

Straight Ahead

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“The Shadow Knows!”

Wouldn't it be great to be able to see where we really are supposed to be in our Backward Motion, that all-important First Part of the swing? What a benefit it would be!

Unfortunately most of us don't have the luxury of having someone who can tell us what's really going on. Years ago, I thought "Hey, why don't I use the sun to help me out with this!" After all, I was spending countless hours outside (with sunscreen on of course!).

Now, there are certain times when this trick works better than others. Depending on the time of year, I find that 10am or 2pm work best for me. The shadows are long enough, but no too long.

To accomplish this drill you will need some sunshine, 5 golf balls and the knowledge of where to place them on your shadow. Essentially you must also be able to stand with the sun directly behind your back. If you were to hold a club, the club head should sit in the center of your shadow when grounded. Once again, you can't do this from a bad Address Position, a position that creates a posture that is not as good as it could or should be. Learn this area correctly before trying this drill.

Let's get started, here's where I would like you to place the golf balls on your shadow. Standing in your Address Position, remember each Ball placement spot on your shadow – it might take a couple of tries.... Or you may need some help placing the balls while you stand still.)

- Ball 1- top of your head, in the center
- Ball 2- on the outside of your "A" shoulder (see past columns, your "A" side is the side closest to the target)
- Ball 3- on the outside of your "B" shoulder
- Ball 4- in the middle of your throat area (Adam's apple area approximately)
- Ball 5- alongside your "B" side (hip area or slightly below)

The goal during your Backward Motion is to have your shadow move from Ball 2 over to Ball 4, while at the same time, not allowing your shadow to drift outside Ball 3 and Ball 5.

We are trying to maintain the elevation we started with, so that the shadow doesn't change on Ball 1, except for a slight movement towards the B side. It can vary from golfer to golfer. Trying to keep your head down and still, (something we all have heard countless times) will only restrict your body from making this motion in both an efficient and correct manner. If you're ball conscious, it decreases your range of motion. Getting to this position can become a monumental task!

You may find that this new motion can be a bit of a challenge, especially in the beginning. It will feel foreign and you may feel like you have moved more to your "B" side and more than you really should. You will feel tension in new, but best of all, in the appropriate places. This beneficial tension is one of the hallmarks of a great golf motion. Its harnessed power! There will be a little triangle of sunlight formed between your arms as you move back. Try to close it so it disappears by extending your range of motion. Not an easy task! You will now feel what real power is! Power that can be readily available for you to release and hopefully in the right sequence and down the intended target line. More on that topic later.

For now, try this exercise so that you are able to get a clearer picture of how and where you should be. What a wonderful feeling it can be, knowing you're moving in the correct fashion and getting to the right place!

I will set up this drill myself and go through it numerous times. I then move aside to another spot close by and hit balls right away. The goal is to retain the physical sensation you experienced during the Shadow Drill, but then apply it to the real thing. Let me know what happens.

If you have any questions regarding the areas we have discussed today or queries about any of my previous articles, you may contact me at 613-885-9883 or by email at northstring@gmail.com

Until Next Time...Straight Ahead!