



Keiser University

# High School Golf Coaching Manual

Bradley Turner, M.B.A., PGA Member  
Director of Online Instruction  
College of Golf

Section I Introduction to Golf Coaching  
July 2021

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Introduction .....</b>   | <b>Pg. 3</b>  |
| <b>You Are the New Coach.....</b>   | <b>Pg. 4</b>  |
| <b>The Student Journey .....</b>  | <b>Pg. 5</b>  |
| Coaching Attributes   |               |
| Setting Expectations  |               |
| Four Cornerstones of Golf Improvement                                     |               |
| Creating a Roadmap for Success  |               |
| <b>Baseline Assessment of Your Team.....</b>                              | <b>Pg. 7</b>  |
| Team Segments / Groups  |               |
| Measure Skill Improvement   |               |
| Keeping Player Statistics   |               |
| <b>Important Concepts for Golf Coaches—Full Swing Club Mechanics.....</b> | <b>Pg. 12</b> |
| Starting Point and the Grip   |               |
| Club Mechanics through Impact and Ball Flight Laws                        |               |
| The Essentials of Club Mechanics  |               |
| Curving the Ball  |               |
| <b>Important Concepts for Golf Coaches—Full Swing Body Mechanics.....</b> | <b>Pg. 14</b> |
| General Concepts of the Pivot   |               |
| Weight Distribution   |               |
| Full Swing Checkpoints  |               |
| <b>Coaching Putting Fundamentals.....</b>                                 | <b>Pg. 17</b> |
| Concepts in Good Putting  |               |
| Putting Checkpoints   |               |
| <b>Coaching Short Game Fundamentals .....</b>                             | <b>Pg. 21</b> |
| Coaching Chipping Fundamentals and Checkpoints.....                       | <b>Pg. 22</b> |
| Coaching Pitching Fundamentals and Checkpoints.....                       | <b>Pg. 25</b> |
| Coaching Bunker Fundamentals and Checkpoints.....                         | <b>Pg. 28</b> |
| <b>Thoughts on Your Coaching Journey.....</b>                             | <b>Pg. 31</b> |
| <b>About the College of Golf at Keiser University.....</b>                | <b>Pg. 32</b> |



Thank you for requesting the Keiser University High School Golf Coaching Manual. The purpose of this manual is to provide a foundation to enhance your knowledge and understanding of this great game. As a professional educator, you understand the power of an instructor's influence on a young athlete. The information in this manual will provide a platform for you to expand your coaching influence and make a life long difference for your players' success and enjoyment of golf.

Your role as a high school golf coach is vital to the growth of the game. According to the National Golf Foundation the number of golfers in the United States continues to be relatively flat. One of the main reasons is new golfers become frustrated because they are unable to play competent golf. The number of people who try the game every year is offset by the number who end up quitting the game. In 2020, the NGF states we have about 24.8 million golfers in the U.S which is down about five million golfers from 2005. We have an additional 11.9 million who are very interested in playing the game but do not for various reasons. If we can somehow attract and maintain many of the golfers who are very interested in playing the game, the golf industry will be healthy for the foreseeable future!

This past year, golf has been a recreational outlet for many during the COVID pandemic. Golf participation has increased almost 10% over 2019 numbers. There are high hopes within the golf industry for continual interest and growth in golf, making your role as the high school golf coach essential in the development of new golfers. In 2020, American's played the second most rounds of golf ever recorded. The only year that exceeded 2020 was in 1997 when Tiger Woods became golf's superstar after winning the Masters.

The majority of you will never get the chance to coach a Jordan Spieth or Lexi Thompson. The majority of you have the opportunity to coach someone who is capable of playing college golf. All of you have the chance to change the life of your players through the enjoyment and appreciation of the game of golf.

The manual is divided into two sections. The first section is focused on articulating the concepts of coaching the game along with the essential skills to communicate to your team. The information in this section is essential concepts of golf that every instructor should know. In addition, this section will focus on the fundamentals of putting, short game, and the full swing. This basic yet comprehensive manual will identify what you need to teach students during your practice sessions. The second section will highlight the performance aspects of the game combining practice ideas with course management strategies. Please contact me at your convenience as I am available to support you and your teams.

Wish you the very best this season!



#### **About the Author**

*Bradley Turner is the Director of Online Golf Instruction for the College of Golf at Keiser University. He has earned his M.B.A. and became a PGA of America member in 1988. He recently completed the General Management Certified Professional program through the PGA. He has been teaching and coaching golf since 1983 after graduating from Bowling Green State University. Mr. Turner has been in the field of golf education since 1991 and previously served as the Campus President at the Golf Academy of America Orlando campus for 24 years. An accomplished player and golf coach, he enjoys sharing his passion for golf instruction with future coaches and teachers.*

## **You Are the New Coach**

Congratulations on your position as a high school golf coach! You may have been hired as the head coach because you love playing the game. It may be that you have the lowest handicap of the faculty. It is possible you were hired because you have coached other sports. Hopefully, you were not hired because you drew the shortest straw...but that could be the case too! You all have come from different backgrounds with a myriad of thoughts regarding the game of golf. Coaching and teaching the game of golf is a challenge for even the most experienced instructors. Just like any profession, it takes time and effort to become really good at your craft. I am certain you all would agree that you are a better classroom instructor today than when you first walked into a classroom. Coaching golf is exactly the same. Regardless of what your qualifications are, by making the decision to read this manual, you are expressing a desire to become a better golf coach.

A high school golf coach is often viewed as an administrator of the team instead of the coach. Unfortunately, there are plenty of examples of high school coaches who simply do not know the fundamentals of the game and they refuse to improve their understanding. This lack of understanding leads many of these coaches down the path of becoming the team administrator... not the coach. It is interesting to listen to individuals who are passionate about golf, yet lack the training and experience, explain the reasoning behind a poor golf shot. By some strange coincidence a high handicap golfer seems to always know what went wrong with the golf shot. As a professional instructor since 1983, I have often pondered why a player would continue to hit poor shots when he or she knows what the problem is? And most importantly, why do they continue to believe in their own self analysis capabilities, yet still be incapable of breaking 100? You do not want to be a golf coach that lacks the understanding to help your players become better.

The game of golf was founded on the simple idea of using a stick to move an object to a destination. Today, the essence of the game has not changed very much. Yet to say the game is simple is a complete understatement. The complexity of moving the club in an initial backwards movement, through a transition into a forward motion, along an inclined plane, at a high rate of speed, with the ball on a slight downhill lie, with the wind blowing left to right, with the flight objective a right to left draw, to a left hand flag location only 20 feet from the water hazard, is quite an undertaking to say the least! When the flight of the ball does not match the intention of the player, do you really know what caused the poor outcome? I think Arnold Palmer said it best:

***“Golf is deceptively simply and endlessly complicated”***

***Arnold Palmer***

The first golf lesson I ever gave was a true eye opener. I had just graduated from college having played four years on the golf team. I was an accomplished golfer so of course I assumed I should be a good teacher of the game too. I learned very quickly that teaching golf as a profession was going to be more challenging than I thought. Unfortunately for my first student, I was at a loss of what to do. That feeling of failure was something I did not want to experience again. My first lesson was a great one for me because I realized that I better ask someone for help. Thus started my summer apprenticeship teaching golf. I contacted my college golf coach on a regular basis to get advice and ideas on how to help my students become better players. I learned a lot that summer...primarily because I had a lot to learn.

Since coaching golf is now your part-time occupation, the first step is to begin with some base knowledge and become very proficient at communicating this information. As a new golf coach, you do not need to know all the complexity of a golf swing to be very good at what you do. However, you must be competent at communicating the knowledge you do have in an energetic and encouraging way. You must be able to build trust from your students. I have always believed that a great basketball or football coach could be a great golf coach as well. Duke University head basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski certainly has proven his ability to motivate, encourage and create a winning team. The only missing piece necessary for Coach K to be a successful golf coach, is the base knowledge related to golf. With the information in this manual, you will be capable of successfully coaching a high school golf team!

## **The Student Journey**

The journey to better golf is unique for each of your players. It is very similar to learning a discipline like Geometry with the exception that golf is a motor skill. To get a student to understand the concepts of Geometry it will take time and patience for both the student and the instructor. As each lesson is understood, additional concepts and Geometry skills are introduced. To get through an entire year of Geometry the instructor simply follows the curriculum. This manual will serve as a curriculum for you and your players.

### **Coaching Attributes**

The players on your team will come with a wide variety of golf knowledge, skills and experience. Consequently, they will have an array of strengths and weaknesses that can become overwhelming to a new golf coach. It is best to focus on the controllable efforts you can make to improve your golfers. There are two very important attributes of a good coach from the perspective of the players:

1. **Expertise/experience**— a good golf coach will have the base knowledge and technical understanding to get the players to develop their golf skills. The coach will have a proven record of success and will continually be learning about the game through books, videos, seminars and other continuing education activities. In short, players must believe in their coach's ability to help them on their journey. If you are a new golf coach, you too are on your own journey. Your knowledge and understanding will improve every week of the season and before you know it, you will be the expert.
2. **Empathy**— a good golf coach will show the appropriate empathy in learning the game of golf. The ability to understand the challenges of the golf journey can separate a good coach from an average coach. A coach that can support the players' cognitive understanding of the game through compassion and encouragement will be a great coach.

### **Setting Expectations**

Expectations from the student perspective and the coach's perspective are often different. These expectations need to be clear for all parties to avoid too much disappointment when the game inevitably becomes difficult. The golf coach is the guide on the student journey. Students are looking for the guide to coach them and improve their golf skills. When golf skills are not developing appropriately in the mind of the student, frustration will begin to surface.

As the guide on the student journey it is important to clarify your expectations with each student. You should create measurable milestones related to the various skills your players develop. Clear milestones can mitigate the frustration of learning any skill. Therefore, each student will have their own unique milestones depending on their baseline start point. If students progress from one milestone to the next, they will most likely be emotionally pleased with their own performance. They will be excited to learn new and more challenging skills. If students fail to progress to a milestone, then frustration and disappointment come to the forefront. Failure to progress is when your job as a coach becomes very influential and powerful. There are generally only three reasons for failing to progress to the next milestone:

1. The coach has not provided the tools for the student to progress
2. The student has not put forth the effort and followership to progress
3. The milestones are unrealistic for the athletic ability of the player

### **Four Cornerstones of Golf Improvement**

Coaching golf is ultimately about player performance. Your students must be progressing, reaching individual milestones and finally improving their scoring abilities. The core curriculum in this manual will be divided into four broad golf skill development areas I like to refer to as the Four Cornerstones of Golf Improvement:

1. Full Swing Fundamentals—Club Mechanics
2. Full Swing Fundamentals—Body Mechanics

### 3. Putting Fundamentals

### 4. Short Game Fundamentals — Chipping, Pitching and Bunker Play

These four areas will be the cornerstones for player improvement. Within each one of the cornerstones you as the coach will need to establish outcome expectations, performance milestones and process goals. The outcome goal or expectation is an agreed upon big picture outcome for your players. This should be related to scoring or handicap improvement as this is the essence of the game. The outcome goal is usually long-term and not easily achieved. As the coach, you must use your discretion in determining an appropriate outcome goal for each one of your students. A long and arduous a journey may inspire some of your players but for others it may create unwanted frustration and disappointment.

The performance milestone goals are checkpoints along the journey. There are many potential performance milestones and I suggest using a standardized skills test to measure your students' performance. For those coaches with launch monitor equipment, you can easily measure the full swing club mechanics and resulting ball flight. Some milestones may be difficult to quantify such as improving the golf grip or setup position. However, you and the student must agree on what it will look like when a milestone is met.

Finally, the process goals are the daily or weekly tasks you ask your players to complete on the journey between milestones. This is when the real coaching work is done.

#### **Creating a Roadmap for Success**

An example roadmap for a typical student will look something like this:

**Outcome Goal**— Reduce handicap index to 5.0 by the end of the golf season. For a student to achieve this goal, the coach should establish milestones that support the goal

**Milestones**— Create milestones within the four Cornerstones of Golf Improvement

- Putting Fundamentals— reduce tournament putts per round to 31 or less
- Short Game Fundamentals—score 75 on the skill test
- Full Swing Club Mechanics—increase greens in regulation to 50%
- Full Swing Body Mechanics— improve flexibility resulting in increased club head speed to 100 mph with driver

**Process Goals**— Develop practice plans that support the established milestones. Using the above milestone of 31 putts or less per round as an example, the Putting Fundamentals process goals will look something like this:

- Complete 5 minutes of putting mechanics at the start of every practice
- Putt to the fringe for 5 minutes at the end of practice

You do not want to create an elaborate Roadmap for each of your students. Establishing realistic milestones so they will see improvement is important. Also the process goals should be simple to complete but students should repeat their efforts in their practice session. Using the above process goals as an example, a total of 10 minutes a day at three days a week is better than 30 minutes for one day a week.

**Hyperlink to Roadmap for Success** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-zxBd3baFc>

As a successful golf coach, you must be able to measure skill improvement throughout the season. Shooting lower scores is certainly the most important measurement, but golf requires many different skills. Therefore, creating your standardized skill measurement process is necessary. Lets explore how to establish baseline skill measurements.

## **Baseline Assessment of Your Team**

It is the first day of team try outs. Assessing your team is a good starting point of the golf season. When evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of any golfer, it is important to use as much objective information as possible. There are three recommended sources for this information; an established USGA handicap index, actual competitive 9 or 18 holes scores, and a Skills Assessment test. Subjective assessment would include items such as other athletic activities, the skill level achieved in those activities, and overall perception of the athletic abilities of your players. To play golf at a high level of proficiency, players must develop their hand and eye coordination. Previous athletic experience can be helpful in the development process.

### **Team Segments / Groups**

In order to help the entire team, you must be able to segment your team based on your assessment. Just as in coaching a basketball team, you would have an overall coaching philosophy for the entire team, but you would also have the team segmented to work on special skills. The offense will work on different fundamentals than the defense. Team members will be asked to play different roles based on the coaching assessment. My recommendation is to segment into three groups; Foundation group is basically your novice golfers, the second group are your Core group, experienced but need enhancement of their technique and understanding of their golf skills, and the final group I like to call Players who already possess a strong golf game.

#### Foundation

This group would be any player with little to no competitive golf experience. The handicap would be over 18, unable to break into the 80's, and a very low Skill Test score. This is the group where you will provide the base knowledge of information, "the how to" part of teaching golf. With your foundation players, it is important to properly instruct them on the items in this manual. This is the technical aspect of golf instruction when you will focus on technique. All team members should be able to understand and perform the following golf skills/concepts at a basic level:

- \* Pre-swing set-up for full swing and short game skills; including grip, aim, alignment, posture, and ball position
- \* Demonstrate the full-swing pivot or body mechanics without a golf club
- \* Understand the basics of ball flight—club mechanics

#### Core

These players will have more playing experience than your Foundation group, and will likely be sophomores through seniors. The handicap range for this group will range from about 10 to 25, with the ability to occasionally break into the high 80's, for the higher handicaps. A short game skill test score in the middle of the team. The Core group are players who will compete in matches and tournaments for you. This group needs coaching on performance and shooting lower scores. Your focus should be:

- \* Ability to demonstrate and understand all items within the Foundation group
- \* Measure short game performance—emphasis on getting the ball in the hole from short distances
- \* Play short game performance games highlighted in Section 2 of this manual

#### Players

These players are going to be your number one or two on the team. Some of these individuals are already very good with a single digit handicap capable of shooting in the 70's on a consistent basis, and the best Short Game skills test scores. Players will always have a better short game than any of your Core team members. Your job is to make sure and keep them playing to their potential. Often times, these players already have a full-time PGA instructor helping them with their game.

- \* All items under the Foundation and Enhancement would apply
- \* Communicate with the PGA professional if applicable
- \* Focus on three areas; in play off the tee, 100 yards and in, and targeting less than 30 putts per round

## **Measuring Skill Improvement**

Anyone who decides to participate in a new sport expects to improve with time and effort. Standardized skill testing is a must for your team as it will provide performance feedback and intrinsic motivation for your players. When a student can see for themselves their own improvement, they are very likely to continue with the necessary work. Many students become frustrated in their performance solely based on their own perceptions. Using a skill test to verify their improvement is sometimes necessary in golf because there are so many external factors that can influence the scorecard. Isolating individual skills and the associated improvement will only make your life as a coach that much better. The numbers will tell you if there has been some incremental improvement so it is important to start with baseline testing.

### **Short Game Skills Test**

There are a few really good skill tests for you to implement into your program. Included in this manual is a short game skills test that has been proven to be very effective in evaluating specific skills for golfers (pg. 9-10). The difficulty in administering these standardized tests is predicated on the practice facilities available to you and the team. Therefore, I suggest that you create your own skills test and stay committed to using it. You may want to use the entire skill test as presented in the manual or you can select the skills that you can measure and implement given the resources available to you.

Any type of consistent skills testing can work for your team. If the attached skills test is too arduous given the limited resources in your program, use this simplified skills test:

### **SIMPLIFIED SHORT GAME SKILLS TEST**

#### ***Putting— (Star Point setup with the putts around the cup. Record made putts)***

- 5 putts from 6 feet (Star Point setup with the putts around the cup)
- 5 putts from 10 feet (Star Point setup with the putts around the cup)

#### ***Lag Putting—(Using baby powder, create a 3 foot radius circle around the cup. Record putts on or inside the circle)***

- 5 putts from 30 feet
- 5 putts from 50 feet

#### ***Chipping—(Using baby powder, create a 6 foot radius circle around the cup. Record chip shots on or inside the circle)***

- 5 chips from 30 feet
- 5 chips from 50 feet

#### ***Pitching —(Using baby powder, create a bigger circle at a 10 foot radius circle around the cup.)***

- 5 pitch shots from 15 yards
- 5 pitch shots from 25 yards

#### ***Bunker— (For many students, getting out of a bunker and on the green is the objective)***

- 10 bunker shots - measure how many out of sand and on the green
- For your more skilled golfers, measure how many inside a 10 foot radius circle from the flag

## **Measuring Full Swing Skill**

Given the safety concerns and limitations of practice facilities, it is very difficult to accurately measure swing improvement in a standardized format. For those that have launch monitors you will be able to create measurements that provide tremendous feedback for your players. Keeping statistics is a good way of measuring ball striking skill and this is the next topic.



## KEISER UNIVERSITY STANDARDIZED SHORT GAME SKILLS TEST

### **Lag Putting – 10 putts**      2 from 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 feet

Keep the putt relatively flat especially near the hole location. The hole location will vary as the cups are changed but do your best to be consistent in setting up your skills test.

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Holed.....   | 3 pts |
| 0-3 feet...  | 2 pts |
| 3-6 feet...  | 1 pt  |
| 6-9 feet...  | 0 pts |
| Over 9 ft... | -1 pt |

### **Putting – 20 total putts**      4 lines of a compass (NSWE) From 3, 6, 9, 12, 15 feet

Select a hole location that provides for a modest break. At the three foot distance, the putt should move very slightly. Straight uphill, straight downhill, and then left to right and right to left.

2 points for each putt made

### **Chipping - 10 shots**      5 from 30-40 feet and 5 from 50-60 feet

Select a simple chip shot from the edge of the green, preferably on the fringe or closely mown area.

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Holed.....    | 3 pts |
| 0-3 feet..... | 2 pts |
| 3-6 feet..... | 1 pt  |
| 6-9 feet..... | 0 pts |
| Over 9 ft...  | -1 pt |

### **Bunker – 10 shots**      5 shots from 10 yds and 5 from 15 yds

Select a simple bunker shot and allow the player to select their preferred lie in the sand

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Holed.....    | 3 pts |
| 0-5 ft.....   | 2 pts |
| 5-10 ft.....  | 1 pt  |
| 10-15 ft..... | 0 pts |
| Over 15 ft... | -1 pt |

### **Pitch – 10 shots**      5 shots from 15 yds and 5 from 25 yards to flag

Select a pitch shot from light rough where a sand wedge or lob wedge must be used. Students should land the ball on the putting surface so it is important to have the hole location at least 8-10 yards from the fringe.

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Holed.....    | 3 pts |
| 0-5 ft.....   | 2 pts |
| 5-10 ft.....  | 1 pt  |
| 10-15 ft..... | 0 pts |
| Over 15 ft... | -1 pt |

### **Scoring Wedges – 10 shots**      2 from 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 yards

This is the only skill when you are measuring based on the landing point of the shot. There are very few practice areas that will allow for a consistent ball / green reaction. Measure where the ball lands NOT where it stops.

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| 0-3 ft.....   | 3 pts |
| 3-10 ft.....  | 2 pts |
| 10-20 ft..... | 1 pt  |
| 20-30 ft..... | 0 pts |
| Over 30 ft... | -1 pt |

# STANDARDIZED SHORT GAME SKILLS TEST

## Handicap System

This Standardized Short Game Skills Test has been a staple in measuring specific short game skills. I have used this test since 1992 when I created this system with the help of PGA professional, Charlie King. Through the efforts of many students we were able to establish a system of feedback that worked very well for golfers. The short game is the quickest avenue to lower scoring. Yet too many golfers believe if they could only hit the ball better, their handicap would drop considerable. In some cases this can be true. But the majority of golfers can benefit considerable with diligent attention to their short game.

This handicap chart provides you and your students with an accurate assessment of each of the six short game skills. With over 25 years of data and research embedded within this skills test, you can easily communicate the strengths and weaknesses of your players.

For example, if a legitimate 3 handicap player on your team consistently scores below 90 on the skills test, it will tell you there is opportunity to lower the handicap by improving the short game. On the other hand, a student with a USGA handicap of 13 has scored in the 70+ range on the skills test, then ball striking should be a priority. Every golfer is unique and by measuring skill performance, you will become a much better golf coach to your players!

| <b>Overall Handicap</b> | <b>Lag Putting</b> | <b>Putting</b> | <b>Chipping</b> | <b>Bunker</b> | <b>Pitch</b> | <b>Scoring Wedge</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 100 = 0 hdcp            | 20 = +1 hdcp       | 22 = +1 hdcp   | 18 = +1 hdcp    | 16 = +1 hdcp  | 18 = +1 hdcp | 16 = +1              |
| 90 = 3 hdcp             | 18 = 2 hdcp        | 20 = 2 hdcp    | 16 = 4 hdcp     | 14 = 2 hdcp   | 16 = 2 hdcp  | 14 = 2 hdcp          |
| 80 = 6 hdcp             | 16 = 5 hdcp        | 18 = 6 hdcp    | 14 = 8 hdcp     | 12 = 4 hdcp   | 14 = 5 hdcp  | 12 = 5 hdcp          |
| 70 = 9 hdcp             | 14 = 9 hdcp        | 16 = 10 hdcp   | 12 = 12 hdcp    | 10 = 6 hdcp   | 12 = 8 hdcp  | 10 = 9 hdcp          |
| 60 = 13 hdcp            | 12 = 12 hdcp       | 14 = 14 hdcp   | 10 = 16 hdcp    | 8 = 8 hdcp    | 10 = 11 hdcp | 8 = 13 hdcp          |
| 50 = 18 hdcp            | 10 = 16 hdcp       | 12 = 18 hdcp   | 8 = 20 hdcp     | 6 = 10 hdcp   | 8 = 14 hdcp  | 5 = 18 hdcp          |
| 40 = 23 hdcp            | 8 = 20 hdcp        | 10 = 22 hdcp   | 6 = 24 hdcp     | 3 = 14 hdcp   | 6 = 18 hdcp  | 3 = 22 hdcp          |
| 30 = 28 hdcp            | 6 = 24 hdcp        | 8 = 26 hdcp    | 4 = 28 hdcp     | 0 = 20 hdcp   | 4 = 22 hdcp  | 0 = 28 hdcp          |

Hyperlink to setting up a Short Game Skills Test - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adCqFPSCDMA>

**Keeping Player Statistics**

Having your players keep their golf course statistics should be more targeted towards your Players and Core students. This information will be helpful for you and your players. However, with your Foundation students, I would suggest to keep only the very basics such as putts per round and possibly greens in regulation (this will be a low number).

As the coach, the ability to target the key areas of opportunity for your starting players, is certainly a valuable piece of information. Tournament statistics can provide this information for you. Below is an example of a very simple spreadsheet that provides the basic information for you and the team. Be careful of asking your players to track too much information as it may get them thinking of statistics more than shooting a lower score!

Here is a 10 Round Summary Sheet you can use to track your player statistics. You can simplify based on your students skill level. Included is summary of statistical performance expectations of various skill levels.

## 10 Round Summary Sheet

| Course and Date  | Score | Greens In Reg. | Up & D<br>0-40 yds | Attempts<br>0-40 yds | Up & D<br>Bunker | Attempts<br>Bunker | Total<br>Putts | 3 putts | Penalties |
|------------------|-------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
|                  |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |
| 10 Round Average |       |                |                    |                      |                  |                    |                |         |           |

| Score    | Greens In Regulation | Up & D %<br>0-40 yds | Up & D %<br>Bunker | Total<br>Putts | 3 putts | Penalties |
|----------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| PGA/LPGA | 12.1 or 67%          | 64%                  | 50%                | 28.9           | 0.5     | 0.3       |
| 73       | 10.8 or 60%          | 58%                  | 45%                | 29.7           | 0.65    | 0.9       |
| 77       | 9.0 or 50%           | 52%                  | 39%                | 30.3           | 1.15    | 1.2       |
| 82       | 7.2 or 40%           | 39%                  | 22%                | 31.9           | 1.27    | 1.6       |
| 87       | 5.4 or 30%           | 33%                  | 13%                | 32.3           | 1.53    | 2.7       |
| 92       | 3.6 or 20%           | 30%                  | 8%                 | 33.7           | 1.89    | 4.4       |

## **Important Concepts for Golf Coaches—Full Swing Club Mechanics**

As a new golf coach the plethora of golf information available on the Internet can create more confusion than clarification. I would advise you to stay away from viewing videos analyzing golf swings until you begin to deeply understand the most important concepts of developing a player. In this section, you will learn about the movement of the club through the impact zone. Golfers do not hit the ball on the backswing so this manual will focus on the forward swing, conditions of impact and post impact position.

### **Starting Position or Set-Up**

First on the list is the starting position for the full swing and all basic short game shots. The starting point or “set-up” includes the grip, posture, aim, alignment and ball position. You should begin to memorize key checkpoints in the setup and develop the ability to demonstrate this understanding of the starting position. With this base knowledge, you can begin the process of creating a competent and fundamentally sound player. Within this manual are easy to follow checkpoints for the set up position, in putting, chipping, pitching, bunker play and full swing. Each one of these five skills will have pictures along with the detailed explanations to build your confidence in correcting the set up position of your players. My suggestion is to review these periodically and in short order, you will be able to easily spot problems and know how to correct them.

### **The Grip**

Teaching the proper grip is detailed in the hyperlink to Teaching the Grip. If there is one fundamental that is non-negotiable for your foundation students, the grip is a must to get right. It is easy for young golfers to learn to hold the club in a functional position. Most importantly, you are setting them up for long-term success. Be tough on a good grip!

Hyperlink to Teaching the Grip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7f14sDqwWMs>

### **Club Mechanics through Impact and Ball Flight Laws**

The next item is to clearly understand the basics of ball flight. A good coach must be able to communicate the science behind the flight of a golf ball. This is referred to as club mechanics or simply the Ball Flight Laws. The basics of ball flight is based on the science of impact. The interaction of the clubface with the golf ball will create a predictable ball flight. The Ball Flight Laws will help you to understand the conditions at impact. Here is the need to know information.

#### **Ball Flight Laws**

1. The club head speed at impact. Higher speed for more potential distance.
2. The face angle relative to the target at impact. The face angle can be open, closed or square to the target at impact.
3. The path of the club relative to the target at impact. The energy of the club through the golf ball at impact.
4. The angle of attack of the club relative to the ground at impact. Descending for most golf shots. The club strikes the ball first and then the ground. The lowest point in an iron shot is approximately 4” after initial impact.
5. The centeredness of the strike or the solidness of contact.

I suggest that you begin to understand the path and face angle relationship. For a golf ball to fly perfectly straight to the intended target (assuming a center face strike), the path of the club will be moving toward the target at impact and the face angle must be at 90 degrees to the path. This collision will maximize the energy passed on to the golf ball and result in a quality golf shot.

Hyperlink to the Ball Flight Laws <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRX3YvIBFm8>

### The Essentials of Club Mechanics

The essentials of club mechanics refers to the movement of the golf club just before and just after contact with the golf ball. The three specific positions in the golf swing are:

1. **Pre-impact**—position of the club is parallel to the ground just before contact with the ball
2. **Impact**—the moment the club touches the golf ball
3. **Post-impact**—position of the club is parallel to the ground after impact with the golf ball

I would suggest that you get your players to demonstrate these important moments in the golf swing in a static position. Have them in a small group all demonstrate the pre-impact position. Let them look around at each other and you will begin to see them conform to the norm. Do the same thing with the impact and post impact position. Once your students are able to adequately demonstrate these three essentials of club mechanics in a static position, begin creating movement between the positions. I suggest working in reverse order as well so they begin to understand each position and feel the proper positions.

Hyperlink to the Three Essentials of Club Mechanics [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h22\\_mSBn1JE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h22_mSBn1JE)

### Curving the Ball

The golf swing is a three dimensional movement with countless variables that influence the flight of the golf ball. This can create misunderstanding as to why the ball hooked or sliced. There are only five foundational variables that make a golf ball curve. There are varying degrees of each of these five variables which account for a lot of confused golfers. All of these are directly related to the directional movement of the club head and the face plane orientation at impact. This is known as the path/club face relationship.

1. **Change the relationship of the grip to the club face.** Basically, opening or closing the clubface at setup. The player will keep the grip the same but the relationship of the face angle and grip will change. The clubface plane is the entire surface of the hitting area of the golf club.
2. **Change the club path.** This is the movement of the club head through the golf ball. An in to out path for a right handed golfer is oriented to the right of the intended starting line. An out to in path for a right handed golfer is oriented to the left of the intended starting line.
3. **Change the vertical swing plane angle.** From a targetline view, the club shaft can be in a more vertical position at impact or a shallower position. This change in vertical swing plane has a direct influence on the club face plane.
4. **Change the lead wrist position.** Assuming a neutral grip, a bowed lead wrist position will close the club face plane while a cupped lead wrist will open the club face plane.
5. **Change the timing of the release.** There are two factors that contribute to the release of the club face through impact. First is the rotation of the forearms and the second is the rotation of the body through impact. The ability to time the release is essential to good ball striking skill.

All golfer have these components embedded in their golf swings. Ultimately, the best players move the club in a manner that produces powerful and desirable ball flights. There are great ball strikers with unique golf swings. However, the unique swings we see on the PGA tour still adhere to the ball flight laws and essentials of club mechanics!

Hyperlink to Curving the Ball [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pWGXn4ow\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pWGXn4ow_4)

## **Important Concepts for Golf Coaches—Full Swing Body Mechanics**

### **General Concepts of the Body Mechanics**

The full swing body movement is often referred to as the pivot. I have always preferred the phrase body mechanics as it captures the essence of the movement, sequence and tempo of a golf swing. In building a fundamentally sound golf swing, it is ideal to establish good body mechanics. A solid understanding of good body mechanics will allow any golfer a better opportunity to develop good club mechanics. At the end of the day, the movement of the club head through the impact zone is what is most important.

If you can imagine a golf swing without any arms or golf club, then what remains is body mechanics. The essentials of body mechanics include a good setup or starting point (pg. 15-16), maintaining posture through impact, sequencing of the body to create proper shift of pressure or commonly referred to as weight shift.

### **Maintaining Posture**

The ability to maintain the posture in the golf swing is a trait of many great ball strikers. A simple way to understand this concept is to focus on the spine angle at address. From both a face on perspective and a target line perspective, maintaining posture is the ability to keep the spine angle steady without too much movement from its original starting point. The golf swing is an athletic movement so there is always some leeway in maintaining the spine angle during the swing. If you can get your players to rotate around a steady spine angle in the backswing and into the impact zone, they will have a much better chance of creating a consistent and repetitive golf swing.

### **Sequencing of the Body**

The kinematic sequence of the golf swing is similar to the throwing motion of a baseball player. In the golf swing, the hips should rotate approximately 45 degrees in the backswing while the shoulders rotate 90 degrees. This will give the average person the potential to build power in the forward swing. There are many golfers that look good at the top of the swing but everything falls apart on the forward swing due to poor body sequencing. Just before the player has reached the top of the swing, the first move is to shift the hips towards the target and begin to increase pressure on to the lead foot. As the hips bump forward they must also be rotating open to the target. This motion is like throwing a baseball. It is very difficult to throw a baseball effectively without opening up to the direction the ball is to be thrown. As the golfer reaches impact, the hips should be open to the target with the shoulders square to the target line. There is a wide variance in how much the hips open up at impact but the essential idea is to get the hips more open than the shoulders. If the shoulders are too open, the path of the club will start moving too much out to in resulting in pulls and sliced golf shots.

### **Pressure Shift**

Beginning with the starting point, the pressure should be evenly distributed between the balls of the feet and the heels. Weight should be evenly distributed between the left and right foot. During the initial takeaway, the pressure will begin to shift back to the trail foot with maximum pressure of about 70 percent before the top of the swing. Great ball strikers begin to shift the pressure to the lead foot prior to completing the backswing. At the top of swing the pressure is back to approximately 50/50. On the forward swing, the pressure will increase until impact with about 90 percent of the pressure on the lead foot. It is always good to get your players to complete the swing in good balance with the majority of weight on the lead foot.

Hyperlink to the Pivot <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uBNNQMpkY4Q>



## **TEACHING CHECKPOINTS for the Full Swing Starting Point / Setup**

### Face On View

1. Stance shoulder width 50/50 weight distribution
2. Slight spine tilt away from target (blue line)
3. Hands slightly forward with slight shaft lean
4. Full swing grip
5. Ball position with irons off lead ear and with driver more towards lead shoulder (yellow line)



### Target Line View

1. Shoulders /hips / feet parallel to target
2. Hip/Pant seam directly above the heel
3. Athletic posture, bend from the hips
4. Hands hang under shoulders
5. Shaft plane points to the belt line (yellow line)



## **Supplemental Notes: Teaching the Full Swing Starting Point / Set-Up**

### **FACE ON VIEW**

1. The stance should be as wide as the shoulders for most full swing shots. Keeping the lead foot as wide as the lead shoulder is important in maintaining a balanced finish. The pressure should be equally distributed (50/50) for the majority of shots including fairway metals and drivers. Keep the pressure between the heels and the balls of the feet. With wedge shots, many tour players move the pressure more towards the lead foot (60/40).
2. There will be a slight spine tilt away from the target. However, too much shoulder tilt can occur if there is excessive lean of the shaft. This spine tilt should range from 4 to 8 degrees.
3. Stand to the handle simply means to position the body where the belt buckle or zipper is in front of the grip end of the club. The handle of the club should be leaning slightly forward. It is rare for a good player to lean significantly in front of this position in the set up. Usually, this will occur with unusual stances or awkward lies.
4. The full swing grip is used to allow the club to hinge properly and also maintain lag in the forward swing. This will increase clubhead speed and allow for the player to square the clubface at impact.
5. A good rule is to position the ball off the lead ear for any shot played off the turf. The driver will be positioned more forward towards the lead shoulder. Changing ball position to accommodate a necessary change in trajectory can be done by experienced low handicap players. It is best to simplify ball position versus creating a variable ball position for each club.

### **TARGET LINE VIEW**

1. Align the shoulders, hips and feet parallel to the target. A consistent starting point will breed a consistent golf swing. This is one area of the full swing that needs constant attention to ensure that poor aiming and body alignment are mitigated.
2. The pressure of the body weight should feel equally distributed between the heels and the balls of the feet. This (along with good posture) will create needed space for the arms and hands to swing freely.
3. Bending from the hips will be evident by the belt line approximately 90 degrees to the lower spine. The spine will be in an anatomically neutral position. If the player stands straight up (90 degrees) and then bends forward, the spine tilt will be somewhere close to 55 degrees for the average golfer
4. Gravity will bring the hands directly under the shoulders. Do not fight gravity...it will always win! Especially at high swing speeds. With the driver, many players will extend their hands away slightly from the position for an iron. Hands that are too close to the body make it difficult for the player to swing freely through the impact area.
5. The shaft plane should point to the belt line. This will help maintain consistent posture. Hands that are too low will normally create a rounded posture by the player. This inhibits the ability of the player to rotate the torso to its fullest.
6. The face plane should point directly to the target. A common error is to position the face plan too far open to the target resulting in shot patterns that miss to the right (for right handed golfers) or compensations that include an out to in path and/or flipping of the hands/wrists to square the face.



## **Coaching Putting Fundamentals**

The fundamentals essential to putting are not overly complicated. Putting is the easiest skill from a mechanical aspect. But when you combine the variability in green speed, green contour, grass type and grain, it becomes a bit more complicated. Stay focused on getting your team to develop solid fundamentals versus perfect fundamentals. Putting is one skill that can be perceived as boring as most new golfers enjoy the strike of the club against the ball. Even when you are developing these putting fundamentals, remind your team that you are also working on their ball striking skills.

### **Essentials to Good Putting**

1. Consistently start the ball on the intended target or start line.
2. Control the speed or distance of the putt.
3. Develop good green reading skills.

### **Starting the Putt on the Intended Line**

There are three general influences on a player's ability to start the ball on the intended line. These will be very familiar to you as they are focused on the putter movement through impact with the ball. The general putting mechanics are:

1. Centerface Strike—hitting the putt solid in the center of the putter face. Off center hits can deflect the putter face open or closed causing the ball to miss the intended start line.
2. Path towards the target— the putter path is the movement of the putter head through the impact area. The path should be moving directly along the intended start line.
3. Face Angle pointed to target— putter face should be 90 degrees to the path at impact. The face angle has the most influence on the starting line of the putt.

Hyperlink to HS Manual Putting 1 —Intended starting line <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8JI7MEo3s8>

### **Controlling the Speed / Distance**

There are many factors that will influence the speed of a putt. The distance of the putt is primary but other important factors include the green speed, the undulations of the putting surface, the type of grass, the influence of grain, the level of moisture on the putting green and the putting mechanics of the player. On virtually every putt with the exception of very short and straight putts, the ability to correctly judge the proper speed is critical for success. Judgment and execution are two different variables in controlling the speed of a putt. A good example of poor judgment is when a putt is struck seemingly perfect in the mind of the golfer, yet the ball rolls 10 feet past the cup. On the other hand, when the player strikes a putt and starts asking for the ball to “keep going”, and then watches the ball stop 6 inches short of the cup, the player knew the execution of the putt was off.

A key mechanic in lag putting is to ensure there is plenty of backswing on longer distance putts. I like the idea of equal distance on the backswing and the forward swing. Avoid trying to artificially accelerate the putter head. Acceleration is a misunderstood concept and if the player has an inadequate length back swing, the need to artificially accelerate becomes evident. Hitting a putt solid is very important on longer putts as poor contact will reduce the distance the ball will roll.

Get your players to putt to the fringe of the putting green during practice sessions. This is also good for pre-tournament round warm up. By taking the hole away from the player's mind, the focus will be entirely on the distance the ball is rolling.

Hyperlink to HS Manual Putting 2 —Controlling Distance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch8uYL-vV4k&t=73s>

### Developing Green Reading Skills

Having played the game for over half century, and coached it for almost 40 years, it is still a bit of mystery as to why some players have the ability to read greens well while others are completely lost with this important skill. Golfers are often influenced by the television commentators who educate the audience on the amount of break on a given putt. My opinion is these guys are in the TV booth for a reason...because they couldn't read greens well when they were playing on the PGA Tour!

As a coach you need to provide verifiable evidence so your players can become better at seeing the true amount of break in a putt. So how can you show your students the true amount of break? Watch the YouTube videos below and you will be training your players on reading greens properly.

In this first video, I have created an all in one drill using a chalkline and board to clearly convey the three mechanical aspects of good putting:

1. Read the true amount of break
2. Start the ball on the intended line
3. Hit the putt at the required speed

Hyperlink to HS Manual 3—All Together / Green reading <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLxkB535xc4>

In the following three videos, I have created different stages or phases of using the board and chalkline in your training sessions. Begin with video #1 and build the skills of your players up through video #2 and finally video #3. All players on the team will benefit from these three training drills, but I suggest keeping your foundational players focused on the first drill. Once their skill is adequate, then introduce the second video. The last video is a long distance putt and is fun for all players to try.

Hyperlink to HS Manual—Putting with a Chalk Line 1 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yh5IGRCW\\_FE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yh5IGRCW_FE)

Hyperlink to HS Manual—Putting with a Chalk Line 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDmFXIPV7W0>

Hyperlink to HS Manual—Putting with a Chalk Line 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZilm4yF8U0>

## **TEACHING CHECKPOINTS for the Putting Starting Point / Set-Up**

### Face On View

1. Feet hip width - weight about 50/50 to slightly forward
2. Neutral spine, no spine tilt — shoulders level to slight tilt with trailing shoulder lower
3. Stand to the handle— hands hang underneath sternum
4. Various grips can work—must control face
5. Ball positioned slightly forward of sternum—putter shaft 90 degrees to ground

### Target Line View

1. Feet, hips, forearms, shoulders parallel to target
2. Hip/Pant seam directly above the heel
3. Athletic posture, bend from the hips
4. Hands hang under shoulders
5. Shaft in line with inside edge of the forearms
6. Putter soled flat to the ground
7. Eyes over the ball / slightly inside the ball



## **Supplemental Notes: Teaching the Putting Starting Point / Set-Up**

### **FACE ON VIEW**

1. Keeping the body stable is essential when making a good putting stroke. Consequently, a balance ratio of 50/50 makes the most sense. Some great putters prefer to keep the weight slightly forward towards the lead foot at a maximum of 70/30. The idea behind this weight distribution is to keep the putter head from ascending too quickly through the impact area. Very few if any really good putters keep the majority of their weight on the back foot.
2. Since putting does not require a powerful hitting force, it is not necessary to stay behind the ball in putting. Therefore, a neutral spine angle is ideal for putting. This will keep the shoulders fairly level to the ground (depending on the grip). If a player has a straight lead arm and they play the ball well forward in their stance, the shoulders will be tilted significantly. The problem with this type of set up is the putter will ascend too quickly resulting in putts that are hit thin (near the bottom of putter face).
3. Stand to the handle simply means to position the body where the belt buckle or zipper is in front of the grip end of the club. It is rare for a good player to lean significantly in front of this position in the set up.
4. The putting stroke does not require leverage (hinging) to function properly. Consequently, there are many different putting grips used on the professional tours. The most essential function is simply controlling the putter face. However, using your "dominant" hand makes the most sense because it is best at writing, at throwing a baseball, at shooting a basketball, and it can cast a fishing line better too. It is safe to assume it is best at controlling the position of the putter face.
5. A putter will be manufactured to have between 2 and 4 degrees of loft. Striking a putt with this amount of loft will allow the ball to be gently lifted off the grass and begin rolling. If a ball is struck with negative loft, the ball will actually be pinched against the grass resulting in a slight bounce prior to the ball beginning to roll. The putter handle can be positioned ever so slightly forward of 90 degrees to the ground, but too much becomes a problem.

### **TARGET LINE VIEW**

1. The most important step is to keep the shoulders parallel to the target. It is much easier to create an ideal putter path movement when starting with the shoulders in a properly aligned position.
2. The weight will feel as if it is a little more toward the balls of the feet when the hip or pant seam is above the heel. This (along with good posture) will create needed space for the arms and hands to swing freely.
3. The degree of spine tilt should be somewhere between 30 and 45 degrees. Bending from the hip joint will be evident by the belt line approximately 90 degrees to the lower spine. The spine will be in an anatomically neutral position. A putter that is either too long or too short will negatively influence the proper spine tilt.
4. Gravity will bring the hands directly under the shoulders.
5. This will help create a single lever between the shaft and forearms. It is easier to create this single lever by ensuring the grip is more in the palms of the hands versus the fingers.
6. The putter should be soled flat to the ground. This can be achieved with the overall solid starting point and minor adjustments to either the putter length or to the putter lie angle.
7. Eyes over the ball to slightly inside the ball. This will make it easier to properly align the face of the putter. Both eyes should be over the target line.

## **Coaching Short Game Fundamentals**

The short game fundamentals in this manual will focus on three important skills; chipping, pitching and basic bunker play. Learning to play the game from the hole backwards means that a beginner should start putting first, then learn to chip the ball from just off the edge of the green and so on. Because a large percentage of golf shots are taken from 50 yards and in, it is a good idea to spend time with your team on the shorter distance golf shots. However, the average beginner golfer likes the idea of smashing the big stick far and straight. Your students will probably think the same way. The fun in golf is creating a massive collision between the golf club and the ball. Golfers enjoy watching the long hitters on the PGA Tour hit prodigious drives of well over 300 yards. Watching a PGA Tour player hit a simple chip shot close to the hole does not excite the mind of the average golfer. It is the same with baseball fans, a bunt that advances a runner into scoring position is boring but a homerun is exciting and fun to watch. The short game is much more like a bunt in baseball, so your job as the coach is to ensure your players are working on this very important but often perceived as a boring aspect of the game.

### **The Essence of the Short Game**

The skill in the short game is a player's ability to get the ball to come to rest as close as possible to the hole location. It is that simple. How a player decipheres all the data needed to create a plan for one short game shot is actually quite overwhelming. It takes experience for a golfer to know how a ball will react to all the various course conditions and shot requirements. My suggestion for you and the team is to get everyone to adopt this short game philosophy; hit the easiest shot possible (putting) and then progress to the most difficult shot (flop shot off a tight lie). There are numerous shots in between, but if the conditions allow a player to putt, I recommend they putt. Next would be to chip with a less lofted club such as a 7 iron and keep adding loft until a chip with a lob wedge will not work. From chipping you progress to pitching. If a basic pitch shot will not work given the shot requirements, then a specialty short game shot will be needed.

### **Judgment - Which Club? Which Shot?**

Since the objective in the short game is to get the ball to stop by the hole, how does an experienced player determine which club to use and which shot to execute? The answer will depend on the skills of each player but here is a good checklist to get your players started. The more consistent they are in this short game judgment process, the better they will become in making good decisions around the greens. There are two reasons a short game shot does not end up close to the hole, poor judgment or poor execution. To improve on making good judgment decisions before each short game shot, have your players work through this checklist in order. Once this process becomes a habit, your team will be making better decisions under tournament pressure.

1. Always look at the lie of the ball. Is it sitting down? What are the grass conditions? Are you with the grain or against the grain?
2. What are the turf/ground conditions? Is the ground firm or soft? Wet or dried out? Can a player bounce the ball on to the ground or will it require the ball to land on the green?
3. What is the speed of the greens? Are the greens firm or soft?
4. What is the slope like on the green?
5. At this point a player must begin to picture how the ball will come to rest by the hole. This may take a series of images in their mind along with various club selections to finally come up with an image that works best for the situation. The player (the judge in this case) must make a final decision on the shot to be played. Once decided, it is now time to execute the shot.

The next three skill shots will supplement the above information with concepts, technique and club selection to help your players execute the short game shots they have imagined.

## **Coaching Chipping Fundamentals**

### **Concepts in Chipping**

The chip shot is played from just off the green when the ball is either on the fringe, fairway or short rough. If the ball is in moderate to heavy rough, a chip shot will not work as well as some type of pitch shot. The technique in chipping is second only to putting in the simplicity required to make solid contact with the ball. However, learning to judge all the variables that influence how the ball will land and roll to the flagstick is quite complex. Even the very best players in the world can have a hard time judging and executing a seemingly simple chip shot. Learning to play the game from the green and then back starts with putting and then moves on to chipping. Unfortunately, most students are not patient enough to learn this way and want to hit the driver first! The essentials of chipping properly will establish a great foundation as your students build on some important concepts.

### **Basic Chipping Technique**

The chip shot is a one lever stroke, very similar to putting. The main differences between chipping and putting is a change in ball position, the use of a more lofted club and weight distribution through the chipping motion. These adjustments will create a subtle increase in the angle of attack in the chipping motion. A slight descending blow to the ball and then the ground will create the ideal impact conditions for the basic chip shot. The loft of the club is responsible for getting the ball into the air while the player responsibility is to simply contact the ball first and then the ground. It is very important to emphasize to your new students, the concept of ball first and then ground contact. This should be part of every practice session until your players begin to develop good impact conditions!

Make sure and get your students to follow the chip shot set up checklist in this manual (pg.23 and p.24). Once you get any player into a good chipping setup position, the success rate is very good with regard to quality contact and overall satisfactory results. The setup is so very important which is why this manual is focused substantially on this fundamental. Do not allow your new players to deviate from the chipping checklist and soon enough, they will become competent chippers of the golf ball!

Once good impact conditions become trained, the next step will be to practice landing the ball in an imaginary circle at least the length of the flagstick from the edge of the green (6 –7 feet). With the majority of chip shots, the ball should land on the putting green first and then roll out to the target. The idea is to hit the ball a short distance in the air and then let the ball roll to the hole. Sometimes, a bump and run shot is needed where the ball lands short of the green and bounces a few times before reaching the putting surface. If the ground is firm and the grass is relatively short, the bump and run is a great shot for your team to learn.

Hyperlink to Chipping Technique <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABR039AQMwY>

### **Club Selection**

If the putter does not work for the short game situation, then you should look to chip with a less lofted iron and progress all the way to the lob wedge. Regardless of the club selection in chipping, the technique is the same. If the conditions do not reward the chip shot technique then we move onto pitching and specialty shots.

The club selection for advance chipping can include a wide variety of choices. This can include using the majority of the irons in the bag including the hybrid club. This can be confusing to new players to the game so the following are good adaptations from the advanced player. A very common problem is when a player uses only a sand wedge or lob wedge to hit all the different chip shots. Hitting quality chip shots with a 60 degree lofted wedge is very difficult to do! Phil Mickelson is great at it, but not too many average golfers have the skill of Phil! Get your players to expand their club selection around the green. For those one club chippers, suggest to them using one of the following club combinations for chipping. As they get more familiar with using different lofted clubs, they will want to expand their repertoire of clubs to chip with. The first suggestion is to use the **SW—8 iron combination**. This works particularly well for those players on your team that love using the SW only around the greens. If you have a player that likes to use the 60 degree lob wedge, then suggest the **LW—PW—7 iron combination**.

Hyperlink to Club Selection in Chipping <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FtOo6zDwZI>



## **TEACHING CHECKPOINTS for the Chipping Starting Point / Set-Up**

### Face On View

1. Narrow stance (6" to 8"), weight forward
2. Neutral spine , no spine tilt — shoulders level to slight tilt with trailing shoulder
3. Stand to the handle – hands under sternum
4. Weaken lead hand grip is preferred
5. Ball positioned back of sternum—slight forward lean of handle



### Target Line View

1. Shoulders parallel to target, stance slightly open
2. Hip/Pant seam directly above the heel
3. Athletic posture, bend from the hips
4. Hands hang under shoulders
5. Grip down to sole club properly
6. Face plane to target



## **Supplemental Notes: Teaching the Chipping Starting Point / Set-Up**

### **FACE ON VIEW**

1. A narrow stance will help to stabilize any excessive body movement. The wider the chipping stance, the more likely it is for a player to move the swing center off the original starting point resulting in miss-hit shots. The easiest way to position weight forward (70/30) is to keep the sternum just inside the lead foot.
2. There will be no spine tilt away from the target. However, there will be a slight tilt of the shoulders due to the trailing hand lower on the grip of the club. Too much shoulder tilt can occur if there is excessive lean of the shaft.
3. Stand to the handle simply means to position the body where the belt buckle or zipper is in front of the grip end of the club. It is rare for a good player to lean significantly in front of this position in the set up. Usually, this will occur with unusual stances or awkward lies.
4. The chipping stroke does not require leverage (hinging) to function properly. Consequently, many top players utilize a chipping grip to accommodate a one lever action. This grip is often a blend of the full swing grip and the putting grip.
5. With a one lever stroke, it is essential that solid contact can occur regardless of the lie of the ball. The generally accepted rule is to position the ball back farther when the lie is poor and move closer to the sternum with perfect lies. Always refer to ball position relative to the sternum. Never refer to the feet as they can skew the perception of the correct ball position.

### **TARGET LINE VIEW**

1. The most important step is to keep the shoulders parallel to the target. Opening the stance slightly will encourage the lower body rotation needed in the chip shot. Opening the feet and lower body too much can drastically change the path the club is moving through the impact zone.
2. The weight will feel as if it is a little more toward the heel of the lead foot. This (along with good posture) will create needed space for the arms and hands to swing freely.
3. Bending from the hips will be evident by the belt line approximately 90 degrees to the lower spine. The spine will be in an anatomically neutral position.
4. Gravity will bring the hands directly under the shoulders.
5. The club should be soled flat to the ground. This can be achieved with the overall solid starting point and by gripping down on the club (shortening the length of the shaft).
6. The face plane should point directly to the target. The most common error is to position the face plane open to the target resulting in shot patterns that miss to the right (for right handed golfers) or compensations that include an out to in path and/or flipping of the hands/wrists to square the face.



## **Coaching Pitching Fundamentals**

### **Pitching Concepts**

The pitch shot is a short shot played from off the green when the shot requires the ball to be lofted over an obstacle between the player and the hole. The common obstacles include bunkers, long grass, mounding and depressions that eliminate the option of putting or chipping. Even if there is nothing but short grass between the player and the hole, a pitch shot can be a good choice. If executed properly, the ball will land softly and roll a short distance to the hole.

Of all the golf shots that can contribute to your students ability to lower their score, the pitch shot is the one with the most influence. The basic pitch shot is very similar to hitting a full 9 iron shot. The distance of the swing is shorter as well as the speed of the swing is slower. The club mechanic concepts discussed earlier in the manual still apply to the pitch shot. When your students are working on the pitch shot, they are also working on the full swing impact positions. Therefore, an excellent pitch shot player is often times a very good iron player too!

### **Club selection**

There are many variables that will influence the decision on the best club to use for a given situation. Since most pitch shots are executed with the idea of the ball flying higher and landing softer, the best clubs to use are the sand wedge and lob wedge. Some players like using a gap wedge but I recommend sticking with the first two for the majority of pitch shots. Club lofts have changed over the past 20-30 years. In the early 1980's, the most lofted club in the bag was a sand wedge with about 55 to 56 degrees of loft. The next was a pitching wedge that was 50 degrees of loft. Today, most players carry a 60 degree lob wedge, a 55-56 sand wedge (no change in the loft), but a pitching wedge will range from 44 to 47 degrees. The pitching wedge of today is yesterday's 9 iron and the gap wedge of today is now used as yesterday's pitching wedge. Consequently, because of the change in lofts, I do not recommend pitching with a pitching wedge!

### **Basic Pitching Technique**

The setup or starting point is detailed on pages 26-27. This is vital to the success in learning this important skill. Once your students are able to setup properly for the pitch shot, they must understand the proper action of the shot. A pitch shot requires a player to begin to hinge the club on the backswing. This hinging increases the potential speed of the swing and it also encourages a descending angle of attack at impact. Two important concepts associated with the hinge are the effective loft of the club and the low point of the swing. Assuming a player is using a 60 degree lofted club, the effective loft at impact will be less because of shaft lean. The shaft should lean approximately 8—10 degrees at initial impact with the ball. The low point will occur after impact (see page 12-13).

The distance of the arm swing will vary depending on the shot requirements. Start by having the players swing the club back so the lead arm is close to parallel with the ground. On the forward swing, make sure the weight stays on the lead foot and the player rotates the torso towards the target. The swing is generally abbreviated with the trail arm parallel to the ground with both arms extended away from the chest. A player can control the distance the ball travels by changing the effective loft of the club at impact and by the changing the speed of the swing.

Hyperlink to the Pitching Technique <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd5PBG7GL3w>

## **TEACHING CHECKPOINTS for the Pitching Starting Point / Set-Up**

### Face On View

1. Narrow stance (6" to 8"), weight forward
2. Slight spine tilt away from target
3. Stand to the handle – hands slightly forward
4. Full swing grip
5. Ball position depends on lie of the ball — even to slightly forward of the sternum for basic pitch

### Target Line View

1. Shoulders parallel to target—stance slightly open
2. Hip/Pant seam directly above the heel
3. Athletic posture, bend from the hips
4. Hands hang under shoulders
5. Shaft plane points to the belt line
6. Face plane to target



## **Supplemental Notes: Teaching the Pitching Starting Point / Set-Up**

### **FACE ON VIEW**

1. A narrow stance will help to stabilize any excessive body movement. The wider the pitching stance, the more likely it is for a player to move the swing center off the original starting point resulting in miss-hit shots. The width of the stance will gradually widen as the distance of the pitch shot increases. On short pitch shots the weight will be about (70/30) and closer to (50/50) on wedge shots over 50 yards.
2. There will be a slight spine tilt away from the target. However, too much shoulder tilt can occur if there is excessive lean of the shaft. This spine tilt should range from 2 to 6 degrees.
3. Stand to the handle simply means to position the body where the belt buckle or zipper is in front of the grip end of the club. The handle of the club should be leaning slightly forward. It is rare for a good player to lean significantly in front of this position in the set up. Usually, this will occur with unusual stances or awkward lies.
4. The pitch shot is a two lever stroke and therefore requires leverage (hinging) to function properly. It is recommended to use the full swing grip on all pitch shots.
5. The generally accepted rule is to position the ball back farther when the lie is poor and move slightly forward of the sternum with perfect lies. Always refer to ball position relative to the sternum. Never refer to the feet as they can skew the perception of the correct ball position.

### **TARGET LINE VIEW**

1. Keep the shoulders parallel to slightly open to the target. Opening the stance slightly will encourage the lower body rotation needed in the pitch shot. Opening the feet and lower body too much can drastically change the path the club is moving through the impact zone.
2. The weight will feel as if it is a little more toward the heel of the lead foot. This (along with good posture) will create needed space for the arms and hands to swing freely.
3. Bending from the hips will be evident by the belt line approximately 90 degrees to the lower spine. The spine will be in an anatomically neutral position.
4. Gravity will bring the hands directly under the shoulders.
5. The shaft plane should point to the belt line. Gripping down slightly on the club will help to keep the club soled flat to the ground.
6. The face plane should point directly to the target for a neutral pitch shot. The most common error is to position the face plane too far open to the target resulting in shot patterns that miss to the right (for right handed golfers) or compensations that include an out to in path and/or flipping of the hands/wrists to square the face.

## **Coaching Bunker Fundamentals**

### **Bunker Concepts**

Most golfers understand that the objective of this shot is to hit behind the ball and allow the sand to push the golf ball out of the bunker and on to the green. It sounds so simple yet this is one of the most feared shots in golf! The sand is the variable in the shot that confuses and frustrates so many golfers. Hitting a 20 yard shot out of light rough with a sand wedge can be easily accomplished by many low and high handicappers alike. When the sand variable is added to the equation, the resulting outcome can be much different.

The first step in good bunker play is to understand the club and sand interaction. By drawing a thin line in the sand and placing the ball on the line, the best place for the club to enter the sand is between 3" to 5" behind the line. Referring back to the Ball Flight Laws on page 12 of the manual, the lowest point of an iron swing is 4" after impact. In bunker play, if we can keep the low point in the sand 4" after initial contact with the sand, the club will be at its lowest point directly under the ball. This will ensure that the club does not make contact with the ball and only the sand will move the ball out of the bunker.

The other importance aspect of this is to avoid digging up too much sand by going too deep into it. This can be accomplished by making the appropriate set up adjustments noted on page 29-30. The setup for the basic bunker shot is absolutely critical for success on this shot.

### **Club Selection—Sand Wedge**

There are three important club head specifications that influence the playability of the sand wedge. Manufacturers make a wide variety of sand wedges to meet the needs of sand conditions, bunker technique, skill level, course conditions and player personal preferences.

1. **Sand Wedge Loft**—this will range from about 54—58 degrees. This is largely influenced by the number of wedges a player will carry along with their personal preference.
2. **Sand Wedge Bounce**— this is what differentiates a sand wedge from the other wedges. The bounce is expressed in degrees and will range from 10 to 14 degrees. The bounce is measured from the trailing edge of the bottom of the club to the leading edge of the club. The higher degree of bounce, the better the club is out of softer sand or for players with steep swing plane angles. Higher bounce is usually better for less skilled golfers. Low bounce sand wedges can be used effectively out of firm sand or for very skilled golfers.
3. **Flange or Grind**— There is a wide variety of grinds for a sand wedge. The flange or sole of the club can be customized to the player preference. Most golfers will benefit from a traditional sand wedge grind.



### **Basic Bunker Technique**

Good bunker technique starts with a great setup or starting point along with a good sand wedge. Once these two important essentials to bunker play are in place, the actually swing technique becomes much easier. The bunker technique is very similar to the basic pitch shot technique. The simplified version is to have your players:

1. Keep the pressure or weight on the lead foot throughout the entire motion.
2. Contact the sand 3"-5" behind the ball with the trail edge of the sand wedge touching the sand first!
3. Ensure that they rotate the torso through the impact zone. Too many golfers stop moving their body once they contact the sand.

Hyperlink to Comprehensive Bunker Technique <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qipjUZ5xA5k&t=94s>



## **TEACHING CHECKPOINTS for the Bunker Starting Point / Set-Up**

### Face On View

1. Widen stance - 60%-70% weight on lead foot
2. Slight spine tilt away from target
3. Stand to the handle – hands even to slightly forward
4. Open the face first then use full swing grip
5. Ball position 3" to 5" forward of the sternum

### Target Line View

1. Shoulders/stance slightly open to target
2. Stand farther away from ball—increase knee flex
3. Athletic posture—bend from the hips
4. Lower the shaft plane angle (shallower) - this helps to set the face plane toward the target



## **Supplemental Notes: Teaching the Bunker Starting Point / Set-Up**

### **FACE ON VIEW**

1. A wider stance is recommended as it will accommodate some of the other set up adjustments. Keep 60%-70% of weight forward by pushing both legs slightly toward the target while maintaining a slight tilt away from the target.
2. There will be some spine tilt away from the target. It is recommended to keep this spine tilt at 2 to 5 degrees.
3. Stand to the handle simple means to position the body and hands where the belt buckle or zipper is in front of the grip end of the club. A common error is to position the handle of the club significantly forward of the club head. This negates the bounce that is needed to hit a quality bunker shot.
4. Rotate the club face open and then use the full swing grip. This is important as this increases the effective bounce of the sand wedge. Most sand wedges will range in bounce from 10 to 14 degrees. More bounce is generally better for most golfers. Bounce is your friend in the bunker!
5. This is the one shot in golf where contact with the ball is a big problem. On a well executed bunker shot, the club will enter the sand about 3 to 5 inches behind the ball. Therefore, it is important to position the ball 3 to 5 inches forward of the swing center or sternum.

### **TARGET LINE VIEW**

1. Keep the shoulders slightly open to the target. Opening the stance slightly will encourage the lower body rotation needed in the bunker shot. Opening the feet and lower body too much can drastically change the angle the club is moving through the impact zone. Opening up too much is a very common error in poor bunker shot technique.
2. Stand farther away from the ball and increase knee flex. This combined with a wider stance will allow a player to lower the center of gravity as well as shallow out the vertical swing plane angle. This is an important adjustment to make when hitting soft and controlled bunker shots.
3. Bending from the hips will be evident by the belt line approximately 90 degrees to the lower spine. Spine will be in an anatomically neutral position.
4. Lowering the shaft plane angle into a shallower position is now possible because of the above adjustments (wider stance, farther distance from the ball, and increased knee flex). By lowering the handle (vertical shaft plane), the face plane will now align more toward the target. You can use a magnetic pointer on the face of a sand wedge to clearly understand this relationship.

## **Thoughts on Your Coaching Journey**

Congratulations! You have completed the first section of the Keiser University High School Golf Coaching manual. The coaching journey is a never ending process of blending the fundamentals of the sport with the individual talents of the players on the team and finally developing a roadmap to get the most out of your players. You have taken a positive step in developing your golf coaching skills and are now ready for the second section of the manual. The second section will be highlighting the key aspects of preparing your players for tournament play. Below is a brief description of the areas that will be discussed in Section 2 of the Keiser University High School Coaching Manual.

**Practice Plans** - Establishing a consistent and productive practice plan for your foundation, core and player segments is vital for your team success. Utilizing effective training aids and drills that build fundamental skills is essential in your practice sessions. There are numerous training aids and drills that can lead to confusion for a new golf coach. The reality is that picking a few really good training aids and getting your players to understand the proper use of these training aids will go a long way in improving specific golf skills. The same applies to the use of drills. A few really good ones is all you need to get started on your coaching journey.

**Gamification**— Providing a fun assessment of golf skill will keep your players motivated throughout a typical practice session. Gamification is a way to measure performance in a practice environment. There are numerous games used to challenge your players on the many skills needed to become a low handicap golfer. There is substantial research on the motivation of young athletes and when the sport becomes work to them, they end up quitting. Gamification can help increase the fun for your students and keep them on the team from year to year.

**Club Fitting**— The essentials of club fitting will be covered including important elements of putter fitting, wedge fitting, iron fitting and driver fitting. This section will provide a good foundation for you as the coach to support your players and for you to know when to direct them to a professional club fitter. The best club fitters are also very knowledgeable about the golf swing. You will be able to help your foundation and core golfers with the important elements of club fitting while sending your players to a professional club fitter. With more experience and training, you will eventually be able to fit all of your students.

**Course Strategy**—Providing direction and support of your players on managing their game during tournament play is one of the important tasks you have as the golf coach. This section will cover strategic course management plans for different skill levels as well as discussing when to play aggressive and when to play conservative.

**Mental Performance**— Preparing your players for tournament competition involves the development of pre-shot routines. A suggested routine will be explained with the ultimate purpose of preparing the player mentally to perform to their potential.

**Tracking Improvement**—This section will identify simple ways of measuring and tracking skill performance. A Blueprint template will be provided that maps out milestone targets and the tools to measure improvement. Additional data with anticipated outcomes and timelines will be included.

**The Basics of Motor Skill Learning**—Golf is a motor skill requiring a wide variety of mental and physical skills. Golfers are athletes that must understand the steps in acquiring a specific motor skill. This section will highlight the latest findings in motor skill development and better equip you in nurturing the motor skill learning of your players.

**USGA Rules of Golf** – The best tool you have as golf coach is the USGA Rules Book app. You can download this free to your smart phone. The USGA has developed an informative and educational app for all golfers. This app will help provide the necessary information on important rulings you may need to make. It is also a great way to learn about the Rules of Golf.

Email me for your free copy of Section 2!

[brturner@keiseruniversity.edu](mailto:brturner@keiseruniversity.edu)



Keiser University is a regionally accredited private career university that provides educational programs the undergraduate and graduate levels for a diverse student body in traditional, nontraditional and online delivery formats. The flagship campus is located in West Palm Beach, Florida with additional campus locations throughout the state of Florida and internationally. Through quality teaching, learning, and research, the university is committed to provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary for successful employment. Committed to a “student first” philosophy, Keiser University prepares graduates for careers in business, criminal justice, health care, technology, hospitality, education and career focused general studies.

The College of Golf & Sport Management is located at our flagship campus in West Palm Beach. Our mission is to educate future leaders of golf by providing a well-rounded golf education. Our faculty is comprised of PGA Master Professionals and Certified PGA Professionals who are invested in you. We are here to help you realize your dreams. At the College of Golf at Keiser University, you can earn an Associate of Science Degree in Golf Management online or on-campus in just 16 months. You can also continue on and earn you Bachelor’s Degree in Golf Management. In the fall of 2021, we will be offering a degree in Master of Science in Golf Teaching and Learning.

Additional program offerings under the Sport Management department include an Associate Degree in Exercise Science and Health and Human Performance. The Bachelor’s Degree programs include Exercise Science, Sport Management, Health and Human Performance.

When it comes to golf colleges and golf academy programs, our staff understands what is necessary to succeed, and they are ready to share this information with you. Below are just a few compelling reasons we should be your choice for pursuing a golf career:

- Our facility includes over 2000 square feet of indoor golf instructional space that houses state-of-the practice technology including video systems, launch monitors, pressure plate technology and indoor simulators.
- With an Associate or Bachelor’s degree in golf management from Keiser University College of Golf, upon graduation you’ll have earned credits toward those required for PGA membership.
- You have the option to take all classes in an online or on-ground format.
- Playing Golf—Students have access to Palm Beach County Golf Courses 7 days a week.
- You benefit from our strategic partnerships with major golf equipment companies, including merchandise and equipment discounts.
- International students are accepted with an F-1 visa that is good for the length of the program.
- The College of Golf is a part of Keiser University, a trusted, reputable, and accredited institution awarding degrees from the associate to doctoral level since 1977.

Please contact us for more information on our programs. We hope to hear from you soon.

Dr. Eric Wilson, PGA Master Professional  
Executive Director of the College of Golf at Keiser University  
ewilson@keiseruniversity.edu