



The Great Experience of Golf for Boys

.....designed for players, parents and coaches



Fundamentals of the Golf Swing

Short Game

Putting – Chip Shots – Pitch Shots

Full Swing

Pre-Swing - Full Back Swing - Forward Swing

Specialty Shots

Lob Shots - Bunker Shots

Playing the Game

Application of Golf Skills - Practice & Pre-Round Preparation

Building Life Skills for the Future

Developing Core Values - Behavioral Traits Parents Should Practice

presented by

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The Great Experience of Golf for Boys

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DEDICATION

***The Great Experience of Golf** would not be possible without the contributions of many behind the scenes who have unselfishly given of their time and talents.....without seeking recognition. To these people we say a **huge thank you**. We hope this publication serves as the foundation for a better game.....one that will be enjoyed by many golfers of all ages for years to come.*

*We offer our thanks for those who say **YES** when asked to serve, PGA and LPGA Golf Professionals who give of their time and talents, to the many public and private golf facilities that open their doors to our participants, to the educational institutions that offer guidance and use of facilities, to the many volunteers who help to cover all the bases, to the teachers and coaches who remain dedicated to the education of their students in the classroom and on the playing field, to the many who serve on focus groups, steering committees, advisory committees and leadership of the Indian River Golf Foundation, Treasure Coast Junior Golf Tour, St. Lucie County Junior Golf Association and so many other golf programs, to the mentors who have a heart for helping others and willing to share their interest the game of golf, to individuals and philanthropic organizations giving their financial support through donations and grants.*

Without question, our heartfelt thanks go out to the PGA, LPGA and teaching golf professionals who continue to serve this great game of golf. The sharing of their time, talents and commitment makes golf not only a better game, but a game that can be enjoyed for a lifetime. The success of many young players is attributed to these individuals and the many golf facilities they represent.

Forward

This booklet and the contents by no means imply that there is only one way to play the game of golf and swing a golf club. The writer's objectives were to communicate text and illustrations in a simple but clear understanding of the fundamentals of the short game and full swing. One of the main objectives through this booklet is to provide coaches, both amateur and professional, a guide so their students can learn properly.

There are many theories and methodology about how to swing a golf club making the game very confusing. That is another reason we feel that this instructional booklet will be an aid in making the teaching both consistent and straight forward. Our hope is that the text and illustrations in this booklet will serve as a great tool in the development of future golf stars.

We as instructors are always open to learn improved techniques on how to present the game. We should always be open to suggestions so we can deliver a clear message. It is our philosophy that **THOSE WHO DARE TO TEACH MUST NEVER CEASE TO LEARN**. Results are our objective.

Finally, we must remember most importantly.....it is a game and the golfer should have FUN playing it!

As a general rule and with exceptions.....**boys and girls under the age of 12 should "experience" the game of golf in a casual, relaxed setting and play the game at their own pace and level of enjoyment.** Parents may serve as coaches in the sense of getting them to the golf course, providing a safe environment, and making sure all aspects of the game are experienced. **Between the ages of 12 to 15, structured practices may now be in place to guide developing young players in the right direction.** Parents should remain in the capacity of encouragement and support in competitions....not a coach or caddie. Any expectations in player development must originate with the player....not the **parent**. By the time developing young players reach the ages of 15 and over, parents should almost entirely be out of the way. If young aspiring players need assistance in swing technique or how to improve playing the game, they should seek out the services of a PGA or LPGA Golf Professional.

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to provide students, coaches and mentors with an understanding of how a golf swing works starting with putting and advancing to the full swing. Many of the basic principles of the set-up position and fundamentals of the swing are more clearly understood when starting with putting, then advancing to chip shots, pitch shots and eventually to the full swing.

Graduated Length Method

It is much easier to explain information about chip shots once there is a clear understanding of the technique for putting. It is easier to explain information about the pitch shot once there is understanding of the technique for the chip shot and so on. The golf swing is best learned as a progression from putting through to the full swing.

PUTTING ➡ CHIP SHOTS ➡ PITCH SHOTS ➡ FULL SWING

Whether learning the game as a new golfer or an experienced golfer with a need to review swing technique, it is best to start with the short clubs/short shots and work up to longer clubs/full swing. This is referred to as the “Graduated Length Method”.

The general layout of this booklet is based upon the progressive “Graduated Length Method” for teaching, learning or reviewing the golf swing as outlined above.

By establishing the IRGF Fundamentals of the Golf Swing, the goal is to provide consistency in messaging on proper swing techniques. This material represents the starting point of learning the ABC’s of the golf swing while consideration is given for a variety of teaching styles. The IRGF endorses the theory, students best learn when first learning the alphabet – writing words – writing sentences – chapters – novels.

It is important to stay “on-course” with this progressive learning process, to be patient and most of all.....HAVE FUN and ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!

5 Essentials of a Symmetrical Golf Swing

- 1) Steady Swing Center – reinforce with drills – “feel” of the clubhead – letting the club fall and swing through to the finish.
- 2) Maintain proper swing radius – using the forward arm to lead the swing
- 3) Swing club with the proper angle – swinging on plane down the target line
 - The horizontal radius of the extended LEAD arm represents the ARC of the swing – must be parallel to the target line.
- 4) Clubface SQUARE to the path of the swing. Know the various SQUARE positions throughout the swing.
- 5) Balance – Static (while standing) – Dynamic (maintaining balance during the motion of the swing).

PUTTING

Set Up

Motion

Length

Direction

Training Equipment – Select a straight putting surface....set up two poles, a putting string and 3 golf balls positioned under the string as pictured:

Set Up – Aim & Alignment

- Set up to the string with feet shoulder width apart for longer putts – narrower for shorter putts - toes, knees, hips, forearms and shoulders equal distance from the string. Some players prefer a slightly open stance.
- Bow to the ball from the hips so that your eyes are directly above the string. It should appear the string is splitting the ball in half. If not, you are either too close or too far away from the string.
- Weight should be favoring the forward foot.
- Feel that the arms are hanging down from the shoulders.
While holding on to the putter, the arms should form the letter “V” or a triangle (connecting three points....left shoulder....right shoulder....and hands). Many players prefer the putter shaft to angle up slightly towards the forward shoulder (sometimes referred to a “forward shaft lean”).
- Grip the putter lightly with the palms of the hands facing each other.
- The face of the putter should aim down the target line (string).



Motion

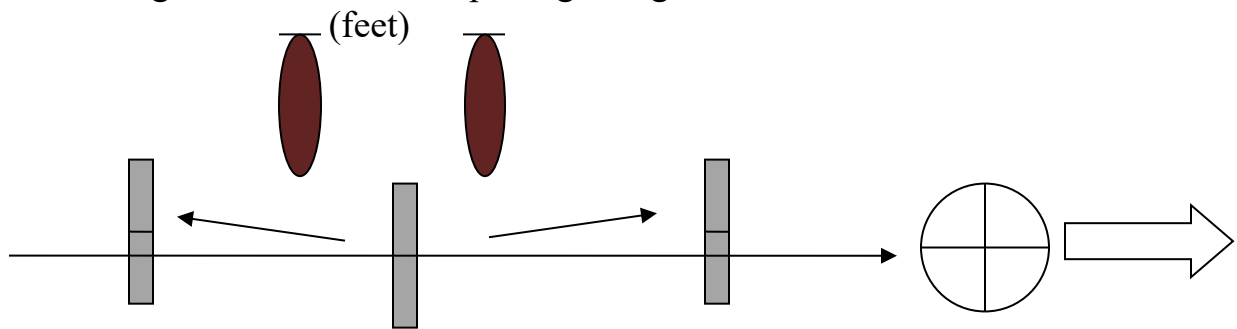
- The motion of the putting stroke is to swing the putter back and *through feeling the weight of the putter with soft hands (along the string on shorter putts – slight arc for longer putts) lead by the arms and shoulders while maintaining the “V” or triangle. No use of hands except to hold onto the club. No conscious wrist motion. Upon the completion of the putting stroke the “V” or triangle should still be in place. Head remains still with eyes over the ball through the stroke.*

Length

- The length of the back stroke is directly related to the length of the putt. To make the ball go further.....stroke the putter further back.
- Do not try to hit the ball HARDER on longer putts – lengthen the backstroke. No conscious wrist motion – should not apply to length of putt.
- Try the Grail Method of putting where the stroke stops shortly after impact.

Direction

- With the putter face perpendicular to the putting string, stroke the putter back and through along the string. Looking straight down, the putter will swing a little “inside” the putting string as described below:



- All putts are straight putts. Putt straight down the target line. The slope of the green and grain (direction the grass is growing) will cause the ball to curve.
- To improve the possibility of the putt starting online - focus on the ball coming off the putter face staring down the target line for the first 12”.

Reading the Green

- Look at the green from the ball to the hole - from the hole back to the ball and from a side view (usually below the putting line). Then make your decision as to the line of the putt.
- Grain (direction the grass is growing) will influence the curve of the putt. Look for DARK green - the grass is growing towards the golfer – thus a slower putt. LIGHT green - the grass is growing away from the golfer - thus a faster putt.
- Look at the cup – the grain is going in the direction the cup shows any type of wear or dead grass.

CHIP SHOTS

Set Up	Motion	Length	Direction	Club Selection
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Set-Up – Aim & Alignment

Feet close together – one clubhead apart - forward foot may be slightly open (turned towards the target). Some players prefer a square stance.

Establish “V” or triangle position with arms, shoulders and hands

Shaft of club is in line with forward forearm

Ball is slightly back of center of stance....never forward in stance.

Shaft of club angles slightly up towards the forward shoulder (creating a slight forward shaft lean).

Weight – 80% - 70% - 60% on forward foot depending upon the length of the shot.

Shoulders should be more level with each other. A neutral grip may be helpful.

Recommendation: Spend some time hitting Chip Shots with shaft of club more vertical with toe of club on the ground – use more of putting stroke. This may improve direction and less resistance of contact with the ground.



Motion & Length

Some players start the motion with the forward shoulder. Others with the core.

Maintain “V” or triangle position throughout the swing (start to finish)

Virtually no use of hands and wrists – use of “core” is recommended by many.

Some players consider the swing is in relationship to the face of a clock:

Examples that may be helpful – illustrated with **SNAG Golf** “clock” rings.

7 o’clock to 5 o’clock.....short distance Chip Shot

8 o’clock to 4 o’clock.....longer distance Chip Shot

Length of the swing (back and through) is in direct relationship to distance

Lower body (from the waist down) should be quiet throughout the Chip Shot.

It is important to “brush” the grass during the forward swing.

Direction

- Very similar to the putting stroke. Reading the green for Chip Shots is very important to determine the direction of the shot.
- Practice Drill - Lay a club down between feet and the ball for direction
- With the club face perpendicular to the desired direction and the shaft of the club as vertical as possible. Think of swinging the club straight back and through for the desired direction. The club head may swing a little “inside” the line of the chip.....similar to the putt.
- Select an “intermediate” target for alignment – select a landing spot for distance control – allow for slope of the green.



Club Selection

- Club selection (club face angle) influences height of the shot and roll out.
- A lower lofted club is desired to carry the ball onto the green just enough to create the desired roll on the ball. Lower the loft – more roll.
- If more height is needed to stop/spin the ball, use a more lofted club
- “Back spin is not your friend around the green unless you need it.” This statement is necessary to caution players who prefer to use a too lofted club.



“Visualize the shot – Create the shot”

PITCH SHOTS

Set Up Motion Length Direction Club Selection

Note: The style and technique for short Pitch Shots is an increased motion of the Chip Shot. The style and technique for the longer Pitch Shots will include some hand/wrist, fore arm rotation and use of core. Converting a Chip Shot to a Pitch Shot is based upon adding loft to carry-onto-the-green” and stop the ball.

Set-Up

Feet apart - two clubhead widths - forward foot slightly open (some players prefer squared stance) – standing slightly further away from the ball than the Chip Shot.

Establish “V” or triangle position with arms, shoulders and hands. Soft hands.

Shaft of club is in line with forward forearm.

Ball position is slightly back in stance.

Ball positioned forward in stance only if more height is desired.

Shaft of club angles slightly up towards the forward shoulder creating a slight forward shaft lean. Experiment with the distribution of weight for set-up that works best.



Motion & Length

Short Pitch Shots - Maintain “V” or triangle position throughout the swing

Longer Pitch Shots – Maintain “V” or triangle as long as possible

Slight use of hands/wrists - mostly arms and shoulders – the forward swing is supported by the core leading the motion through the shot. For skilled players, the clubface may be pointing to the sky at end of the swing depending upon the desired trajectory (see as pictured above).

For beginners, the swing can be related to the face of a clock illustrated below.

8 o'clock to 4 o'clock.....short distance Pitch Shots

9 o'clock to 3 o'clock.....longer distance Pitch Shots

Length of the swing (back and through) is in direct relationship to distance.

The core is “master of the motion”. Let the core regulate distance control.

Weight distribution: Favoring the forward side. Some golf instructors find great benefit with – short shots (80%) – medium shots (70%) – long shots (60%). Lower body (from the waist down) should be quiet on the backswing and slightly active (utilizing the core) on the follow through to the finish. Brush the grass during the forward swing. Slight divot OK – disturb the turf.

Direction

- Lay another club down between feet and the ball for direction
- With the club face perpendicular to the desired direction, swing the club back and through the desired distance (8 to 4.....9 to 5). The club head will swing a little “inside” the line.



Club Selection

- Club selection (angle of club face) will influence height of the shot
 - On occasion, a lower lofted club is desired to carry the ball onto the green just enough to create a roll on the ball as much as possible.
 - When more height is needed to stop the ball, use a more lofted club
- Note: Position of ball may be more forward in stance for higher shots.

Technique Reminder

The style and technique for the longer Pitch Shots will include some hand, wrist and forearm rotation lead by the core. In this case, the **toe** of the club will be pointing slightly down when the club swings back and through the 9 o'clock position. The **toe** may be pointing to the sky when the club swings through to the 3 o'clock position. This is the result of some hand/wrist and arm rotation.



FULL SWING

Pre-Swing Positions

Grip Position Posture Ball Position

Grip - Hands

The Grip is a term most people use to describe the PROPER POSITION of the hands on the club. It is the most important part of controlling the club face.

Understanding the Proper Position

Whether an INTERLOCK....FULL FINGER....OR OVERLAP grip is used.....it is a personal preference. Most players are best served with a slightly strong grip while others are strong advocates of a more neutral grip.

Position of Grip

The position of the grip is very important for proper club face position.

The PALMS of each hand MUST be in direct opposition (facing) each other

The grip starts with the muscle pad on the forward hand of the grip.

When looking down at the grip....player should see two to three knuckles on the back of the forward hand. The upside-down “V’s” formed by the thumbs and index fingers of BOTH hands should be pointing up towards the back shoulder. Note: This positioning of the grip will vary from one golfer to another. This should be determined along with professional instructor.

The muscle pad is on the club throughout the back and forward swing.



Recommended Drill:
When you do not have a golf club – select a square wooden dowel to practice holding onto the simulated grip.
Seek the desired “feel”.

Posture

Start by standing vertical with:

- 1) Both arms out gripping onto the club with the hands.
- 2) Knees should be slightly flexed in an athletic position.....then....
- 3) Bow to the ball - slightly forward from your hips. Keep the spine straight.
- 4) Arms should now be hanging down.
- 5) Hands should be in line with neck (see side view illustration below). The alignment of the body (toes, knees, hips, forearms and shoulders) should be parallel to the target line. Notice the tilted spine angle (picture on right).



Ball Position

The ball position should be center to slightly forward in the stance for the iron and hybrid clubs. The ball position should be a slightly forward of center for the fairway metals and slightly inside of the forward heel for the driver.

Note: The sternum must be behind the golf ball at the address position.

Exception: Sternum is in front of the ball when hitting shots from the rough, hitting low shots and downhill lies.



Iron



Driver

Note: At address - the back shoulder is lower than the forward shoulder to the degree the back hand is lower on the grip than the forward hand.

FULL BACK SWING

Set Up Motion Direction Length Rotation Toe Position

Set Up

Feet approximately shoulder width apart

Toes, knees, hips, forearms and shoulders parallel to target line

Length of Swing & Toe Position

The full back swing is an increased motion of the Pitch Shot - as far back as 11 o'clock (with some exceptions). The back swing will pass through the slightly down toe position at 9 o'clock on the way up to 11 o'clock. The only thing happening from the 9 o'clock position to the 11 or 12 o'clock position is the continued shoulder turn and for some, a continued wrist cock. Notice the position of the clubface (square) at the top of the backswing. When the clubface is square at the top – the clubface is angled at 45 degrees facing the sky.



Motion - Relationship of Shoulders & Hips

The full back swing (started by the forward shoulder by many players) is basically with arms and shoulders with a hinging (cocking) of the hands and wrists.

At the top of the back swing:

Shoulders will have rotated up to 90 degrees from the address position

Hips will have minimal rotation.

This all should provide the feeling of “coiling up”.

Note: It is important to understand – for some, the forward shoulder starts the back swing moving the club, hands, arms together into the back swing. Keep the clubface SQUARE to the swing path. Others will start the back swing with their core.

There are 3 main connections in the golf swing.....as you feel the clubhead :

Hands to Club

Arms to Body

Feet to Ground

Balance & Weight Distribution

Some players prefer the weight to shift slightly to the back foot during the back swing. With the extended lead arm, the shoulders will rotate to the top followed by the hands and arms. All this should help to avoid “reverse pivoting”. The player should feel a feeling of the body “coiling”. Note: Some players feel there should be more of a “swing center” representing one of the five Essentials of the Golf Swing.



Direction

When the shaft of the club is parallel to the ground in the “toe slightly down position (square)” on the back swing, the shaft of the club is also parallel to the target line. The “butt” of the club should be pointing down the target line. Note: This is also true for passing through the 9 o’clock position on the forward or down swing including keeping the clubface square.



Toe slightly down (square)
matching the spine angle
on Back Swing



Toe slightly down (square)
matching the spine angle
on Forward Swing



Toe of Club Up
on the Follow Through

When club shaft is parallel to the ground – it is also parallel to the target line.

This is an excellent moment to check the clubface for squareness.

Notice the body rotation by the core through the shot.

FORWARD SWING TO THE FINISH

Since there is a coil feeling during the backswing created by the shoulders rotating more than the hips, the lower body will start the uncoil towards the target and “fall” of the club into the swing. Following the lead of the lower body, the shoulders, arms and hands (in that order) will follow as the body begins to uncoil.

Note #1: When the club is half way down on the FORWARD SWING (shaft is parallel to the ground).....the shaft should be pointing towards the target as illustrated below. The toe of the club should be pointing slightly down.

As the shoulders, arms and hands continue the FORWARD SWING and from this halfway down position, the arms and hands deliver the toe of the club a slightly down position and continue to the toe-up position halfway up after striking the ball through to the finish of the golf swing. Therefore, the clubface continues to rotate as it strikes the ball.

In extreme cases, players having difficulty rotating the hands through the impact position, an excellent drill is to swing into an “impact bag” with the toe of the club striking the bag first. This will give the player the feeling of “releasing the hands” through the hitting zone.

Note #2: As the lower body starts the forward swing the player’s weight shifts towards the target (using the ground for stability) and finish on the forward foot in a balanced and posed position.



SPECIALTY SHOTS

A skilled player can transform a difficult type of shot around the green (inside and outside the bunker) into a much desired shot with proper technique and imagination.

The less experienced player is encouraged to understand the importance of being comfortable with Pitch Shots BEFORE attempting Lob Shots or Bunker Shots. Seek professional assistance and understanding of these shots.

LOB SHOTS

Set Up

Feet slightly open to the target especially when an open clubface is necessary for greater height of the shot. For shorter shots, some players like gripping down on the club especially on shorter Lob Shots with the weight in a forward/stationary position.

Ball Position

Ball position should be forward in the stance on a normal Lob Shot.

Swing Motion

The swing motion for a Lob Shot becomes more hands and wrists oriented than the swinging of the arms and shoulders. Soft hands (light grip on the club) should take the lead. The arms and shoulders will follow. Some players prefer the hands to initiate with the clubhead coming through the hitting zone first – not the butt of the club – a definite “flippy” feeling. Other players prefer more core engagement with emphasis on weight distribution.

Note: Adding more hand and wrist motion requires practice - so, when the player is faced with a challenging situation, the player needs to apply a high level of **imagination** and **proper technique** to execute a successful shot. Visualize the shot, then execute the shot - maintaining the loft of the clubface – soft hands.

Keep the swing-thought simple adjusting the club face and ball position as necessary to adjust the loft of the shot. With a slightly open clubface – open the stance slightly – then swing in the direction your feet are aiming. Some like the feeling of the hands and grip of the club finishing near the lead pocket.



GREENSIDE BUNKER SHOTS

Set-Up

Most players prefer a slightly open stance to the target with an open clubface. Some like it square. It is important to permit the “bounce” of the club to “splash” through the sand. The feet should be slightly “dug” into the sand for stability throughout the swing. Shoulders level with each other.

Ball Position

The ball position should be slightly forward of center.

Swing Motion – Flat Lie

This is the only shot where the club does not come in contact with the ball. The club should enter the sand approximately 1 to 2 inches behind the ball.

The swing should be more vertical.....allowing the club to enter the sand with a firm bounce motion unique sound. It is important to avoid “skidding” over the top of the sand and striking the ball in the middle. Quiet lower body after “posting” up – all arm and shoulder swing. Some successful players prefer to utilize the core and use the lower body to initiate the forward swing.

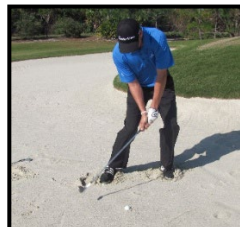
The swing should continue through to a full finish with weight transferred to the forward foot.



Swing Motion – Buried Lie

When ball lies partially or totally below the surface of the sand, the ball position should be toward the back foot. The club face should be slightly closed at address. The hands and take the lead in a vertical swing and chopping motion.

Some players prefer to engage the core in these situations. The intent is to deliver the club head into the sand WITHOUT any intention of following through. The club face will open up as it enters the sand, so aim accordingly. The ball should “pop” up out of the sand with little to no spin. The ball will pick up overspin as it hits the green.



FAIRWAY BUNKER SHOTS

Set-Up

Feet set-up may be SQUARE or slightly open to the target with a SQUARE to open clubface. The advantage of an open clubface will result in a slight “bounce” of the club if there is contact with the sand. The feet should be slightly “dug” into the sand for stability throughout the swing. The more you dig in, the more you should choke down on the club. Shoulders level with each other or the forward shoulder slightly lower than the back shoulder.

Ball Position

The ball position should be slightly back of center. If more of an open-face “cut” shot is desired – the ball position could be more center or slightly forward in the stance.

Club Selection

Select a club usually ONE more than what would be used for this distance if not in the bunker. This is due to the usual less distance realized when hitting from a bunker. A hybrid may be a good choice for longer distances. This will also provide more assurance the ball will gain the necessary fall flight (height). Make sure you select a club with sufficient loft to clear the “lip” of the fairway bunker. Many players prefer to grip lower (shortening the club) to avoid digging the clubhead into the sand.

Swing Motion – Flat Lie

Unlike Greenside Bunker Shots – the club DOES come in contact with the ball before striking the sand.

The swing should be more vertical.....allowing the club to strike the ball on the way down. Quiet lower body unless the core is engaged.

The swing should continue through to a full finish with weight transferred to the forward foot.

Swing Motion – Buried Lie

Refer back the buried lie technique for a greenside bunker. Main objective – get the ball out of the bunker.

PLAYING THE GAME

Everything you have just reviewed to this point has to do with MOTION, TECHNIQUE and HOW TO APPLY it. Now you need to put it to work. Playing golf is not just physical, but it is mental and can become extremely emotional. Playing the game of golf is an art and those who play well and are able to score low are “artists”. These so called “artists” are creative because they are able to apply the technique part to accomplish short term and long term goals.

There are many who drive the ball long and straight. There are many who are good iron players. There are many who can putt and have a good short game. There are those who are good thinkers and are able to make good decisions on the golf course. But....there are few who can put it all together. This can be YOU!

Playing the game of golf begins with a vision of the next shot to be played and then selecting the right club to make things happen. PLAN, PRETEND, COMMIT and EXECUTE. These are the key ingredients in making an unrestricted quality golf swing.

In starting the swing in motion, you must aim the clubface down the target line and position your body to make the swing. In preparation, some will move their feet - some will waggle the club - but, whatever you do...do it the same way every time. Make it part of your routine. Following your routine is the best way to combat being nervous. Make it consistent, rhythmic and without thought. You may have a key to start your swing different than what has been mentioned. Either way, it should be your thought process. The swing should begin without hesitation. It should include COMMITMENT – TRUST - SIMPLICITY. The rest is out of your control.

LIKE IT OR NOT, THE RESULT OF EACH GOLF SHOT IS YOURS. If it ends up as planned – fine - move on and work towards repeating these successful shots. If not - this is the real test of your GAME MANAGEMENT and learning how to cope with adversity. Less than desirable golf shots are not uncommon to golf. With proper game management, you will learn to accept the good with the not-so-good and make the best out of it. Remember, each round is a learning experience. It is important to do the best you can and maintain a POSITIVE ATTITUDE.

Of upmost importance...ENJOY! While doing so, do what you can to help others have an enjoyable experience and enjoy your company.

PRACTICE & PRE-ROUND PREPARATION

For every player, practicing and pre-round preparation should be two different elements.

Practice Sessions

Too many practice sessions become only a golf ball beating session which could be engraving faults. A quality practice session is when you are working on specifics. You should always determine your main purpose for being there. If you are focusing on aiming and alignment, you should practice with a directional string for putting or clubs on the ground aiming at a target. If you are working on specific drills, continue using the club on the ground and other training aids such as an impact bag or the highly recommended swing plane guide. Use them throughout your practice session. Whenever possible you should have a trained pair of eyes like your coach or a PGA/LPGA professional watching to make sure you are working on correct swing positions. Remember when you making a change it may take some time. It is important to be patient through the process.

Pre-Round Preparation

This is a very important part of the preparing for a round of golf. It should be taken seriously. It should entail starting with a few pitch shots and small swings. You should increase the swing and the length of the club all the way up to the driver. Your warm up session should last no more than twenty to thirty minutes and no more. Your main purpose is to focus on one key swing thought....working on your rhythm and timing.

Included in your pre-round preparation should be a few minutes working on your putting stroke. It is highly recommended to start off with distance control putts so you become familiar with the speed of the greens. Some find it beneficial to start and finish their pre-round preparation with putting. It is matter of choice. Either way, the pre-round preparation should conclude with a few short putts. These will be the putts offering the most challenge in the early holes of your round of golf.

One of the most important elements of pre-round preparation is the mind set of calm and resolve. Work on recognizing only the positive voice in your mind. Knowing what you are capable of doing, make every effort to set your mind to satisfying your goal.

BUILDING LIFE SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

The Indian River Golf Foundation (IRGF) has been in existence since November 1, 2008. Over 30 “pilot programs” have been tested to determine needs within the golf community. Emphasis has been on enhancing the enjoyment of the game for existing players and attracting new players. Programs include junior golfers through senior golfers....boys & girls.....men & women. The theme running through each golf program is TPC (training, practice and competition).

Opportunities to Teach and Learn

As the IRGF moves forward, there are numerous opportunities for teaching and learning. The obvious learning is in the understanding of how to play the game, development of skills, competition, appreciating the traditions of the game and having FUN. Equally important are the opportunities to develop life skills. There are many ups and downs as one learns to play the game and work towards “bringing it to the next level”. This process involves input and assistance from parents, friends, coaches and others who want young players to succeed. It is the player, however, that must balance out all that is going on. They are the captain. They are the ones who must decide how they are going to proceed.....how they are going to deal with successes and failures. Young players will have to ultimately decide their definition of character. All successful people in life have had to go through the same process. There are no exceptions.

Good Intentions – Parents and Coaches

Parents and coaches have good intentions. Some understand the process every young player must go through and recognize the levels of their involvement. Each parent-child or coach-player situation is different. There are no two alike. Players must strive to the point that they are in charge. They must decide how to manage the learning process. When a bad shot is hit.....decide what is to be learned here? Do I as a player really know how to execute that shot? Has there been enough devoted enough time in developing that shotor, is this all to be expected because it is part of learning the game and playing competitive golf? It is important young players know when to swallow their pride and ask for professional instruction.

Have FUN!

The best thing that can happen out of all teaching moments is the emphasis on FUN! The coach of a successful youth golf program once stated that he makes sure his players have fun. He goes on to say that while they are having fun, young players will learn and develop their skills without realizing it.

Contribution

Parents can best contribute in this regard by being supportive, interested and encouraging. Be sympathetic when your child does not do well and remain focused on the child's emotional development. Do not contribute to added pressure to perform. Young players have enough pressure of their own. They are doing the best they can.

If this is all true, then young players, parents and coaches need to understand there is a time and place for this learning process to take place. Young players may say to their parents..... "thank you for your input".... "thank you for making this all happen for me".... "thank you for your best wishes"....but I need to take the responsibility for progressive development on my own.....as a player and as a responsible citizen.

Share Your Experiences

The sharing of parents experience and wisdom in the development of their child as a person is very important. All they would ask is that you give them the opportunity to develop and learn during all situations including their successes and set-backs. If you feel like you need to correct or counsel them, please do so in private. Let them demonstrate their preparedness to set their own course for building their own character in the core values of:

Honesty/Trust	Perseverance	Integrity
Respect	Confidence	Responsibility
Judgment	Sportsmanship	Courtesy
Presentation	Leadership	

Young players should be encouraged to recognize each of these traits. Applying these in daily life on and off the golf course will define who they are and how they will be perceived by others.

BEHAVIORAL TRAITS PARENTS SHOULD PRACTICE

- 1) Stay involved in a positive way
- 2) Put the emphasis on enjoying the opportunity to play and competenot winning.
- 3) Be extremely supportive, interested and encouraging
- 4) Be sympathetic....not critical....when things don't go well
- 5) Try to remain focused on emotional development
- 6) Forbid cheating and lack of sportsmanship
- 7) Discourage hot tempers, angry mental behavior and vulgarity.
If it happens, discipline accordingly.
- 8) Stress that golf is a lifetime sport and to have FUN!
- 9) Look relaxed and comfortable on the course....never showing expressions of disappointment or get upset.
- 10) Unless you are the coach, rarely attend instruction sessions with your child.
- 11) Be a spectator at competitions....not a coach or caddie unless
You are their coach or caddie.

If you practice these simple rules of life, you will be more of a success as a parent.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bob Komarinetz, PGA Golf Professional

Director of Golf – Sandridge Golf Club

Bob was introduced to the golf profession when he began caddying for his father at the En-Joie Golf Club in his hometown of Endicott, New York. He played on his high school golf team including the State Championship as a senior. After graduation, Bob served during the summers as Assistant Golf Professional (5 years) at Binghamton Country Club under the direction of Head Golf Professional Bob Klink. During the winters, Bob was at the PGA National Golf Club. While there, Bob competed on the Caribbean Professional Tour.....then part of the PGA Tour.

In 1975, Bob was appointed Director of Golf and General Manager at Eastpointe Country Club in Palm Beach Gardens. In 1982, Bob was awarded the “Golf Professional of the Year” for the South Florida PGA. He was instrumental in the development of the Palm Beach County Golf Association and the Palm Beach County Junior Golf Association.

From 1983 – 1986, Bob served as Director of Golf and General Manager at the Golf & Racquet Club at Eastpointe. In 1986, Bob was given the opportunity to take his career in a different direction.....the building of Sandridge Golf Club from the ground up. He helped establish what is today considered one of the finest 36 hole, daily fee, public golf facilities in the country.

For the last 23 years, Bob developed several golf tournaments, the Treasure Coast Golf Association and the Treasure Coast Junior Golf Tour. This tour gives young golfers the opportunity to play many of the private golf courses during the summer months. One of the most important objectives of the program, which still exists today, is the development of people skills along with their golf development. In 1991 & 1992, Bob was awarded the Junior Golf Leader for the Southeast Chapter of the South Florida PGA.

Bob remains active in all aspects of the game including the Indian River Golf Foundation.

Roger Van Dyke, PGA Life Member - Master Professional

Roger started playing the game of golf at the age of 13. He played on his high school and college golf team earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Education at Eastern Illinois University. Roger maintained a high level of enthusiasm and passion for all aspects of the game. During this time, he grew to appreciate and learn from golf professionals and amateurs who served the game of golf.

His first Head Golf Professional assignment in Michigan came at the age of 27. Serving as Michigan Section PGA President and the National PGA Board of Directors, he was chairman of the National PGA Junior Championship and was on the Ryder Cup Committee. He was recipient of the National Bill Strausbaugh Award for contributions in Employment and Golf Facility Relations.

In 1988, he attained “Master Professional” classification with the PGA of America and served as Director of Golf at The Landings Club - Skidaway Island, Savannah, Georgia. While in Savannah, he co-founded the Savannah Junior Golf Association. In 1993 Roger became the Manager/Head Golf Professional at Hawk’s Nest Golf Club in Vero Beach where he served until his retirement in 2007. Following his retirement, Roger assisted in the development of the Golf Facilities Hospitality & Management Associates Degree program at Indian River State College. and is Founder/President of the Indian River Golf Foundation (IRGF). He currently serves the IRGF as Executive Director.

In October - 2022, Roger was inducted into the Michigan Section PGA Hall of Fame.

IRGF PUBLICATIONS & PROGRAMS

The Indian River Golf Foundation (IRGF) has established a number of publications and programs for golfers of all ages...junior golfers to senior golfers....boys & girls....men & women. The purpose is to enhance enjoyment in the game and offer a clear path for those who aspire to reach the highest level in player development.

Other publications and programs available include:

Publications

The Great Experience of Golf

Fundamentals of the Golf Swing

Playing the Game

Building Life Skills for the Future

The Story of Emily....a fictitious story of a little girl in golf

The Story of Andy....a fictitious story of a little boy in golf

Recommended Progressive Junior Golf Program...for ages 4 - 18

I Didn't Pick Golf, it Picked Me...a World Golf Hall of Fame story

Best Practices Training Program

....a collection of career paths for four area golfers

The Value of Golf for Youth

....a publication on National Standards for Youth Sports

Beginning....an inspirational/motivational poem by author Warren Hanson

Functions of the Indian River Golf Foundation....listing of all programs

Indian River Golf Alliance

....outline of purpose & identifying stakeholders in the game of golf

Case for Support....outline of operational/capital financial needs of the IRGF

Indian River Golf Training Center....facility drawings and color rendering

The Value of Mentoring....a personal tribute to a former PGA Tour player

Can You See The Possibilities....a futuristic newspaper article for youth golf

Interview with IRGF President...documented questions & answers

Pyramid of Success.....in golf, academics and life.

IRGF Programs & Objectives.....an outline of all IRGF goals & objectives

Play Golf America....“how to get started” publication of the PGA of America

Six Steps to Reaching High Achievement in Golf

...with excerpts from “Best Practices” of area players

Status of Sports Facilities in Indian River County....survey of facilities

IRGF Support Organizations...listing of local, state & national organizations

Girls In Golf Program

....program outline and organizational charts for players & coaches

Why So Much Interest in Short Game Skills

....reasons players should pursue and why golf facilities should host

Players Club Training Program

...for Middle & High School Players...Off- Season/Pre-Season/In-Season

TPC for Boys & TPC for Boys (Futures)....two programs of training,

practice and competition on a year-round basis for boys ages 10 – 18

TPC for Girls & TPC for Girls (Futures).... two programs of training,

practice and competition on a year-round basis for girls ages 10 – 18

TPC for Seniors... a program of training, practice and competition on a year-round basis for senior golfers

TPC for Families.... a program of training, practice and competition on a year-round basis for families

Short Game Skills – Practice Area Set-Up....illustrations of six (6) skills stations for Short Game including skill levels, scorecards & evaluations.

Full Swing Skills – Practice Area Set-UP.... illustrations of full swing skills stations skill level boundary markers, scorecards & evaluations.

Recruiting New Players to the Game

Recommended Golf Equipment for Developing Players.....equipment

Endorsed by Golf Pros.....Education Pros....Recreation Pros from
SNAG Golf....Super SNAG Golf....ALMOST Golf....Real Golf

Building Blocks for Player Developmenta complete color illustration in pyramid form of Indian River Golf Foundation programs including the Indian River Golf Alliance and Indian River Golf Training Center

IRGF Power Point Presentation....a presentation of IRGF programs

Programs

Short Game Skills Evaluation (all ages & levels)

.....includes scorecards, scoreboard, ranking system and equipment

Full Swing Skills Evaluation (all ages & levels)

.....includes scorecards, scoreboard, ranking system and equipment

After School Program....golf program for Middle School students

TPC (Training, Practice & Competition) Series....combination of skills development...practice and 9 holes of golf..... for members of high school golf teams and select middle school players

IRGF Players Club Golf Tournament Series....for “select” high school & middle school players from St. Lucie, Indian River and Brevard Counties.

Girls In Golf Initiative....a “pilot program” for girls ages 10 to 18

Corporate/Charity Short Game Challenges

....fun competition for linking businesses through golf

High Profile Golf Tournaments.....offered annually to area top players

Mayor's Cup

Junior Golfer Challenge Cup

Senior Golfer / Junior Golfer Tournament

Indian River Golf Classic

Golf Specific Physical Fitness...strength, flexibility & cardio-vascular

Indian River Golf Academy.....an education/certification program in golf

Rules of Golf Seminar.....featuring most commonly applied rules

Meet the Pros....specialty golf instruction sessions by guest professionals

Young Leaders in Golf Award Program.

....recognizing contributions to the game through community service

Atlantic Junior Golf Team Series

.....a developmental program for aspiring young players 5th - 12th grades

.....serving Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin Counties

.....monthly tournaments on a year-round basis

.....supported by Family and School Based Junior Golf Teams

.....requires membership in Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Golf

TPC for Boys

....an outline of junior golf programs for boys including

Family Based Junior Golf Teams

School Based Junior Golf Teams

TPC for Boys (Competition)

Travel Golf Team

TPC for Girls

....an outline of junior golf programs for girls including

Family Based Junior Golf Teams

School Based Junior Golf Teams

TPC for Girls (Competition)

Travel Golf Team

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Cover Photo & Story

Sal Spallone – Tour Professional - Nationwide Tour Graduate of St. Edwards School and Texas Christian University

The photo on the cover captures a brief moment with PGA Nationwide Tour player Sal Spallone and his mentor PGA Professional Bob Komarinetz, Director of Golf at Sandridge Golf Club. Their relationship spans back to the early days of Sal playing golf in Indian River County.

Sal is a graduate of St. Edward's School and Texas Christian University. He had successful golf careers at each level having competed in Florida High School State Championships and an All-American at TCU.

He started golf at the age of 6 where the first couple years he just played for fun. His father enrolled him into the local program at Sandridge Golf Club for lessons. It taught him from the beginning how to practice. His advice is to always practice with a purpose and to make your sessions productive. He always worked on fundamentals from day one. His most important teaching aid was to lay clubs down on the ground for alignment. He recognized the value of this because most bad habits are in relation to poor alignment and setup. Sal likes to accomplish either a new shot or drill for each workout. He never spent a day of practice without a goal to accomplish. If he felt that his fade shot was lacking then he would work on that or if his punch shot was getting too high, he would hit a hundred balls knee high until he knew he could hit that desired shot without even thinking about it. And the last thing he suggests is to spend the majority of time on and around the greens. He would try to practice with a buddy and have games around the greens with all kinds of shots. This makes it a little more fun and helps you to concentrate like you would in a tournament. And also mix up your practice and with on-course playing as well.

Ever since Sal was about age ten his practice has been pretty much the same. He starts out in the morning around the greens for a while and then moves into hitting balls. He will take a break for lunch and then play 18. Then back to the practice tee to work on what he feels was lacking.

Sal states that it doesn't stop at the on-course preparation. Eating right working out and mental strength are all just as important. A healthy diet has been very important to him. Throughout the years he has experimented with how his body performs the best with certain foods. A healthy diet insures you with the strength and endurance you need throughout the day. He would see that if he ate poorly his energy and focus would start to diminish as the day progressed. Coming down the stretch is when you want to be your strongest so you have to be constantly feeding your body with fuel.

This leads directly into working out. This day and age being physically fit is a necessity. He started working out his freshman year in college. He states that if he had to do it all over again he would have started a lot sooner. He works the whole body but focuses on his legs and core because that is where most of your power comes from.

And finally for the mental side of the game. He has worked with numerous sports psychiatrists that have helped to an extent. But he advises if you are not able to go that route he suggests reading. He will tell you that he has gotten the most out of reading books and learning how to control his emotions in certain situations. And, of course, experience playing in competitive situations has been very helpful. .

Sal would suggest is that you can never play enough tournaments. He was always playing in tournaments. You have to learn how to lose before you can learn how to win. The more you put yourself in tournament conditions the more comfortable and relaxed you will be able to feel when the bell rings.

He is still to this day experimenting and working on different things to get to that next level. If you have the opportunity to meet Sal and you have any questions or need more info..... don't hesitate to ask. As he would say..... "Hope all is well and look forward to seeing you on the golf course!!"

Sal Spallone currently serves as Director of Golf Instruction
Quail Valley Golf Club - Vero Beach, FL