

605393

THE GOLFING SWING

THE BEST BOOKS ON GOLF

**THE COMPLETE GOLFER
HARRY VARDON**

**HOW TO PLAY GOLF
HARRY VARDON**

**ADVANCED GOLF
JAMES BRAID**

**GOLF DO'S AND DONT'S
'STANCLIFFE'**

*Please see at end of book for
full particulars of above*



**THE
GOLFING SWING
SIMPLIFIED
AND ITS MECHANISM CORRECTLY
EXPLAINED**

**BY
BURNHAM HARE**

WITH FRONTISPIECE

THIRD EDITION

**METHUEN & CO. LTD.
6 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON**

First Published . . April 10th 1913
Second Edition . . April 1913
Third Edition . . May 1913

PREFACE

THE simplification of the golf swing constitutes the chief claim of this little work to a place on the golfer's bookshelf. The complexity of the golf swing has arisen largely as the result of the imperfect appreciation of the influence of the wrists in the execution of the movements of the club. Confusion, too, has been introduced by the inaccurate terminology that is usually employed in the description of the "so-called" action of the wrists.

The object of this book is to show that the mechanism of the golf

. vi THE GOLFING SWING

swing depends on "forearm," rather than on "wrist," action. Indeed, apart from putting, it will be contended that there is no such ~~thing~~ as a pure wrist shot in the whole domain of golf.

The exposition, as well as the performance, of the golf swing is a comparatively simple matter, provided the action of the wrist joints can be excluded from the movement. The proof of this proposition is set out in the following pages.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE ACTION OF THE WRISTS . . .	1
II. THE SWING WITH WOODEN CLUBS . .	8
III. THE PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS . . .	31
IV. ON PUTTING	43
INDEX	53

THE GOLFING SWING

CHAPTER I

THE ACTION OF THE WRISTS

AMONG the various implements that have been devised for the propulsion of a ball, there are few which at first sight appear so ill adapted for the purpose as a golf club. Yet the extraordinary accuracy and precision that is exhibited, under the most diverse conditions, by the skilful golfer show that the manipulative difficulties attaching to these clubs are not insurmountable, and

2 THE GOLFING SWING

it is to the process of acquiring the necessary manual dexterity that golf owes a great deal of its fascination.

There is, of course, no doubt that the best way to learn how to use a golf club is to follow the example and precept of a competent teacher, and to do this as early in life as circumstances will permit. It is hardly possible to learn to play golf from a book, but the written word is not without merit, since the inculcation of correct theoretical principles permits, nay promotes, the making of mental pictures of the perfect golfing swing which may not only help the man who is "off" his game, but also assist the man who wishes to get on to it. Again it is a great advantage to the golfer, es-

pecially if he has started to play the game in middle life, to be able to analyse the golfing swing into its component parts, for in this way he is able to discover and correct faults, which from time to time creep into his method of play. Not the least, too, of the pleasures of golf is the working out of manipulative problems in relation to the needs of the individual and the requirements of the game, and in this respect a sound theoretical knowledge of the details of the different strokes is essential.

The great drawback to the written exposition of the golfing swing, as a teaching medium, is the difficulty of describing a series of exceedingly complicated movements in language

4 THE GOLFING SWING

that admits of but one interpretation. Unfortunately, too, authors of books on golf have commonly paid very little attention to anatomical considerations, and the result has been that their account of the part played by the movement of certain joints in the manipulation of the club has been, to say the least of it, misleading. This criticism applies more especially to the wrist joint, which has had more liberties taken with it, and more nonsense talked about it in golfing circles, than any other joint in the human frame.

It is a very simple matter to demonstrate the movements of which the wrist joint is capable. Let the reader stand with his right arm fully extended in front of his body, the

hand in a straight line with the forearm, and the palm of the hand facing the sky. It will then be found that the hand can be bent upwards at the wrist joint (flexion of the wrist joint), or downwards (extension of the wrist joint), or to either side (adduction and abduction of the wrist joint). These four movements, either alone or in combination, are all that can be accomplished by the wrist joint, and it will be observed that, with the possible exception of flexion, they are all comparatively feeble movements from a muscular point of view. Now with the arm and hand in the position mentioned above, it will be found that another movement of the hand can be performed, *i.e.* the palm can be turned

6 THE GOLFING SWING

over so that it faces the ground (pronation of the hand), and back again to its original position (supination of the hand). •

It is the turning over and turning back again of the hand (pronation and supination) which has almost universally been described as a wrist action, whereas in point of fact it is nothing of the sort. The movement in question is effected by the forward and backward rotation of one of the bones of the forearm on the other, and is entirely a forearm action. The wrist joint, so far from coming into play, is passively rotated backwards and forwards *en bloc* with the hand and forearm.

It follows, therefore, that the initial movement of the club head in

the backward swing, about which so much has been written, is actuated and controlled by the forearm and not by the wrist, and herein lies the solution of a great deal of the complexity that has been introduced into the golf swing.

The attempt will now be made to describe the swing of both wooden and iron clubs in the light of the conclusions that have just been reached, and it is hoped that the problem of the swing with both kinds of club can, without labouring the point, be considerably simplified.

CHAPTER II

THE SWING WITH WOODEN CLUBS]

THIS little book does not make any claim to be a complete treatise on the whole art of golf ; it is put forward rather as a *ballon d'essai* in the direction of illustrating certain aspects of the golf swing.

Thus questions of grip and stance, although of the first importance in relation to the swing of the club, can receive but scanty consideration. As regards grip, there is no question that the overlapping variety gives the most satisfactory results, and it should be employed provided the

length and strength of the fingers permit of its adoption, but, if they do not, consolation may be derived from the fact that some of the finest exponents of the game have used the ordinary so-called "two V grip."

The advantage obtained by the over-lapping grip is that it makes for the more perfect co-operation of the two hands in the manipulation of the club than in the ordinary grip.

The selection of a suitable stance is a matter of very great importance inasmuch as the position of the feet in relation to the ball determines to a large extent the character of the swing. At the same time it is not possible to prescribe a stance for any particular player off hand; the question can be settled only by

10 THE GOLFING SWING

experiment and experience. It may perhaps be stated that short, thick-set, muscular men are better suited by the open than by the square stance, but there are, of course, so many exceptions in this respect that no general rule can be laid down.

Again a feeling of comfort and steadiness on the feet are important factors in the choice of a stance, and the player should take care not to stand with the feet too wide apart. As a general rule the distance between the heels for a man of average height should not exceed sixteen inches, and a much smaller interval frequently adds greatly to the rhythm and power of the swing.

So soon as a satisfactory working stance has been acquired it should,

so far as possible, be retained unchanged, since repeated alterations in the position of the feet call for corresponding changes in the swing of the club, and the frequent failure to effect the necessary adjustments is the source of a great deal of inaccurate swinging and timing of the stroke, and generally of much disheartening play.

With regard to the address there are a few points to which special attention should be directed. The attitude of the player should be so arranged that he feels able to deliver a back-handed swipe at the ball with the left hand. The assumption of this position is facilitated by a slight inclination of the head towards the right shoulder, and by the deposition

12 THE GOLFING SWING

of rather more weight on the right than on the left foot and heel. Moreover, it is of the utmost importance that the position of the head, as indicated above, should be maintained unchanged until the ball has been removed from the tee. Any shifting of the head into a more upright position in the course of the swing not only alters the level of the shoulders, but also interferes with the balance of the swing, and thereby paves the way to a vast amount of fozzling.

The left hand should grasp the handle of the club very firmly, but not so tightly as to interfere with the flexibility of the muscles of the forearm. The grip of the right hand should be much more delicate

WITH WOODEN CLUBS 13.

but sufficiently firm to act persuasively.

It will be noted that the position of the two hands on the club is identical in that they are both placed midway between supination and pronation, the natural pose which combines comfort and power.

The player may now address himself to the business of the swing, and in so doing he should remember to introduce into his methods a little of the *suaviter in modo* as well as the *fortiter in re*.

The preliminary "waggle" calls for no comment beyond the warning that care must be taken in the execution of this manœuvre to avoid any flexion of the left wrist. The club head is carried backwards and

114 THE GOLFING SWING

forwards over the ball by the pronation and supination of the left hand and wrist, the right hand falling in with the movement. The head of the club is now replaced immediately behind the ball, and is slowly and evenly turned away from it by the gradual pronation of the left hand and wrist, supplemented by the rotation forwards of the left shoulder. It cannot be too strongly urged that the whole mechanism of the golfing swing is based on and actuated by these two movements. The pronation of the left hand and wrist turns the club head away from the ball, and the rotation of the left shoulder forward translates the club head upwards and backwards towards the right shoulder. Inasmuch

as the left elbow is, or rather should be, kept as straight as possible in the turning backwards of the club, the two movements must commence simultaneously, but the extent to which the one or the other predominates in the initial stages of the swing largely determines the character of the stroke. Thus a rapid pronation of the left hand makes for a comparatively horizontal movement of the club head, whereas a more gradual turn-over of the left hand favours an upright swing, and between these extremes there is considerable scope for the gradation of the two factors which control the backward swing. The blending of the two movements must, however, be uniform throughout the backward

16 THE GOLFING SWING

swing, for experience shows that any deviation in the path of the club head is, as a rule, fraught with disaster. In practice it is found that, as a general rule, the open stance is suited by a more horizontal sweep of the club head than in the case of the square stance, but considerable allowance has to be made in these respects for individual peculiarities. Attention must be directed to one other point, and that is the supreme importance of *commencing* the backward swing slowly and steadily. A very large number of golfing strokes are made or marred in the first few inches of the backward swing, and this observation applies as well to iron as to wooden club play.

WITH WOODEN CLUBS 17

The swing may now be resumed, and it will be found that the continuance of the combined movement of pronation of the left hand and rotation of the left shoulder necessitates, at an early stage, the twisting of the body at the hips, and the bending inwards of the left knee in order to permit the shoulder to come round. The proper performance of the body twist, which is the pivot on which the swing turns, is essential to the success of the stroke. The chief, if not the only, danger to the correct execution of the turning movement at the hips is the tendency of the body to sway away to the right, which not only throws too much weight on the right leg, but completely disorganizes the

18 THE GOLFING SWING

swing of the club. The commission of this almost irremediable golfing *faux pas* is prevented by a very simple device, which consists in resisting the turning forward of the left shoulder by a stiffening of the muscles of the right leg. This manœuvre not only prevents any swaying of the body to the right, but keeps a proper share of the weight on the fore and inner side of the left foot, which, in consequence of the bending of the left knee, and the raising of the heel from the ground, should press firmly on the turf and maintain the balance.

The continuation and completion of the backward swing now resolves itself into the full development of the two factors which initiated the

WITH WOODEN CLUBS 19

movement ; that is to say, the club head is turned inwards, backwards, and upwards to the top of the swing by the twisting of the left forearm and upper arm (pronation of the left wrist and hand), and of the body (rotation of the left shoulder forwards). It is by means of the combined twisting of the arm and body that the sensation of tension is acquired at the top of the swing to which attention has been directed by Braid and others.

At the top of the swing the grasp of the second, third, and fourth fingers of the left hand should be relaxed just sufficiently (but no more than this) to allow the shaft of the club to drop behind the head into a horizontal position, with the toe of

20 THE GOLFING SWING

the club pointing towards the turf. The wrists at the top of the swing should be situated immediately beneath the handle of the club, and it will be found that the left wrist and hand are fully pronated and the left wrist joint slightly adducted (a pure wrist movement, which not only facilitates the falling back of the club behind the head, but also its recovery at the beginning of the downward swing).

The position of the right hand and wrist at the top of the swing is the same as it was in the address, viz. midway between pronation and supination. The right elbow should not be kept glued to the side, but should not be separated from it by more than a few inches. The up-

ward and downward swing of the club are part of one and the same cyclic movement: there should be no interval between them, and they should be attuned into a rhythmic whole. The commencement of the downward swing waits pendulum-like on the completion of the upward and backward motion of the club head, and should take up, and fall in with the time and pace of the movement.

As in the case of the upward swing, it is the beginning of the downward movement which largely determines the success or failure of the stroke.

There is a tendency, due to the throwing forward of the hands and arms at the beginning of the downward movement, for the club head to

22 THE GOLFING SWING

take the shortest route from the top of the swing to the ball, a proceeding which is productive of a great deal of inaccurate play, since it not only lets the right shoulder into the stroke too quickly, but allows insufficient time for the hands and arms to act effectively. The whole stroke is rushed through too rapidly, and anything like accurate timing of the ball is rendered impossible.

The object of the player should be to make the path of the club head between the top of the swing and the ball as long as possible, and this is attained, not by throwing out the hands and arms to the front, but by letting them go backwards and to the right at the commencement of the downward swing. Vardon especially

WITH WOODEN CLUBS 23

insists on the importance of getting the club head behind and to the right of the player at the beginning of the downward swing, and there can be no doubt that this manoeuvre is of the greatest assistance in the timing of the ball, and in bringing about accurate and powerful play.

The commencement of the downward swing, then, finds the head of the club taken backwards and to the right by the gradual tightening up of the fingers of the left hand on the handle of the driver, by the straightening of the left wrist, and by the turning back of the left hand into the half-way position between pronation and supination. The club, by these means alone, is brought two-thirds of the way down towards

24 THE GOLFING SWING

the ball, and from this point onwards the whole spring and force of the untwisting and rebound of the upward movement, in respect both of arms and body, are brought to bear on the acceleration of the club head, which is lashed through the ball.

The pace and power of the club head at the moment of impact are greatly increased by the incipient pronation of the right hand, which contributes the whip-like snap to the movement whereon depends so largely the length and straightness of the drive. This scarcely perceptible turning of the right hand is due to the tightening up of the grip at the moment the ball is struck, and is almost universally ascribed to so-called wrist action, whereas of course

it is nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it is a pure forearm action, which takes command of the wrist and hand together, and although at the moment of impact the movement is largely potential, it develops into full pronation of the right wrist and hand *en bloc* ere the finish of the stroke is reached. It is, moreover, a very powerful movement, and one of which the wrist joint is totally incapable. The player must, however, be cautioned against a too early accentuation of the turning over of the right hand, in view of the danger of foundering the ball, or of producing a disastrous pull.

After the ball has been dispatched from the tee the club head must continue in the line of flight unchecked

26 THE GOLFING SWING

to the full stretch of the arms, and should then be brought round over the left shoulder with the hands in a position the reverse of that at the top of the swing.

The body also comes round in consequence of the rotation of the shoulders on the pivot of the hips, so that at the finish of the stroke the chest of the player faces the line of flight of the ball.

The bending inward of the right knee and the transference of the weight from the right to the left foot, which accompany the turn of the body, should assist in the completion of the follow through, and it is well that some weight should still be left on the fore and inner side of the right foot at the finish of the stroke.

WITH WOODEN CLUBS 27.

The tendency of the body to sway forwards at the moment of impact should be resisted by immobility of the head both as regards position and pose, and by retention of the weight on the right foot and leg until the ball has been dispatched from the tee.

There is very little more to be said about the mechanism of the golf swing in respect to wooden clubs, except by way of insistence on certain essential features of the movement.

It should be borne in mind that the hands describe in miniature the path of the club head, so that any disturbance in the lesser swing of the hands is enormously exaggerated in the greater swing of the club head. From this point of view, therefore,

28 THE GOLFING SWING

it must be strongly urged that the combined turning movement of the hands and shoulder in the upward swing should be free, smooth, compact, and uniform, and the player must take care to swing well within himself in order to cultivate the feeling of complete control of the club head at all stages of the stroke.

The club head, too, should always move in advance of the head and shoulders, for it is essential that it should be in possession of the lead from the beginning to the end of the swing. The player is strongly advised to stereotype his stance, as there is nothing more prejudicial to accurate swinging and timing of the stroke than repeated changes in the position of the feet. Great im-

portance attaches to correct foot action, and to this end the weight should be kept well back on the heels. The bending inwards of the left knee, and the raising of the left heel from the ground, should not come too hurriedly into play during the early part of the upward swing ; a little restraint in these respects exercises a remarkably steadying influence on the turning movement of the arms and body. The necessity for keeping the eyes on the back of the ball has not been mentioned for the reason that this precaution will always be observed, provided the position and pose of the head be maintained unchanged throughout the swing, until the ball has been struck from the tee.

30 THE GOLFING SWING

The importance of the forearm movement in the execution of the golf swing has already been insisted upon, and if the arguments that have been advanced carry weight there is no necessity to pursue the subject further. Attention may, however, be directed once more to the danger of stiffening up the muscles of the forearm in the address, or during any portion of the swing. Even at the moment of impact, when some tightening up of the grip of the right hand is inevitable, the muscles of the forearm should be kept perfectly flexible and free from any trace of rigidity.

CHAPTER III

THE PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS

THERE is practically no difference in the principles which govern the play of iron as compared with wooden clubs. The instructions, therefore, which have been given with reference to the swing with wooden clubs apply with equal force to the stroke as played with iron clubs. The alterations in stance and swing that are necessitated by the use of the shorter iron clubs call, however, for certain modifications and adjustments in method of manipulation which re-

32 THE GOLFING SWING

quire examination and explanation.

The fact, also, that the stroke with iron clubs is to all intents and purposes a distinct hit introduces a factor which is dormant in the swing with wooden clubs.

The circumstances which demand the use of the iron require that the handle of the club shall be gripped very firmly by both hands, since any wobbling of the head of the club as the ball is struck is fatal to the success of the stroke. At the same time the muscles of the forearm should not lose their flexibility, but the whole stroke must be played with a firm, crisp, and forceful compactness.

The stance is narrower with iron

PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS 33

than with wooden clubs, and the less the distance the ball has to travel the more restricted becomes the stance in order that the necessary turn of the body can be obtained without disturbing the immobility of the feet.

The shorter shaft of the iron club not only obliges the player to stand nearer the ball, but also necessitates a more upright swing than in the case of the wooden club.

The upward movement of the club is actuated and controlled by the gradual turning over (pronation) of the left hand in conjunction with the rotation forwards of the left shoulder. The latter movement together with the bending inwards of the left knee and the raising of the left heel from

34 THE GOLFING SWING

the ground should be much more restricted and restrained than in the case of the swing with wooden clubs, and on no account should the left heel be allowed to turn outwards.

Steadiness on the feet and a compact swing are the foundation of success in play with iron clubs.

The upward movement should be performed very deliberately, with the left elbow as straight as possible, and the greatest care must be taken to prevent any swaying of the body to the right, or any change in the position and pose of the head.

There is no advantage to be gained by taking a full swing with iron clubs; a three-quarter shot, besides giving much better control, obtains

PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS 35

practically all the length that can be got out of the club. With this proviso, the distance required is regulated by the length of the backward swing, and it is customary to speak of quarter, half, and three-quarter iron club shots.

Whatever kind of iron club shot is played, the head of the club is brought into contact with the ball from the top of the swing with a sharp, crisp, and determined flick of the forearms and hands. In the case of the ordinary stroke the club head is forced through the ball and the turf immediately beneath it by the right hand, which takes command of all shots played by iron clubs. At the finish of the stroke the shaft of the iron should be found in the line

.36 THE GOLFING SWING

of the flight of the ball and more or less parallel to the ground, with the right arm fully extended and the face of the club looking towards the left.

•
Immobility of the head is even of greater importance in iron than in wooden club play, and any swaying or lifting of the body in the upward and downward swing is destructive both to accuracy and length. In all iron shots it is absolutely essential that the club head should take the lead in the upward swing and retain it throughout the stroke.

The manipulation of the club with the right hand and forearm is the key to the playing of iron shots of all kinds, whether with the cleek, driving iron, mashie, or niblick. It will not

PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS 37

be possible to do more than outline the general principles which regulate the various kinds of iron shots, but their practical application should not present any real difficulty to the player who is prepared to devote the necessary time to the practice of the different strokes.

In the ordinary iron shot described above, the flick of the club head as it is brought into contact with the ball, which is so essential to the success of the stroke, is obtained by the potential turning over (pronation) of the right hand. At the moment of impact the sudden tightening up of the muscles of the forearm brings the right hand and forearm from the position of slight supination to the position midway between pronation

38 THE GOLFING SWING

and supination ; and this movement, in conjunction with the straightening out and extension of the right elbow, imparts the characteristic flick to the club head.

The further the club is carried beyond the horizontal position at the finish of the stroke (and though this extension of the swing is unnecessary, it is frequently observed), the more pronounced becomes the pronation of the right hand and forearm. A very slight exaggeration of the movement of the right hand at the moment of impact gives rise to a pulled ball, which is not uncommonly a source of trouble in iron club play. A firm grip with the left hand and the exercise of a little restraint in the turning over of the right hand is

PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS 39

usually sufficient to cure the tendency to pull with iron clubs.

The spin that is imparted by the pronation of the right hand causes the ball to travel a considerable distance after it pitches, and for this reason the manoeuvre in question is most clearly in evidence in the playing of the so-called "running-up" shot. For this stroke the ball, which should be in a line with the right foot, is hit cleanly and accurately by a shorter and somewhat more rigid movement of the club head than in the case of the ordinary iron shot. Immediately after impact the pronation of the right hand comes into play and steadily turns over the club head, which is carried forwards low down and parallel with

40 THE GOLFING SWING

the ground to a finish which should not take the shaft of the club much above the horizontal position. The "running-up" shot can be played by any iron club, which gives the stroke a very wide range of application.

The right hand instead of being turned over (pronated) may be rotated in the opposite direction (supinated) at the moment of impact, so that both the palm of the hand and the face of the club are looking upwards at the finish of the stroke.

This type of shot is employed when a high ball with little run is required, and although it may be executed by any iron club, it is usually played by a mashie or

PLAY WITH IRON CLUBS 41

niblick. In all shots that entail the raising of the ball into the air it is well to bear in mind the necessity of keeping the weight well back on the right leg until the ball has been struck. •

The push shot, at once the most difficult and important of all iron strokes, differs from the ordinary shot in stance, swing, and finish. Of these by far the most momentous is the finish, as will presently appear.

For the push shot the player should stand rather nearer to the ball than usual, with the weight inclined forwards on to the left foot, and the hands slightly in front of the ball. The upward movement is controlled almost entirely by the arms, which take the club slowly, smoothly,

42 THE GOLFING SWING

and somewhat stiffly out and away from the body to the top of the swing. The action of the body is restrained by keeping the left heel in contact with the ground during the upward swing. The face of the club is brought directly down on to the REAR-MOST PORTION OF THE BALL from the top of the swing, and at the moment of impact the club head is pushed through the ball by the *vis a tergo* that is produced by the simultaneous stiffening of the forearms, extension of the elbow joints, and slight forward movement of the body. After impact the rapid relaxation of the muscles of the forearms permits of a follow through, which is not so pronounced as in the case of the ordinary iron shot.

CHAPTER IV

ON PUTTING

•

NO manipulative difficulties arise in connection with the ordinary straightforward use of the putter. The putt is, or should be, a pure and simple wrist stroke. Moreover, it is the only stroke in the game of golf that is played solely by the wrists. The chief, if not the only difficulty in putting consists in the elimination of all extraneous movement. A correct wrist action is very easily acquired, and when it is combined with confidence in the calculation of the effect of local conditions on the

44 THE GOLFING SWING

run of the ball, the player is equipped with everything that is really necessary on the putting green. There are very few, if any, putts that cannot be negotiated in this simple way, but, inasmuch as the line to the hole can frequently be made less tortuous and difficult by virtue of the addition of spin or side, as the case may be, to the ball, the means by which these refinements are introduced into the stroke must also be briefly considered.

So long as the stance does not interfere with the action of the wrists it does not appear to matter very much how the player arranges himself on the putting green, but an easy and natural position promotes consistency in the accurate hitting

and control of the ball. A firm, flexible grip of the putter ministers to the delicacy of touch which is so essential to the persuasive propulsion of the ball along the path to the hole. The attention should be concentrated on hitting the ball accurately and firmly, and the intrusion of the least movement of head, legs, or body must so far as possible be prevented. The face of the putter should be placed immediately behind the ball, at right angles to the line of the putt, and the club head is then swung slowly and steadily straight backwards along the turf by the flexion of the left wrist, the right hand and wrist falling in with the movement. The length of the backward swing is regulated by the length of the putt.

46 THE GOLFING SWING

The forward movement of the putter is controlled almost entirely by the right hand, which by flexion of the wrist joint brings the head of the club smoothly, firmly, and somewhat crisply into contact with the back of the ball, and then carries it through to a finish along the line of the putt. The action of the wrists must not be checked at the moment of impact, or at any other stage of the swing, for the least semblance of a jerk is fatal to true putting.

Care should be taken not to move the head or look up until after the ball has been struck, and the player should also remember to putt for the back of the hole.

When the question arises of counteracting the influence of slopes or

undulations on the green, or of alterations in surface conditions, or of wind, etc., the putting problem from a purely manipulative point of view becomes a much more complicated matter. •

The running power of the ball can be increased or diminished, or its course can be diverted, by the introduction of spin. Forward spin or "run" is communicated to the ball by hitting it below its centre with a rising club head, while backward spin or drag is obtained by striking the ball above its centre with a falling club head.

In order to procure forward spin in practice the player must stand with the wrists slightly behind the ball, which should be rather nearer

48 THE GOLFING SWING

the left foot than usual, so that at the moment of impact the club head has passed the lowest point of its swing and is rising to the finish of the stroke.

Conversely, backward spin or "drag" is obtained by having the ball nearer the right foot, and by bringing the club head on to the ball before the lowest part of the downward swing has been reached.

It is possible to graduate the amount of spin that is imparted to the ball. Thus the amount of forward spin can be emphasized by increasing the steepness of the upward swing of the club at the time, and immediately after, the ball is struck. Again, drag can be augmented by a downward and forward

push of the club head at the moment of contact with the ball.

Generally speaking, "run" is required for uphill putts and drag for downhill putts, but, practice alone can provide the experience necessary to decide the kind and amount of spin that is required in particular circumstances.

Lateral spin or side is obtained by bringing the head of the club across the back of the ball at the moment of impact. The course of the ball can be deflected to the right, or left, according as "cut" or the opposite spin is communicated to the ball. "Cut" is obtained very readily by drawing the head of the club inwards across the ball at the time of impact. Deflection of the course of the ball to

50 THE GOLFING SWING

the left is a very difficult and hazardous undertaking, but it can be accomplished by passing the club head across the back of the ball from within outwards. The ball should be addressed by the toe of the club, and at the moment of impact the club head is taken across the back of the ball from within outwards by the straightening out (extension) of the right elbow joint, the right wrist remaining in the position midway between supination and pronation. "Cut" is used in order to make the ball run round a stymie, and also to counteract the influence of slopes on the green. For instance, a slope running from right to left causes the ball to run to the left, so that if it is struck with "cut" which deflects

its course to the right, the opposing forces tend to neutralize each other, and the ball can therefore be played in a much more direct line to the hole than if it had been played without "cut."

The attempt to deflect the course of the ball to the left is very rarely advisable, but it is sometimes impossible to negotiate a stymie by any other means. Side spin should be used only when circumstances imperatively call for its employment. The habit of playing all strokes on the putting green with more or less "cut," that is favoured by some players, interferes with the true hitting of the ball, which after all is the most reliable means of getting the ball into the hole.

INDEX

Address, in driving, 11

Arms, movement of, in swing, 19

Ball, position of, 9

Body, twist of, 9, 34

Cut, in putting, 49, 50, 51

Driving, position in, 9

„ address for, 11

„ stance in, 11

„ timing, 22

„ forearm action in, 14

„ twisting of body, 17, 26

„ top of spring, 19

„ moment of impact, 24

3, position of for drive, 20

Feet, position of, in driving, 9, 10

Fingers, in relation to grip of club, 9

Forearms, action of, 6, 13, 14

Grip, with wooden clubs, 8

„ overlapping, 9

„ with iron clubs, 32

54 THE GOLFING SWING

- Hand, grip of left, for wooden clubs, 12
 - „ grip of right, for wooden clubs, 12
- Head, position of, 11, 29
 - „ immobility of, in iron club play, 36
- Iron clubs, play with, 31
- Knee, action of left, in backward swing, 17, 29
 - „ position of, at finish of stroke, 26
- Position of hands, 6, 12
- Push shot, 41
- Putting, 43
- Running up shot, 39
- Shoulders, movement of, in swing, 14
- Spin, use of, in putting, 47
- Stance, with wooden clubs, 8
 - „ with iron clubs, 32
 - „ in putting, 44
- Supination of hands, 6, 12
- Weight, distribution of, 17, 27, 41
- Wrists, action of, 5, 20

• THE COMPLETE GOLFER.

- By HARRY VARDON, Open Champion, 1896, 1898, 1899, 1903, 1911; American Champion, 1900; German Champion, 1911. With Sixty-six
- Illustrations. Thirteenth Edition. Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d. net.

In this book Mr. Vardon relates his own experiences at the game, how he learned to play, his progress to championship form, and gives a bright account of his many interesting associations. The second section of the book is devoted to detailed advice upon playing every different stroke in the game, from the drive from the tee to the putt on the green, each stroke illustrated by an instantaneous photograph of Mr. Vardon in the act of making it.

A thoroughly comprehensive and practical work for golfers of all classes and of all degrees of skill.

HOW TO PLAY GOLF. By HARRY VARDON. With Forty-eight Illustrations. Fifth Edition. Crown 8vo, 5s. net.

In this book Harry Vardon brings up to date the subject of instruction. He describes lucidly and pointedly the shots that pay at the present time; the shots which he personally plays. To the performer of moderate ability, he gives much original and valuable advice on the use of each club, and indicates a new and simple means of learning that fundament of success, the true swing. For the player who is past his novitiate, the chapters concerning the Push-Shot, Golf in a Wind, and other advanced phases of the game, are full of interest.

**ADVANCED GOLF; OR, HINTS
AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROGRESSIVE
PLAYERS.** By JAMES BRAID, Open
CHAMPION, 1901, 1905, and 1906.
With Eighty-eight Photographs and
Diagrams. Seventh Edition. Demy
8vo, 10s. 6d. net.

This book is intended for all players who have already obtained some knowledge of the game, even only a slight one. By taking it for granted that the reader has thus had some instruction in the most elementary principles of the game, and has practised it a little, the author is enabled to dispense with many chapters usually contained in books of golf which are necessary to those absolutely unacquainted with the game but wearisome to others, and the space thus set free is devoted to a complete exposition of the fine points of the game such as has never been made before.

GOLF DO'S AND DONT'S.

Being a very Little about a Good Deal; together with some New Saws for Old Wood—and Knots in the Golfer's Line which may help a good Memory for Forgetting. By 'STANCLIFFE,' Author of "Fun on the Billiard Table." Fifth Edition. Fcap. 8vo, 1s. net.

This popular little book deals in an abbreviated form with most of the shots that are played in the game, each separately considered and named in the general index. The moderate player or beginner may find out just what he is or has been doing wrong, by looking up the disease and its cure in the volume.

