

Swing Easy School of Golf

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Afternoon and evening golf friends. I was away up north, so apologies for being 2 weeks overdue with this newsletter. I actually went 4 entire days without swinging a club. Believe me that's never going to happen again...it felt like a lover was off having an affair. I felt so lonely! By the way, any of you who want to buy a driving range up north call me, I met a lovely old couple that want to sell theirs. (Will do wonders for you game). Now stop worrying about your golf game being up and down. It's all part of life! How often do you find that when your boss gives you a \$2,500 bonus, you go home to find your central air breaks down, and the bill is...\$2,500! Golf is like that too. A great round is probably going to be followed by a lousy one, and vice versa. Live with it!

MORE ABOUT SLICING

"I only slice with my driver" Yeah right.

When I walk up and down the range the first question I'm asked is: Why do I slice my driver, and not my irons?

Well, I have news for you. If your irons could be sliced, you would slice...as much as a tomato with your favourite knife! I'll bet that as soon as you take your 5 iron or lower numbered clubs, you begin to see more and more of a slice. The fact is if you slice with your driver (95% of the golfing world has this affliction) then you most certainly pull your short irons in the other direction.

You have to understand that because your 7 iron to pitching wedge are so lofted, you can't get sidespin on the ball. Sidespin causes a slice, or hook. So it's impossible to slice or hook your higher lofted irons. But your slice swing is the same swing you are using for your irons (you swing the same for all clubs, whether you think so or not). And when you swing your club down to impact, you are pulling your hands down across the target line from the outside of it, which causes the slice. If that sounds confusing (yeah, you and me both!) think of how you skip a stone. When your arm is coming down to release the stone, your elbow is pretty close to your side, and your hand is coming from a little behind you. This is natural, and correct. When I give you a golf club in your hand, most of you have your elbow sticking out like a chicken with your hand very far away from you and a bit in front of you as you swing down. Without getting any more technical and confusing, this is causing the face of your club to be in a slice position at impact, the same as trying to slice a tennis ball.

Sometimes the club face points to the left at impact and you pull the shot the other way. So remember, it's not just your driver that you are not swinging correctly, but in fact all of your clubs. The problem is that miss hitting a driver can be a lot more devastating than miss hitting your 9 iron!

Cure for slicing?

Sorry, I've got to be real honest here folks...there's only one way to hop on the road to a cure...and that is...you NEED to see a professional. OK, it doesn't have to be me; there are plenty of very good golf teachers in the GTA. But, consider this: If you look through the archives of Golf Digest written from the 1950's, I'll bet you'll find an article entitled "How to Cure Your Slice" in almost every issue. Same goes for The Golf Channel, and just about every golf instruction book or magazine. Hey, if it were easy to cure a slice, you'd never be reading about it, right? So when people ask me (almost on a daily basis) how can I stop slicing the only honest answer to that is: I need to see you swing. That's because I can list at least 20 reasons you might be slicing. And eliminating a slice is not easy, and takes real commitment from the student. (Perhaps over a year for some) It's almost like learning to walk again for someone who lost a leg. My own approach is to teach students how to hit a hook and a draw.

However, I'll give you 2 good band-aids that could stop or slow down the bleeding with your driver, and I've mentioned these in a past newsletter:

1. Take your driver out of your bag permanently until you learn how to swing from inside to inside.
2. Purchase a driver with more loft, at least 11.5 degrees...at least you will reduce the amount of your slice.
3. Try swinging your driver easily to hit the ball about 150 yards; this will improve your rhythm.

Dave's Strategy Session

Do you prefer par 3's or 5's?

I'll best most of you say the par 3 because it's shorter, and you often score double or triple bogey on par 5's.

From an aesthetic point of view I like par 3's. They're better looking than the par 5's. There's often a backdrop of tall trees, sand traps, or water. (think Augusta hole #12). But from the standpoint of scoring, I begin to salivate with most par 5 holes. I'm thinking it should be at least an easy par hole, with a decent chance for a birdie. And the majority of my birdies occur on par 5's. On the PGA tour all players look at them as birdie holes, where they look at a par 3 as hoping they make par and move on. Think about it this way, would you rather have a 160-yard par 3 or a third shot on a par 5 from 125 yards? So rather than worrying about your next intimidating par 5 hole let's think about strategy we can all use on those long scary holes.

Let's take the average 500 yard par 5. It may seem daunting if you don't hit long with your driver, and when you know you will probably slice your driver into...well, maybe some other postal code; everywhere except the fairway most of the time. So let's re-think our strategy and have one goal; ensure we have a 3rd shot that is about 125 yards to the green from the fairway. (If you can get closer, even better). So here's a good strategy: Take out a club that will hit the ball 200 yards and STAY in the fairway. Hmmm...don't need driver...you could use a 3 or 5 fairway metal for that one. I know

you don't slice those clubs nearly as often as your driver, if at all. OK, so I convince you to use your 5 metal, you've hit it 190 yards and it's in the fairway or short rough. Remember the goal is getting to that 125-yard zone. That requires your second shot going 185 yards to get to the promised land. Another 5 metal, or hybrid should do it. Now you're pulling out a 9 iron for your 3rd shot. Now it's like an easy 125-yard par 3. I'll bet you'll start paring most of them. It's really a mindset of using proper strategy, which good golfers do. They play to their strengths. Personally, I rarely take my 3-metal out on a second shot on the par 5's, because I'm not as accurate as with my shorter clubs. Most of the time even after a good drive of 250 or 260 yards I hit a 5 iron to my favourite distance of 80-90 yards, where I know I'm almost always going to have a decent putt for birdie. (Not that I don't make bogeys or worse on par 5's now and then). Occasionally I'll go for the green with my second shot, but only if there's no water or other dangers around the green. I'm really playing the hole with the thought of being in position for birdie or easy par.

Try that strategy in your next round and start lowering your scores!

Golfing Laughs

For a good laugh, check out this video: http://community.bunkershot.com/kickapps/_The-Driver-Will-it-Blend/video/40731/3071.html

Nest issue: How instruction books are killing your game!

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