

Straight Ahead

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“Keepin’ It Simple”

Welcome to the first instalment of "***Straight Ahead***" for the 2017 golfing season. I'm looking forward to my second season as Director of Golf Instruction at Picton G & CC. Last year I thoroughly enjoyed my time with all the great folks I had the opportunity to work with.

This year, throughout the entire season, our column again will be touching upon the many facets that comprise this great, lifelong game. My goal is really simple, to help you play better golf. Hence, the name of our first instalment, "Keepin' it Simple". Let's try to live by those words and see what happens.

For those of you who have read my past articles, there will undoubtedly be some repetition. This is unavoidable, but will be a good review. For those of you who are new to my approach or new to golf, this will be an invaluable springboard.

Some of you may have been fortunate enough to be in warmer climates this winter, where golf was a daily part of your activities. Some maybe got a bit of a breakaway to the South and were lucky enough to play a few rounds. Unfortunately though, many toughed it out up here and didn't have that head start.

For this reason, it's imperative that you ease into the season. Your range of motion and strength, pertaining to the golf swing, is not what it was when you packed away the clubs last fall.

Many of you might have been able to get to an indoor golf facility during the winter months, which can be an advantage. But it's still not

quite the same as the real thing, where you're also getting fresh air and exercise.

Likewise, if you've been able to get in some golf reading, watched golf on TV, or have even checked out a instructional DVD or two, you're most likely chomping at the bit to get out there. Golfers are an impatient lot and because of this, develop all sorts of bad habits.

If you truly want to get a clearer picture of what you need to do in order to lower your scores, I would recommend that you first review your "Address Position". This is the underestimated area that precedes the golf motion. Is it correct, sound, and clearly understood? It always seems to get undervalued and is, in most instances, the prime source of many stray shots.

There are loads of strengthening and stretching exercises for golf that one can easily find online, in books or in magazines. I'm not going to go into these today, as we'll reserve those for a later date.

In the beginning, any new swing thoughts should be kept to a minimum. Also, keep your range of motion limited and your tempo at a slower pace for the first 2 to 3 weeks. In other words, take it easy - you've got all summer.

You also should not get too focused or uptight about your ball-flight for the first little while. If there happens to be continuing trend that causes concern, I would suggest that you see someone who is qualified to help you out.

You can become the golfer you would like to be, if you take the time to investigate the areas that are causing these bad shots.

The 7 main areas I will again be zeroing in on this season, as I do every season are:

- 1) The Address Position
- 2) The Backward Motion
- 3) The Forward Motion
- 4) The Short Game

- 5) Sand Play
- 6) Dealing with the Rough
- 7) Course Management

These areas will build the base of your platform. They'll help you build a sound, solid foundation. This foundation will help you attain the repeatable golf swing you've been looking for.

If you're looking for improvement, the secret is to utilize an uncluttered and simple approach. If you can do this by having simple and productive swing thoughts, lower scores and more enjoyment are just around the corner for you. Bottom line... let's keep it simple this season; you'll have more fun.

If you have any questions regarding today's article or would like to know more about the instructional programs we are offering at Keystroke Golf Academy this year, please visit the Picton Golf & Country Club website or contact me at 613-885-9883 or northstring@gmail.com

Until Next Time...Straight Ahead!