**Slide 1 – Title Slide**

Donnie:

Hey everyone! We’re excited to share our project: Drive for Show, Putt for Dough. I’m Donnie Canchela, here with Nathan Kidder, Kyle Murphy, and Will Girardi.

We used PGA Tour data to explore how much a golfer’s driving and putting contribute to their success—and whether that old saying still holds up.

**Slide 2 – What Data Did We Use?**

Donnie:

"We got our data from the official PGA stats site. It includes all players who made the cut in 19 tournaments in 2022. That means we’re looking only at golfers who made it to the weekend—so no data from those who missed the cut.

It covers key performance metrics in two areas: driving and putting, and includes how players finished in terms of scoring, earnings, and FedEx points."

**Slide 3 – What Variables Are in the Dataset?**

Donnie:

Let’s break that down.

Driving metrics:

* + Average Driving Distance — how far they hit it.
  + Driving Accuracy Percentage — how often they land it in the fairway.
  + Strokes Gained Off the Tee — a more advanced stat measuring how much a player’s driving helps or hurts compared to the average pro.

Putting metrics:

* Average Putts per Round
* One-Putt Percentage — how often they make it in one putt.
* Strokes Gained Putting — similar concept, but for the green.

Success measures:

* Scoring Average, Money Earned, and FedEx Cup Points.
* These allow us to analyze how skills in different parts of the game relate to overall performance.

Question 1 : Driving Accuracy vs One-Putt Percentage

Will:

**Slide 4 -** For our first question, we looked at whether there's a direct relationship between driving accuracy, that’s the percentage of fairways hit—and one-putt percentage.

The idea was to see if being in the fairway more often gives players better angles or closer approach shots, which might make putting easier.

**Slide 5 -** We ran a linear regression and found that the slope of the line is -0.0775. That means that for every 1% increase in fairways hit, the one-putt percentage goes down by about 0.0775 percentage points. So, the relationship is slightly negative, not what we might expect.

The R² value is 0.0136, which is very low. This tells us that only about 1.36% of the variation in one-putt percentage can be explained by driving accuracy.

All in all, the regression tells us that there’s a very weak correlation between the two. Hitting more fairways doesn’t seem to improve your odds of sinking a one-putt.

Question 2: Distance vs Accuracy

Kyle:

**Slide 6 -** Next, we asked: If players drive the ball farther, are they more or less accurate? This analysis helps reveal if players trade accuracy for distance—longer drives may reach the green faster but risk missing the fairway.

**Slide 7 -** We found a negative correlation—between distance increases, accuracy tends to go down. That aligns with intuition: going for power often means sacrificing control. But once again the chart has a lower R^2 value, so we may need to do this with a grain of salt.

**Slide 8 -** We took a deeper dive into this data and narrowed the list down to the top 10 and that tradeoff still exists. Even though they’re less accurate, their longer drives help them reach greens more quickly, potentially gaining strokes in other ways.

So, this tradeoff might work in a player's favor—if they can manage the risk. That could shape course strategy: some players might benefit more by focusing on driving distance, even if it means fewer fairways hit."

Question 3: What Predicts Success Best?

Nathan:

**Slide 9 -** For Question 3, we asked: Which performance metric—scoring average, money, or FedEx points—is best predicted by driving and putting stats?

This helps identify which part of a golfer’s game, driving or putting, has the strongest impact on their performance and results. Knowing whether these stats better predict score, earnings, or points can guide training, strategy, and recruitment on the PGA Tour.​

**Slide 10 -** We ran regressions using combinations of driving and putting data to predict each. Money earned was predictable, but not as well as expected. FedEx points showed moderate predictability. Average Score was by far the most predictable.

**Slide 12 -** Strokes gained—especially off the tee—correlates strongly with earnings. Golfers who drive the ball better tend to earn significantly more, even if they aren’t putting exceptionally.

This insight could help players or coaches allocate practice time—maybe spending more hours improving tee shots has a bigger return than putting drills."

**Slide 13 –** Drive for Show… or Dough?

So, does the classic saying hold up—Drive for Show, Putt for Dough?

Well, not quite. According to our regression, the stat that had the strongest positive effect on money earned was strokes gained off the tee.

It had the highest coefficient—about $120,000 per stroke gained—and a near-zero p-value, showing a statistically strong, consistent impact.

But since not enough variation can be explained by the variables, I think we keep the ole the exact same.

Predicting Who Makes the Cut

Nathan and Kyle:

**Slide 14:** To expand on the project, we created a logistic regression model to predict whether a golfer would make the cut.

We used several strokes gained metrics, including Putting, Around the Green, Approach Shots, Off the Tee, and Tee to Green

**Slide 15:** Our model achieved 93.3% accuracy on the first 15 players we tested and 85% across the full dataset.

The strongest predictors?

Tee to Green and Approach Shots. These are consistent, repeatable skills that really separate the weekend players from those who miss the cut.

There’s room to expand this model by tournament type—like majors versus regular events—to see if certain skills matter more on different courses.

This model offers strong predictive power, with over 85% accuracy on our full dataset. It has practical value for players, coaches, and analysts who want to assess cut-making potential before a tournament begins.

**Slide 16 – Q&A (9:00–10:00)**

Donnie:

And that wraps up our analysis!

To summarize:

Driving distance can hurt accuracy—but it can still pay off.

Putting in performance doesn’t depend much on driving accuracy.

And driving, especially strokes gained off the tree, is one of the strongest predictors of money earned.

Thanks for listening—any questions?