

Straight Ahead

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“What’s Your Hurry?”

When it comes to the First Part of the swing, what's your hurry?

If the archer were to draw his bowstring back at the same pace as I frequently see the typical golfer drawing back their club, one better consider staying well clear of that immediate area. It might not be safe! I have a feeling that the archer will not be hitting the target.

The First Part of your golf motion gives you the opportunity to create potential power and secondly, allows your club to get back to the original Address Position. You gain nothing by swinging back at a rapid pace. You only lose! You lose everything; distance, direction and consistency.

The speed in the First Part, largely determines how well a golfer will be able to maintain a light grip pressure. More speed, more clutching of the club. Once the hands tighten, the arms and shoulders fall prey to this tension. It's a vicious cycle! Instead of the club doing what it's designer intended it to do, you are now trying to manufacture a golf swing and are probably using the weaker and faster muscle groups. A fast swing is normally caused by a golfer trying to get the first part completed before anything can go wrong. If you're ball-conscious, watch out! It can cause a swing to race.

A slower pace really magnifies the fact that many are unaware of what they want to take place in that all-important first half of their swing. If there's a lack of strength and flexibility, it will also become obvious.

Is it hard work slowing your tempo down? You bet! You're out of your comfort zone and will tire if there's too much tension. You walk at a certain pace. Slow down that pace and you may find yourself in an awkward shuffle. When babies are first learning to walk, their main focus is on balance. Once balance is attained, there's less thinking going on. As they gain the confidence, they focus more on other stuff. All the mothers out there can relate!

To demonstrate to a student that the tempo of their takeaway has very little to do with the distance they're hoping to attain, I will make a ridiculously "Slow" Backward Motion. How about one that lasts 2 minutes from the moment I start

until the point where I begin the transition into The Forward Motion! We can also call that the Second Part of the swing. So, we can now divide the complete swing into 5 sections. Here they are:

- 1. The Address Position**
- 2. The First Part (Backward Motion)**
- 3. The Transition**
- 4. The Second Part (Forward Motion)**
- 5. The Finish**

If you are unclear about any of these areas, your first step is to get a handle on each. You should know each area individually. Starting with step one, learn all five and then study each area individually.

When I learn a song, I start at the beginning. I then direct my focus to each of the comprising sections. In order to strengthen my understanding of the entire song, I work on each section individually. I'm all the while aware that a slow, strict tempo will allow me the opportunity to polish and refine the finished product. It's the same with your golf swing, you need to know where to start, understand each section and then finally, learn how to finish it off correctly.

For this week, let's just try to slow it down. Have patience, old habits die hard.

If you have any questions regarding the areas we have discussed today, you can contact me at 613-885-9883 or by email at northstring@gmail.com

Until Next Time...Straight Ahead!