not as good. WHY? Because your swing speed isn't exactly the same, swing to swing. And because ball speed is affected quite a bit by how good the contact is between the club face and the ball. Solid contact on one shot, versus poor contact on the next shot, could screw up your data if you don't measure ball speed and swing speed at the same time. Does this really help improve your game? Well I did a little testing with two balls I was using this summer, and the results confirmed what I found out on the course. Using my G2 driver, I hit a dozen of each ball into my net. One ball was the Maxfli Revolution Tour, and the second was the Revolution EXT Distance. Supposedly, the EXT Distance was the longer ball off the tee, with a higher ball speed. But that's not what my testing showed. With my G2, I was getting a higher Transfer Ratio with the Tour ball. And when I hit both balls out on the course, that data translated to about 10-15 yard longer drives. I now have a way of testing every model of ball I own with each driver I own, to optimize my ball speed. Which translates to giving me the best chances of hitting the longest drives possible. All with out leaving my back yard.

You could have the opposite problem, where you have a few different drivers you like, heaven forbid, and one ball that you just love, and refuse to switch. With my method of testing, you could find out which of your current drivers, gives you the highest transfer ratio for that ball you want to play. The test is conducted the same way, except this time you switch between drivers and use the same balls. Because each ball and driver responds differently at different impact speeds, the only way to find the right combination for you, is to measure both swing speed, and ball speed with a lot of combinations.

Most golfers might think that the SSR/TT is only good for checking out their swing speed with a driver or 5 iron, but it's also good for working on your short game. Consistency is the most important thing you need with your short game. If you want to have a short tap in for birdie, you have to hit your approach shots close, and that means "distance control". I decided to see what the SSR/TT would do for my short game, so I started hitting some half wedge shots, using the SSR/TT to measure my swing speed and tempo. What I found out was that with practice, I could get my speed and tempo pretty consistant. And that was all I needed to start hitting my half-swing wedge shots a lot closer. It's a great tool for dialing in your wedge distance. I started with trying to make all my swings exactly at 40 MPH, with the same tempo time, with each of my 4 wedges. Then I moved up to 50 MPH and 60 MPH. It doesn't take long to discover that doing this gets you dialed in for distance for all your wedges. The nice thing about using the SSR/TT, is that you don't have to go to the range to practice. Once you figure out how far you hit the ball with each wedge, at each speed at the range, you can practice all you want in your back yard if you have a net. Now you can see the results of your practice and never have to drive to the range. Imagine being able to work on your distance control at home, five minutes a day, seven days a week if you want. Don't have a driving net? Not a problem, just make the swing without the ball, and let the SSR/TT provide the feedback you need. Note; because the SSR/TT will measure swing speed down to 10 MPH in dual mode, I'd recommend you take that into account when you are deciding which unit you want to get. The SSR only goes down to 40 MPH, which might not be slow enough for 1/4 swing shots for some golfers. The reason for the 40 MPH limit, is because in SS mode, both units are designed to ignore that little "waggle" some of you make before you swing.

I guess you could say there are at least 5 good reasons to get the SSR/TT.

1. Measure your swing speed
2. Work on improving your tempo
3. Figure out how to increase your swing speed
4. Select the best ball/driver, for your game.
5. Improve your short game

I'm sure a lot of you have hit balls on a launch monitor or a golf simulator, and saw a swing speed for your driver. Have you ever wondered how accurate those readings were? I know I have. One reason I've wondered about this is that the reading seems to vary so much, one day to the next and swing to swing. When I've gone to one of the big golf shops, I've gotten a swing speed reading from 85 MPH to as high as 120 MPH. Now I'm willing to admit my swing isn't as well honed as a PGA tour player's, but I was pretty sure it didn't vary that much.

So I decided to do some research on ways to measure my swing speed and find out the truth of the matter. One of the first things I learned was that most launch monitors don't even measure your swing speed, even if the machine will display a figure for you. The most common launch monitor here in the Denver area is the Vector Launch Monitor. After you hit a ball, it gives you both the swing speed, and ball speed for that shot. What it doesn't tell you is that the swing speed it displays, isn't real, it's only an estimate, based on the ball speed. At one time last year I was thinking about getting a Vector, so I looked up the specifications for it. What I learned is that the unit is SOUND activated. What it does is this. When you hit the ball, the sound of impact triggers a high-speed camera, and it starts taking photos of the ball. Based on how far the ball moves and how much it spins between photos, the Vector can calculate the ball speed and spin rate. Because the unit doesn't start to take photos until impact is made, there is no way it can measure your swing speed, so it makes a "guess", and displays that guess as your swing speed. That's what you get with the Vector, a "guess". The last time I checked on the price of a Vector monitor, it was \$3150.00. And then you have to figure in the cost of a laptop computer to go with it if you don't already have one. That's a lot of money to spend on a machine that guesses rather than measures.

I also read up on a few other units that are supposed to be able to measure swing speed, and what I found was that most of them aren't too reliable, in terms of getting a reading every time. Some of them tell you to place a piece of reflective tape on the club head. That's supposed to make things work better. I can't say how I was too impressed with that idea. Some of the other units I looked at were designed to be used indoors only, under controlled light conditions. Again, I wasn't too excited about that idea. For one thing, I can't swing a driver inside my house, and I don't know many people that can, not without breaking things. Then I found out about the SWING SPEED RADAR, with TEMPO TIMER. First thing I liked about it was that I didn't have to use any reflective tape on the club head, so that makes things easy. Next, it can be used either indoors or outdoors, it doesn't care where you are. Plus, it also will measure the TEMPO TIME of each swing. That's a nice bonus, one that most golfers could really use. Have you ever heard how "timing and tempo" is really important in your golf swing? And how easy is it for your tempo to get off? With this unit, you can measure your TEMPO TIME, from .50 to 4.00 seconds, in thousandths of a second.

Conclusion

This is a first class product, one that works and does what it was designed to do. It's easy to use, it's small and light weight, and it's easy to take with you to the range. It comes in a handy nylon carry pouch, that will clip onto your golf bag or belt. If you're serious about improving your golf game, I'd recommend you look into getting the SWING SPEED RADAR./ TEMPO TIMER soon.

Source

Don Fisher is a long-time contributor and forums moderator at Golf Gear Review. Don is the owner of Fisher Custom Firearms, and is a world class pistolsmith. He is now building his own custom made line of putters. For information contact him by visiting our forums [here](#) and send him a private message.