



Elite Insider Circle Monthly Handicap Improver September 2015



Hello Fellow Golf Enthusiast,

This is **Jaacob Bowden**.

To recap last month, I pointed you to **my guest appearance** on the **18Strong.com** podcast with host **Jeff Pelizzaro** in which we discussed **my background, journey from 14-handicapper to pro golfer, long drive, Dan Shauger and Mike Austin, swing speed, training, etc.**

We **included a CD** of my interview with one of the most popular instructors in the world...**Andrew Rice**. Andrew and I talked about **Trackman, Swing Catalyst, pressure vs pitching, the low-launching high-spinning pitch shot and how anyone can do it, and more.**

Our equipment expert, **Tom Wishon**, wrote an article about **whether or not “the shaft is the engine of the club”**. Hint...**it’s not**. Tom explained it’s actually **more like the transmission.**

Adam Young, our nutrition and general golf expert, told us how simply **switching your focus from something internally focused (i.e. keep your head still) to an external focus (i.e. practice looking at the hole when you putt) can help improve your putting.**



Jamie Sadlowski, 2-time RE/MAX World Long Drive Champion, was our Long Drive Q&A.

Key things to point out are:

- His **equipment is optimized** for his swing
- He **works the ball** in the wind to maximize distance
- He **practices swinging fast** (a simple but important key to increasing your swing speed) with both his driver and the Momentum Speed Whoosh
- He **spends time in the gym** doing mobility work and working with weights to be able to hit the ball far.

Our putting expert, **Geoff Mangum**, wrote a technical piece about “**The X for Golf Lags**”, which is a pattern for which leaves outside of half-meter are easy...and why you want to **leave those long lag putts above the hole** versus below the hole.

I also answered a question from one of our members.

This month, here's what's coming up for you.

Normally we would have information from Tom Wishon and Adam Young. However, **Geoff Mangum is providing such a long article about putting** this month that we've decided not to over load you with too much information at once. **We'll save the two new articles from Tom and Adam for next month to make it easier to digest Geoff's piece.**

However, **we will have a Long Drive Q&A with Jeff “The Critter” Crittenden.** Jeff has multiple wins in long drive and **nearly won the RE/MAX World Long Drive Championships** last year **missing victory by a mere 13 inches!**

I'll also answer a member question....and as part of your Monthly Handicap Improver Insider Circle, **we've included a CD of my extended audio interview with Jamie Sadlowski.**

One of the things that **Jamie and I talked about is mobility work.** Jamie works on his mobility...a lot. If you've ever seen him swing on TV or YouTube, you'll know he has a very long swing. The mobility work helps him do this.

You may recall from the member area in the section about neuromuscular reeducation (NMR) that I mentioned that **bodywork can be synergistically beneficial in regard to helping you hit the ball longer. Mobility work falls under that category.** Some of you have even asked me about the microfiber reduction offered through Somax Sports with Bob Prichard. This is also similar.



Jamie, in particular, likes to use a softball for self-myofascial release. Massage sticks and foam rollers also can help.

One of my favorite self massage tools is the Thera Cane Massager, which you can find here:

<http://amzn.to/1KjZlhs>

It's basically a curved green hard plastic stick with multiple knobs on it that allow you to massage your own muscles very deeply without the help of a therapist. **You can use it to break up knots, points of pain, etc in your muscles.** It's a clever and great tool. If you're interested in mobility work, I'd check it out.

On a side note, I'm writing this ahead of the PGA TOUR's BMW Championship at Conway Farms Golf Club, so it will be interesting to see what happens...but you may have heard that **Jordan Spieth missed the last two cuts and lost the #1 world ranking spot** with some of his worst performances of the last several years.

It's difficult to say exactly what is going on, but looked in to his stats in more detail, his first missed cut it looked like good driving, bad iron play, and bad putting on Day 1...and bad driving, bad iron play, with good putting on Day 2. **The common theme on both days was bad iron play.**

Wouldn't you know it, it turns out that **prior to the tournament he switched his irons** from the Titleist 714 AP2s to the not publicly released yet Titleist 716 AP2s.

Why in the world he would do this after the season he had is beyond me!

I can only **suspect that Titleist required him to do so** in his contract. Even if that's the case, **I don't know why he didn't wait until after the Playoffs and President's Cup** to make the switch. He could've possibly continued his good play and then **he would have had a full 6 months before the 2016 Masters** to get

in the **2000-3000 hits he says he needs on a club before fully trusting it** (not to mention getting used to it under the gun).

Regardless of his reasoning, the point I want to make is for you to **be very careful about switching your clubs** unless you really think it will benefit you. Perhaps you have made a change to your bag early in the season and, with as little as you may play compared to a tour player, it took you most of the golf season to really get comfortable with it.

I remember one time I was talking with **Jean Francois Remesy, a 3-time winner on the European Tour**, and we were chatting about how **simply changing the loft on a wedge by 1 degree can completely throw off your short game** for a long period of time.

I know some people talk about the grooves wearing down a bit over time, but I would also point out that **the guy with the best short game I've ever seen is a scratch level amateur who has been playing the same two wedges for 20 years** or so...basically since when he played for his college team. His grooves are worn a bit, but he knows exactly what they will do and he's got a boatload of experience with them in all sorts of situations.

So please...**be careful when changing your equipment.**

Anyway, let's get started!

Long Drive Q&A with Jeff "The Critter" Crittenden



Age: 44 Height: 6'2" Weight: 230 lbs

Driver Specs: 1X and 2X House of Forged Platinum 6-degree MOI Intruder (depending on conditions)

Sponsors: TCDi, Champ Sports, Tattoo Golf, House of Forged, Hirzl Gloves, Muira Golf, MOI Golf, 59 belts

Special Accomplishments:

- 2015 Omaha Senior Long Drive Champion
- 2014 RE/AX World Long Drive Championship runner-up
- 2012 Dixie Classic Long Drive Champion
- 2012 Sandhills Slam Long Drive Champion
- 2010 Cabo Invitational Long Drive Champion

What is your longest drive in competition?

491 yards at an Omaha long drive event 2015

What were the conditions of the drive?

Downwind and rainy conditions (received the only bounce of the day)

What are the fastest swing speeds you've recorded on a Swing Speed Radar and/or Trackman?

141 mph on Trackman

What lead you to choose your particular equipment specifications?

When swinging consistently in the upper 130s I need a reliable shaft that will kick hard at impact. I look for playability where I can work the shot according to the conditions. When competing I need a certain spin rate and launch angle to have maximum distance and control.

Do you favor a particular shot shape to hit it long?

I like a draw into the wind and fade down wind. If there is no wind I hit more of a straight shot.

Do you use any training aids to work on your speed and power?

I use over under training and video to maintain my swing.

Do you do any other types of training to drive it further?

Physical conditioning, weight training including explosive and strength training. Flexibility and stretching regime. Also work on swing mechanics to maximize swing speed.

Is there any particular bit of advice you would give the regular amateur for him or her to hit the ball longer?

The two things I find most common with my students are tension and swing path, which in my eyes go hand in hand.

When the swing path comes off plane the tension of the student will increase. The tension is in the forearms and body is to control the clubface through impact. The closer the swing is on plane the less tension you need to control the face of the club. The club should be able to release through impact.

Where can people contact you or learn more about you?

<http://critterpowergolf.com>
crittergolf@gmail.com

Getting Rid of the Pull Stroke in Putting

By Geoff Mangum

Nearly all golfers develop a "pull" stroke in their early days of golfing.

The main reason for this is standing beside the ball facing the target with the eyes, with a torso also "facing" the target. This "open" body posture results in a stroke action that sends balls diagonally out to the target with the rear shoulder working towards the front shoulder rotationally.

That's a "pull" for sure later, when the golfer tries to stand more "square" to the intended line, not "open". The usual end state is golfers standing more or less "square" to the intended line as if to putt sideways out of the setup but aiming the putter face out to the outside of the real target line then "pulling" strokes onto the intended line, not being aware this is what they are doing.

This lurking "pull" habit in nearly all golfers causes many unnecessary misses and also is the reason golfers are streaky in putting -- they are unaware of the mis-

aiming and the "pull" action, and therefore also not aware of what exactly they are doing "right" that gets balls onto the intended line as required. It certainly isn't done by putting exactly where the putter face aims!

And the "pull" stroke is also quite naturally fostered by the full-swing. The power required for the full swing necessitates hip and upper torso rotation, and the "pull-hook" is the bane of the golfer who finally solves the "slice" and tries to hit with power. (Think Ben Hogan before he dug the secret out of the dirt to cure his pull-hook problem!)

A golfer on the green putting does not use power, but uses tempo and rhythm instead, and is required to start the ball exactly on line with great precision. But the full-swing movement habit and the mis-aiming "open" body habit conspire to ruin many strokes.

If a golfer strokes 100 putts trying to start each perfectly online where the putter face aims (not trying somehow to get a ball started onto a perceived "intended" line regardless of the putter face aim), perhaps as many as 30 of these putts will be significantly off line.

For example, for a 10-foot putt that is aimed dead straight at the center of the 4.25" wide cup, any error in stroke line greater than 1 degrees left or right of perfect aim will miss the edge of the cup, over 2.125" off line by the cup. Of these 30 "bad" strokes off line, fully 24 of them are probably "pulls" -- that is, the vast majority of bad strokes for line are "pulls", perhaps as much as 80%.

That means that addressing the "pull" and reducing or eliminating this action from the stroke results in a BIG UPGRADE in putting skill!

So let's get busy!

The answer to the "pull" is to KEEP MOVING THE PUTTER FACE ONLINE thru impact a little longer than usually or habitually happens. The "pull" curls the stroke to the inside during impact! So: "don't do that."

A stroke that rolls the ball exactly where the putter face aims at address is one that strokes the flat metal of the putter face "straight thru the ball along the aim line" with a "square face the same aim as at address" without any curling or twisting of the path or putter face offline until impact is concluded.

The "pull" fails to accomplish this necessary dynamic either by an out-to-in path, or a closed or closing putter face, or a combination of the two, DURING impact.

The cure, then, is simple: "don't do that."

In other words, move the putter face straight along the aim line thru the center of the ball with a "square" putter face, and DON'T curl the path or putter face to the inside until after impact is concluded.

That is two things to accomplish: first, move the putter face square and straight thru the ball on the aim line, and second, don't curl the path or face to the inside until impact is concluded.

So actually to help golfers NOT "pull" putts is to teach BOTH of these movement aspects as part of the skill of the stroke.

Straight & Square Strokes

So how do you move the putter face straight and square thru the center of the ball on the aim line?

The starting point is to INTEND this. As silly as it perhaps sounds, golfers don't actually know that they have to INTEND to start the ball exactly on the same line the putter face aims at address. They "sort of assume" they know this, but operationally, it is not really part of many golfers' mindset when looking down at a putter and a ball getting ready to pull the trigger.

To INTEND to putt the ball down the same line the putter face aims requires looking at the inherent aim of the putter face, 90 degrees off the sweetspot of the putter face plane straight thru the ball. Once the golfer looks at and sees this 90-degree line thru the ball, then the golfer needs to INTEND that the stroke send the ball exactly down this line or direction and none other.

So let's pause on this point just a moment for clarity's sake. If you are aiming a putter face thru a ball at a target (a SEPARATE skill, about which you probably need to schedule a half a day's lesson!), the end result is the sweetspot of the putter face needs to be positioned at one and only one spot on the equator at the "back" of the ball.

This spot (or "dimple") is only the CORRECT "back" when it is the farthest point on the equator away from the target. Then the sweetspot of the putter face is positioned at the "back" of the ball so that the CLOSEST point of the equator to the putter face is this same "back" dimple.

But simply locating the sweetspot closest to this "back" of the ball's equator does not SQUARE UP the face at the target.

However, fortunately, that is extremely easy.

When the "back" point is clearly identified, there is only one way to square the aim of the face thru a ball at that point: two points make a line, and the second point is obviously the CENTER of the ball, so square up the putter face thru these two points -- from the back of the ball straight thru the center of the ball.

THAT is the aim line for the stroke.

Now for the stroke, before making it, perceive this aim line of the square face thru the ball, seeing the spot on the equator closest to the putter face, the center of the ball, and if possible also identify and perceive the exact opposite FRONT spot on the equator. The "front" spot on the ball's equator that is part of this aim line can be perceived as the exact OPPOSITE of the "back" spot -- like a South Pole and a North Pole.

Also the exact "front" spot on the equator is the point on the equator that is farther from the putter face sweetspot than any other spot on the ball's equator. Also the "front" spot is the point on the ball's equator that is closest to the target. And of course the exact "front" spot is a point on the line established by the "back" spot and the ball's center, and by the 90-degree direction of the putter face off the sweetspot. Good to know (emphasis on the word "know")!

Golfers need to "see" the aim line thru the ball, and this sort of deliberate knowledge about the equator and the center of the ball and the relationship of the face aim to the ball insists that golfers get this skill.

Now, once golfers can "see" this line thru the ball of the face aim, then the golfer needs to imagine the stroke moving the putter face straight and square along this line thru the ball. That's just required!

While it is possible in physics to suck at putting by using a "cut stroke" like the hapless Billy Mayfair in an artless attempt to gets balls rolling on the "intended" line, using an out-to-in path and an "open" face thru impact in some UNKNOWN combination (but not the line where the putter face aims at address), don't go there! It's a sure formula for streakiness and lack of skill.

Once the golfer "sees" the aim line thru the ball and "visualizes" a movie of the stroke that moves the putter face straight and square down this line, then it's time to MOVE.

The best teaching and the most powerful teaching to help golfers is to say: "Get the ball started on the aim line anyway you can, or die trying." That's because doing what is required is not optional if you want the putt to sink.

The aim of the putter face represents the golfer's best decision of what the WORLD out there requires for the putt to get the ball into the hole. So ONCE AIMED, there is no Plan B for the stroke -- straight where aimed for line and pace.

If the aim is not satisfying, then recycle and aim better. But once the aiming is DONE, there is NO Plan B.

That means WHETHER the ball starts exactly online is far more critical to the success of the putt than HOW this is done. So the above teaching is the most powerful thing to tell a golfer.

Even so, we have to describe HOW this can BEST be done -- that is, most easily and most accurately and most consistently and most frequently HOW to accomplish what MUST happen, no matter HOW.

This requires teaching golfers a setup and stroke motion that biomechanically CAUSES strokes that roll the ball exactly where the putter face aims at address.

The setup, briefly, is neck square or perpendicular to the aim line, with the chest and shoulders parallel to the aim of the putter face, and the grip of the hands managing the putter face to incorporate the putter face aim into the chest alignment.

The movement is then to swing the arms and hands straight across the body along the line of the shoulders and chest, with the hands maintaining the face aim and not allowing the aim of the face to curl off line on a "pull" path or to twist the face into a "closed" orientation. In other words, swing the arms and hands straight across the front of the body without twisting the face out of its square aim. That moves the putter face straight and square thru the ball.

Strokes That Stay Straight and Don't Curl Off Line

There is plenty more to the SKILL of HOW to putt where the putter face aims, but this article is about reducing or eliminating the "pull", so we have to move on to

the second thing to teach -- how to STAY moving straight and square all the way thru until impact is over.

Impact does not last very long in a putt, but no matter how briefly impact lasts, it doesn't matter if the golfer's stroke does not come into impact square and online before impact starts. That part is addressed by the above.

Now we have to address KEEPING the stroke headed straight and square on the aim line thru impact, until impact is over.

Although actual impact is very brief and a short span of space, the golfer needs to PERSIST in a much larger span than the actual impact to make sure that NO STROKE curls off line for path or face until WELL AFTER actual impact.

So how far is that? At least 2-3 inches past the front of the ball!

So a stroke that reduces or eliminates the "pull" is one that starts impact with the putter face moving square and straight along the aim line thru the ball and also STAYS moving square and straight along this same line until at least 2-3 inches past the front of the ball.

Since the ball is 1.68" in diameter, the distance the good stroke has to persist is at least 4-5 inches.

Actually, since the stroke has to be square and straight BEFORE impact starts, golfers should make sure there is about a 1-inch WARNING TRACK before the back of the ball so that the putter face is sorted out as square moving straight before this warning track is covered. That EXPANDS the space the stroke needs to be "good" to 5-6 inches.

Okay, that's not THAT big of a requirement, but trust me, golfers are not naturally very good at doing this!

So what's the problem? There are THREE big ones:

- 1) Turning the chest or arms off parallel to the aim line
- 2) Using the rear hand to stroke thru impact
- 3) Hurrying the stroke

1. Turning Shoulders or Arms

First, the golfer turns the chest or arms to the inside thru impact. Stop this.

Do not allow the chest or shoulders to rotate to the inside until well after impact is done.

If you believe in an "arc" stroke, you're a fool and you will be cursed with far too many off-line strokes your whole life. If you believe that a putting stroke is a miniature full swing, you are a fool.

Perhaps you don't know that Jack Nicklaus for the full swing of the driver "chased his tee ball straight off the tee down the aim line for at least a yard" thru impact. I don't teach full swing, but I note that this was the idea of the best professional golfer in history.

How do you stop the chest rotation?

Basically, the golfer needs to value keeping the chest and shoulders aimed parallel to the putter face aim throughout the forward stroke. That means the golfer does not desire to CHANGE the chest and shoulder orientation during the backstroke!

So if you rotate the chest around in the backstroke, that's not helpful. If you deliberately try to curl your backstroke along some sort of "arc" in the backstroke, what the heck are you thinking? You are just making the straight and square THRU-STROKE harder to do, so why do that?

The backstroke doesn't matter to the putt -- the target is in the THRU-STROKE direction, so why create a problem in any backstroke?

Okay, you complain about the requirement that the backstroke be a "straight back" movement and you don't like it, don't believe it is possible, believe it requires manipulation of some ill-defined sort, or some other sort of NOT REAL attitude against a "straight back" stroke.

But read again what I teach: I don't CARE at all about the backstroke, and don't say it needs to be straight back -- what I teach is that the FORWARD stroke thru impact has to be straight and square down the line of aim established at address. Any way you get that done!

But as to the HOW to do that without unnecessary and STUPID complications, never DELIBERATELY rotate the chest off the square / parallel setup orientation in the backstroke. That's just very unhelpful to accomplishing the straight, square online thru-stroke, and that's the stroke that matters.

So the HOW teaching is DON'T ROTATE THE CHEST in making the backstroke but KEEP THE CHEST STILL (or very nearly so) during the backstroke. Then the forward stroke naturally and easily can swing the arms along the line of the shoulders without having to FIX a problem created in the backstroke.

Okay, so far so good -- people who ADVOCATE arcing backstrokes AND straight-back backstrokes can take a hike along STUPID LANE. Goodbye to all that!

Turning Arms and Hands But Not Chest or Shoulders

Well, even so, what happens if the ARMS and HANDS make a problem in the backstroke? There are two separate problems -- backstrokes that start back out across the line (causing a "loop" in the forward stroke), and backstrokes that have the arms and hands "arc" to the inside.

The CAUSE of a backstroke that starts out across the aim line is using the rear hand to pull the putter back from the ball. This flexes the rear ELBOW to move the rear hand, and the flexing of the elbow sends the putter AWAY from the body, making a slight "crescent" shape on the far side of the aim line. So don't do that! Use the front arm and hand to shove the putter back from the ball.

The CURE for an across-the-aim-line backstroke, once it happens, is to let the hands sink back into gravity to hang the way they were at setup before you started the stroke. When the elbow flexes to send the hand away from the body, the distance of the hand from the thigh at setup increases (perhaps 1-2 inches further from the thigh). It also helps not to start with tension in the rear elbow, since that tension disallows the letting the hand sink back closer to the thigh to get back on track. Allowing the hand to come back into natural-hanging before starting the forward thru-stroke gets the problem fixed.

Fixed, that is, PROVIDED the hands did not also TWIST the face out of square during the backstroke.

This requires attention to the "aim" of the lead-hand's thumb print on the handle, as the flatness of the handle IS the aim of the putter face, and then the flatness of the thumb print onto the handle CONTROLS the face aim during the stroke. If the thumb print swings back and forth in front of the body, the thumb print thru impact in the forward stroke has to be the SAME as it was at

address, or else the face of the putter at impact is open or closed compared to what it needs to be. So the easiest way to make that happen is NOT to allow the thumb print to twist compared to its orientation at address, at any time in the back- or thru-stroke, even if the hands drift further from the body. So, to avoid an out-to-in path of the stroke once the backstroke errs to go out across the aim line, let the hands settle back down to the same distance they were from the thighs at address (usually about one hand's width off the thigh). And to avoid hitting the putt with a closed putter face, don't let the thumb print on the handle twist to the inside closed (or open, for that matter).

The CAUSES of strokes that arc to the inside — even after the golfer does not allow the chest or shoulders to rotate in the backstroke — are:

- 1) Too light a grip pressure that allows the weight of the putter head to droop in towards the feet, and
- 2) ARMS or HANDS that curl back in an arc to the inside, off the end of the rear shoulder even though the shoulders don't also rotate back to the inside.

So the CURE for that is to maintain adequate grip pressure so the putter doesn't droop inward at the feet when the backstroke starts and the putter sole comes up from the ground, and then to ALLOW the arms to sink back beneath the shoulders before initiating the forward thru-stroke.

If the arms and hands are swung back to the ball from an inside arcing position, the tendency is to either hit balls to the outside of the line by not re-rotating enough, or to hit balls into a pull by over-rotating to correct the unfortunate arcing inside. There is nothing AUTOMATIC in an arcing backstroke correcting itself in the thru-stroke by “re-arc-ing”, and anyone who thinks there is is a fool. Just uneducated. The arms and putter in this case “fall down” and will never “fall back up”.

Self-Correcting Arms

The two arms hanging like swing chains off the shoulders — aligned parallel to the aim of the putter face — when connected together on the putter handle -- have in physics a nice self-correcting dynamic that will straighten out the unfortunate inside arcing of the arms in the first half of the forward stroke, before impact. A child's swing seat on two chains swings perpendicular to the top bar of the swing apparatus (which represents the line of the shoulders). But in a putting stroke, the “seat” of the swing on two chains moves under the top bar sideways, the same as the line of the shoulders. Because the two chains

(arms) are connected at the handle, when the rear chain goes to the inside out from under the bar of the shoulders (and the shoulders themselves do not also turn), the rear arm is moving a) up against gravity out from beneath its hanging under the bar, and also b) by stretching the distance from the other (front) chain that is not yet also headed out from under the bar. So both gravity and the connection between the two chains restrains how far the rear chain / arm curls back to the inside out from under the shoulders. THEN, in the forward stroke, everything about this conspires to encourage the rear arm / chain to drop back under the bar, and the forward chain / arm's connectedness draws the rear arm back into alignment with the top bar. Once the two chains "agree" that swinging under the bar is "the best compromise", the momentum of the arms is established in alignment with the shoulders and the arms simply swing straight. The "trick" to this is to "allow" the two arms from the top of the backstroke to "drop" back into position without "hurrying" the arms. Hurrying the arms means the golfer's muscles are contracting and this adds too much momentum and "casts" the arms from in-to-out into a push stroke.

So avoiding or curing the "pull" when the backstroke has curled the arms and hands back to the inside of the rear shoulder is both NOT hurrying and NOT trying to re-rotate anything.

Sweet Spot Impact Not the Priority

In BOTH cases — a backstroke out across the aim line and a backstroke arcing to the inside — the golfer should NOT focus upon returning the sweetspot to the back of the ball. This is the wrong idea. The correct idea is to accept that the impact may be on the heel a bit because the backstroke went across the aim line or on the toe a bit because the backstroke went inside the aim line, but in any case WHATEVER piece of the putter face actually meets the back of the ball at impact, THAT piece of metal moves straight and square down the aim line. So the golfer at the top of the backstroke focuses on straight and square stroke, making sure the thumb print on the handle moves along ANY straight line that is parallel to the address line, even if this line presents the toe or heel to the back of the ball.

Because the golfer uses adequate grip pressure to prevent putter droop in the stroke, this grip tone is sufficient to prevent off-center impacts from losing enough distance to make the ball stop short. And the muscle tone is also usually sufficient to prevent loss of square putter face as well. Additionally, experience with this plan to correct off-path backstrokes allows the golfer to anticipate off-center impact and get even better at avoiding loss of distance or twisting of face.

Hands and Arms Swing Straight

A no-pull stroke swings the arms and hands STRAIGHT down the aim line established at address. That means that the hands don't come in closer to the thighs than the hands start at address. At address, the hands hang above the toes, while the shoulders are above the balls of the feet off a slightly forward-bent upper torso. So the hands are 4-5 inches out from the thighs, and in the stroke going forward, the hands STAY this same distance from the thighs. No curling inward, no casting outward — the hands swing straight. If the hands swing straight, the arms swing straight.

When arms swing straight beneath the shoulders, the arms drop and swing under the shoulders and then their own momentum moves them into the straight-thru stroke. The arms by themselves in a no-hurry stroke will move the front shoulder up vertically near the end of the thru-stroke. Anything the golfer does that opposes where the arms are going is likely to cause a pull. So the golfer needs to enjoy the straight-thru direction of the arms and not interfere with them.

The same goes for the hands. If the motion that starts the lead arm and hands back from the ball sends the hands up to the top of a backstroke, from that point forward the hands in a no-hurry stroke will drop and swing to the other side of the thru stroke “when they feel like it.” So the no-pull stroke for the hands is that “they get there when they get there” from the top of the backstroke.

2) Using the Rear Hand

The rear hand should not be used to power the stroke, either back or thru. The LEAD arm and hand as a unit push the putter back from the ball, either straight along the aim line or slightly to the inside. If the rear arm or hand drifts to the inside in the backstroke, the chest and shoulders should NOT also twist or rotate in the backstroke, but should stay parallel to the aim line. But in the forward stroke, using the rear hand CAUSES a pull.

This happens because the upper rear side of the chest is IN THE WAY of the rear upper arm as the rear upper arm moves across the body into impact. The inside of the upper arm conflicts with the side of the upper chest and this blocks and then turns the forearm to the inside. That's a pull.

But swinging the forward arm as a structured unit never has this problem swinging toward the target, since the chest is not in the way and the lead arm does not cross the body headed to the target. So, simply put, never swing the putter with the rear hand, and always have more muscle tone and definition in the lead side, aim and position the putter with the lead side, add the rear hand without as much muscle tone as the lead hand or arm, and then move the lead arm back from the ball with the pectoral muscle in the upper side of the chest that connects the upper lead arm to the rib cage.

3) Hurrying the Second/Forward Stroke

The tempo for quickness or slowness of swinging is what it is, but the “rhythm” is the fact that the back stroke and the forward stroke take the same tempo time. The backstroke from its start back away from the ball to its transition at the top of the backstroke takes one tempo, and then the forward stroke from top of backstroke to top of thru-stroke takes the SAME one tempo of timing. If the second / thru swing arrives at the ball in one-half this tempo, that is correct. But if the swing arrives to impact EARLY, that is likely to result in a pull.

That’s because the only way to speed up the second stroke compared to the first is to CONTRACT muscles. And muscle contractions usually head into a “fetal position” posture. And doing that is a “pull” to the inside. So don’t hurry the second stroke. Keep the second stroke the SAME as the backstroke so that the ball is impacted exactly “now” when the tempo is half-repeated, using the SAME swinging pace for the thru-stroke that was established by the backstroke. Just relax and do two swings the SAME.

Two Pro Tricks for Keeping the Stroke Straighter a Little Longer

Two movements the pros use without being aware of it that defeat the pull are:

- 1) To bend the wrists thru impact
- 2) To shift the head backwards at and thru impact.

The first is either a lead-wrist breakdown or an extension of the rear hand thru impact, in any case changing the angles of the wrists to the forearms that is established at address. This PROLONGS the straightness of the putter head motion thru impact and defeats the pull. The backwards shift of the head at and thru impact does the same. As the head goes back, this promotes the lead shoulder rising, and that in turn promotes the lead hand and putter head arcing vertically up above the stroke line. This also defeats the curl off line to the

inside, as anything headed up thru impact and also laterally towards the target is very unlikely also to curl to the inside while heading to the target.

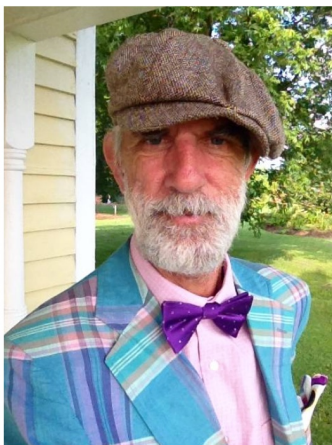
Two Exercises

The first exercise is to position the toe of the putter close to the base of a wall, perpendicular to the wall, and then set up shoulders parallel to the wall and make straight and square strokes that swing alongside the wall while the chest does not rotate off parallel to the wall. The putter head thru impact will stay close to the wall, rise up along an arc vertically next to the wall, and remain square to the wall. Do this so the putter toe stays close and square to the wall for about 2-3 feet past impact into a follow-thru.

The second exercise is to define the “bottom” of the pendular stroke as the front edge of the putter face at address, but then shift the ball about 4 inches forward from the putter face closer to the target. Then “putt the bottom” and then allow the putter sole to rise slightly thru and past the bottom BUT STAYING ONLINE longer than usual until the ball 4 inches away down the aim line is stroked down the aim line. The rising of the putter sole past the bottom to the ball will not be much at all -- about the width of a coin -- so impact will still be solid so long as the putter face does not twist off line. So the golfer sets the base of the neck to remain steady in space and then swings the arms on the low and slightly-rising vertical plane thru impact, and “stretches out” the length of the thru-stroke that STAYS headed straight and square.

Conclusion

So that’s it. Get rid of the pull and that’s a big upgrade in stroke for line control.



Roll ‘em and hole ‘em!

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Your Questions Answered

Member Question:

Hi Jaacob,

I'm struggling with the concept of swinging fast rather than swinging hard.

I know how "forcing" anything in golf is detrimental. However increasing swing speed takes extra effort &, dare I say it, FORCE. I try to keep my grip light & my wrists loose but I'm still unsure what I need to do to swing fast without tension.

Am I over thinking this? Or can you elucidate please.

By the way, I have a Sureshotgps launch monitor which measures carry distance, swing speed & smash factor/ball speed. Unfortunately it only works when you actually hit balls so it's of no use with my home training but works well on the range & golf course. I'm starting from a base of 83-84mph so there's plenty of room for improvement.

Ron H, Australia, 64 years old, 18 handicap

Jaacob's Answer:

Elucidate. Good word. ☺

It's not necessary, but you may want to invest in a Swing Speed Radar.

<http://www.swingmangolf.com/golf-swing-speed-radar.php>

I recommend this particular radar because it's relatively inexpensive, it's portable, and you can measure swings with out having to hit balls...which means you can also measure the speeds of any training aids you like to use. The immediate feedback is great and a lot of our members have one.

As far as the swinging fast versus swinging hard thing goes, here's one way you might think of it. Start by hitting some balls at a very comfortable speed where you feel like you can keep relatively good control over your shots. Gradually go faster and faster until you see a noticeable difference in your shot dispersion. Out of all the people I've measured doing this, most people can handle about 92-95% of their maximum speed. Each person's

percentage is a little bit different, but that tipping point is where you'll find the difference between swinging hard and swinging fast.

Also, if you're looking for a drill to help relieve tension, this video is one that might help you as well:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBqDJcPkA2Q>

Finishing Up With Fun



Bill and his wife Sally died and went to Heaven together. They were met at the gates by an angel who was to show them the place. Right over here, we have our very own golf course! "Wow! It's beautiful! Can we play it now?" they both asked. "Sure!" said the angel.

Therefore, the couple began playing. It was the most beautiful course they had ever seen. Everything was perfect... the fairways, the greens, even the roughs. The more they played the more the woman beamed with happiness, but she noticed her husband was becoming disheartened and angry.

Sally confronted her husband on what was wrong. She said, "I can't understand why you're not happy. We're in Heaven! We're together! We're playing on the most beautiful and perfect golf course ever! What's wrong with you?"

Bill replied, "If we hadn't eaten all that damn health food, we'd been here years ago!"

We hope you enjoyed the Monthly Handicap Improver...

- Do you have a **golf joke** you want to share with your fellow members?
- **Anything you want our experts to write about?**
- Any **other questions or comments?**

Let us know at info@swingmangolf.com with the subject "**FEEDBACK FOR JAACOB**"!

Have a great month!