

SECTION 3

Swing



Articles on the golf swing appear endless. Thousands of words have been written in magazines, newspapers and books about the golf swing—revealing a tip or two by a professional. The full swing has been broken down into several segments and photographed with high-speed, stop-action cameras. One article will play up the importance of the hands, another the legs. Some articles stress the wrists. Other cite the importance of the shoulders or hips. So much is said that a beginner or handicap golfer easily becomes confused. It's a case of “paralysis by analysis,” as the saying goes. I'll get into more detail on this in the chapter where I explode these teaching theories.

Probably the biggest problem in the past two decades of golf has been the emphasis on power. Smooth, graceful swingers seem to be disappearing in favor of hard-hitting, fast-swinging power swingers. Some college players, inspired by tour pros, are becoming power swingers. It used to be that you

would see some of the best swings on college campuses. The quest for power in the swing has been ruining golf. Golfers are being afflicted with physical problems, mostly back or hip strains and tendinitis from swinging so hard. Country club and public course players give up the game in disgust when they fail to achieve the power they seem to think they need to enjoy the game and score well.

The simple answer to a good golf swing is rhythm and smoothness. Be relaxed. Be graceful. Your rhythm will be better. Your clubhead speed will be faster. Your distance automatically will improve and, most important, your accuracy will be good. You don't have to be blessed with a muscular physique, strong hands and wrists or forearms or powerful shoulders or athletic legs to hit a golf ball far and straight. I'm 5-foot-8 and usually weigh the average for my frame and height. I am not muscular and never have been. My hands are not strong. My legs are fairly thin (enough so that I don't like to show them off). Yet I have always hit a golf ball straight and far. I'm just one example. Even better examples are the small golfers on the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour in the decade of the 1970s, such players as Betty Burfeindt (5'4", 115 lbs.), Marlene Bauer Hagge (5'2", 120 lbs.), Sandra Palmer 5'1½", 117 lbs.), Clifford Ann Creed (5'4", 105 lbs), Judy Rankin (5'3½", 110 lbs.), and Laura Baugh (5'5", 118 lbs.), to name just a few. They can all hit the ball far and straight.

A lot has been written on various theories of the swing that has been referred to as “inside-out,” “outside-in,” and “square

to square.” I won’t go into the details of explaining those because I’m afraid I, too, might confuse you.

How, then, does one swing correctly? Here’s how I swing-and have been swinging for more than fifty years:

Find the answer in the book along with working video clips showing you the form.