



## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By Jim Latham

*Latham's Law Number 4. What we expect, we usually get!*

*If you think you can or you think you can't – you're right. (Henry Ford)*

By the very act of reading this manual (version 43 dated November 22, 2018), you expect to get some insights into the game of golf. It is my hope that you will get what you expect. I wrote it for the guy and gal that plays golf for fun. The better they play, the more fun they have and the more fun they have, the better they play. At the current time the manual is long on text and short on graphics. This is partly by design. I want you to read each section and visualize yourself taking the actions described. I call it a manual because it is a “How to do it” publication that should be kept as a reference and reread as needed. More graphics are planned for a future version. If you have never played golf before this manual is for you.

If you are interested, I recommend that you read the definition and general information found at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golf>.

DEDICATION: This manual is dedicated to my good friend and golf partner Lee Edes and the guys at Laytonsville Golf Course (Greg, Bill and Stevie). We have drunk many a styrofoam cup of “Seven Eleven” convenience store coffee in the wee small hours of the morning while we anxiously awaited the opening of the course. Of course, I must include my Friday Golf Group at Saddlebrooke (JimE, Bones, JR and Ken) who, in great and painful detail, have shown me what NOT to do. Also I haven't forgotten

# Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

those young people out there who, after all, are the future of this very challenging and rewarding game. They are, to name a few; Heidi, Henry, Holly and Erik. All of these guys and gals convinced me that someone needs to write a decent golf manual for the common person. A **special** thanks to Mollie Mae Bunch who is my muse.

I need to acknowledge the encouragement and technical expertise that was given me by Bob Brussel and Lee Edes, both of which are good friends and golf partners. Also I can't say enough good things about my editors. Jim Eaton, as a new golfer, has helped make this manual much more readable and appropriate to the novice. Bill Harnew, an experienced golfer and Cognitive Scientist also gave the manual a critical read. Also everyone whom I have played golf with has contributed something to this manual. Perhaps it was a gem of information or perhaps it was an example of what NOT to do on the golf course.

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*On-Line Navigation hints: **Click on an item in the table of contents to go directly to that item.** Click on the text body and use the PageUp and PageDown keys to advance by page. Use the <Cntrl-End> keys to advance to the bottom of the document. Use the <Cntrl-Home> keys to return to the top of the document. To find a particular word or phrase, use the "Find" feature on your browser. You can use the symbol [**TOC**], found after each main section in the text, to return to the Table of Contents.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[MYTHS AND FALLACIES](#) (Changed 08-12-2015)

[GLOSSARY OF TERMS](#)

[THE BASICS](#)

[EQUIPMENT](#)

[WOODS](#)

[IRONS](#)

# Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

WEDGES AND SPECIALTY CLUBS

PUTTER

BALLS

COMPRESSION

PRACTICE OR RANGE BALLS

LADIES BALLS

MEN'S BALLS

THE RIGHT BALL FOR YOU

THE USGA'S ROLE IN BALL TESTING

GLOVES

CARRYING BAG

THE STANDARD GOLF BAG

THE "LIGHT WEIGHT" OR "SUNDAY" BAG

PULL CART VERSUS A GOLF CAR

GOLF IS EXERCISE ALSO

THE PULL CART

THE GOLF CAR

WHAT TO CARRY IN YOUR BAG

WATER BOTTLE

RAIN GEAR

HAT

FIRST AID KIT

SUNTAN LOTION

SUNGLASSES

FACE TOWEL

BUG REPELLENT

SNACKS

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF YOUR EQUIPMENT

# Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

[KEEP IT CLEAN](#)

[MAINTENANCE](#)

[GRIP REPLACEMENT](#)

[THE BASIC GOLF STROKE](#)

[PLAN YOUR SHOT](#)

[PROPER ALIGNMENT](#) (Added 11-22-2018)

[SELECT THE PROPER CLUB](#) (changed 8-31-2019)

[LOFT EXPLAINED](#) (Added 11-22-2018)

[GETTING A GOOD GRIP](#)

[CHOKER UP ON YOUR GRIP](#)

[TAKING THE PROPER STANCE](#) (Image added 9-9-2016)

[EXECUTING THE SWING](#) (Image added 10-24-2018)

[THE BACK SWING](#)

[THE TRANSITION POINT](#)

[THE FORE \(OR FORWARD\) SWING](#)

[THE WALK THROUGH GOLF SWING](#) (Added 10-31-2104)

[A CHECKLIST FOR A PROPER STROKE](#)

[DRIVING \(THE CLUB, NOT THE CART\)](#)

[FAIRWAY WOODS](#)

[FAIRWAY IRONS](#)

[APPROACH SHOTS](#)

[CHIPPING](#)

[PITCHING](#)

[PUTTING](#)

[REGULAR PUTTING](#) (Added 10-24-2018)

[LAG PUTTING](#) (Added 10-24-2018)

[ETIQUETTE \(The Golden Rules of Golf\)](#)

[HONORS VERSUS READY GOLF](#)

# Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

[HONORS](#)

[READY GOLF](#)

[HOW TO COPE WITH SLOW PLAYERS](#)

[TAKING CARE OF THE COURSE](#)

[DIVOTS](#)

[BUNKERS](#)

[GREENS](#)

[GOLF CAR USAGE](#)

[SENSITIVITY TO OTHERS ON THE COURSE](#)

[WHAT TO WEAR](#)

[THE RULES OF THE GAME](#)

[USGA RULES](#) (Changed 11-6-2014)

[LOCAL RULES](#)

[AMATEUR STATUS](#)

[COMMON RULES QUESTIONS](#)

[USGA HANDICAPPING SYSTEM](#)

[TIPS AND TECHNIQUES](#)

[FIXING A HOOK](#)

[CORRECTING A SLICE](#)

[HITTING A DOWNHILL LIE](#)

[HITTING AN UPHILL LIE](#)

[HITTING A SIDEHILL LIE](#)

[BALL ABOVE THE FEET](#)

[BALL BELOW THE FEET](#) (Changed 2-3-2015)

[HITTING A FADE](#)

[HITTING A DRAW](#)

[GETTING MORE DISTANCE](#)

[HITTING OUT OF A DIVOT](#)

## BUNKER PLAY

THE GREENSIDE BUNKER

THE FAIRWAY BUNKER

THE LOB SHOT SIMPLIFIED

THE BUMP AND RUN TECHNIQUE (Added 10-31-2014)

UP UP AND AWAY (GET OVER THAT OBSTACLE)

TIMING

PLAYING WITH STRANGERS

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR GAME

WHAT TO CARRY IN YOUR POCKETS

PLAY WITH TUNNEL VISION

## FITNESS FACTS

GEARING UP FOR GOLF

THE KEY COMPONENTS

STRENGTH AND POWER

FLEXIBILITY

STRETCHING TO IMPROVE YOUR SWING AND PROTECT YOUR BODY

QUAD STRETCH

POSTERIOR SHOULDER STRETCH

ROTATOR CUFF STRETCH

CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONING

EXERCISES TO IMPROVE YOUR GOLF SWING

HYDRATION AS A KEY TO SUCCESS

ON THE FIRST TEE BOX BEFORE PLAY

## PRACTICE DRILLS

THE ADDRESS POSITION (Added 1-27-2015)

USING THE DRIVING RANGE

THE CHIPPING DRILL

# **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

[THE BUMP AND RUN DRILL](#) (Added 10-31-2014)

[PUTTING DRILLS](#)

[BALL POSITION DRILL](#) (ADDED 11-22-2018)

[SAFETY](#)

[LIGHTNING STRIKES](#)

[DRIVING A CART NOT A CLUB](#)

[GOLF FACTS AND TRIVIA](#) (Changed 1-24-2015)

[GOLF HUMOR](#)

[GIFTS FOR GOLFERS](#)

[AND NOW FOR SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT](#)

[BINGO-BANGO-BUNGO](#)

[NASSAU](#)

[SKINS](#)

[NINES](#)

[SCRAMBLE](#)

[SHAMBLE](#)

[TRIFECTA](#)

[THREE IN ONE](#)

[LAS VAGAS](#)

[THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE GAME: THE GOLFER](#) (Changed 1-26-2015)

[APPENDIX I - GLOSSARY OF TERMS](#)

[APPENDIX II - THE USGA HANDICAPPING SYSTEM](#)

[APPENDIX III - THE USGA SLOPE/RATING SYSTEM](#)

[APPENDIX IV - SELECTED COURSE LISTINGS](#)

[APPENDIX V – RESOURCES](#) (Added 1-17-2016)

## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual is designed to be useful to those of us who want to learn how to play

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

golf and play to a level that allows us to fully enjoy the game. Some of the material in the manual is technical in nature and I encourage you to skim over the complicated formulas and technical stuff. Don't try to read and fully comprehend everything. I hope that after your first quick read you will come back to it as you practice and play the game and reread parts to improve your understanding of the sport of golf.

I have omitted references to the metric system because, even though golf is an international sport, it came to us by way of Scotland in the British Isles. It should be easy enough for the reader to convert the lengths to meters if not, here is a little help.

Meters (Rounded)	Yards
48	50
91	100

Although I've tried to use a neutral "Handed" approach, this manual is primarily addressed toward right handed players. In many instances you will see leading foot instead of; left foot for the right handed player, or right foot for those that are left handed. In other instances where I have not been so neutral handed, a left handed player need merely substitute left for right and right for left in accomplishing the same maneuver.

Will this book substitute for golf lessons? The answer is no, but it will give you a leg up when you do take a lessons from a qualified teaching professional. You should know that even the people on the PGA and LPGA Tour take lessons. In fact, they probably take more lessons than we amateurs do. In your approach to golf lessons, you should take the following steps:

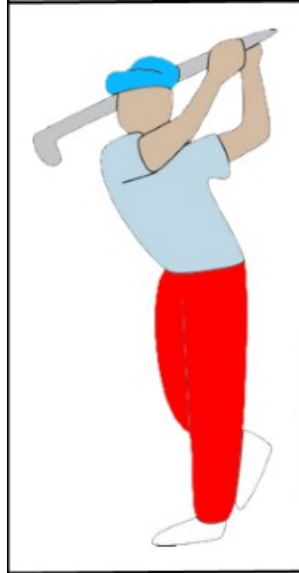
- Contact a golf facility nearby and ask for a PGA teaching professional.
- Spend some time with the professional, get to know him or her and let them know you.
- Discuss your goals and what you expect from the professional. Develop a plan.
- Finally, be patient and look for progress not perfection. As George Savile, an English Politician in the 1700's, once said, "A man who is a master of patience

# Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

is master of everything else.”

**[TOC]**



## IT'S SOME KINDLY OF A GAME

No No's of Golf: Never take a lesson from your father, never teach golf to your wife, never play your son for money, and never try to keep more than 300 separate thoughts in your mind during your swing. If you don't think golf is a mental game, try playing a round after you've had a big argument with your "Significant Other." It will give you a whole new perspective on the role of the "Emotional" side of golf. Of course it can also be said that, if you can muster the concentration necessary and don't take it too seriously, golf is a very relaxing, stress relieving activity.

Playing the game of golf consists of primarily two processes; (1) setup and, (2) execution. Even if your execution leaves something to be desired, you can always score one hundred percent in your setup. A good setup will always enhance your execution.

Golf is primarily a head game and in order to play it well requires some degree of commitment on your part. You decide on how much commitment you need to make. You should set goals, commit to them and see them through. In addition, you need to establish a whole lot of routines and should stick to them. By this I mean that you need routines for making shots, putting, practice and so on. Golf is also a fun game and

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

should never be taken too seriously. A relaxed, confident and positive mental attitude will actually improve both your game and your enjoyment. "Attitude is everything."

Before we go to tee off, we clear our minds and place into our thoughts how much we enjoy the game and those times when we've really excelled at it. Pleasure is infectious, so we should tell everyone that we are having a really great game, no matter how poorly we are playing or have played, – After all, we could be at the office or factory.

**[TOC]**

### MYTHS AND FALLACIES

The game of golf is fraught with myths, fallacies, untruths and outright deceptions.

A golf ball is heavier than a ping pong ball. If you drop a ping-pong ball and a golf ball from an equal height, you'll see them hit the ground at almost the same time.

Lightning Never Strikes the Same Spot Twice. In fact if the object in question is still standing after the lightning strike, it stands a better chance of being struck again than surrounding objects. Trees are always being hit by lightning, but seldom more than once because they get knocked down. You have often heard it said that in a lightning situation that you should take a two iron and hold it over your head because not even God can hit a two iron. This is a fallacy -- God can hit a two (or any other) iron.

Bill Harnew joking says, "When I am out playing golf and a big thunder storm comes up most players on the course run for cover. I just take out my one iron and stand in the middle of the fairway with the club held high over my head and wait for the storm to pass. I do not fear the lighting because I know not even GOD can hit a one iron." As for myself, I don't carry a one iron.

Lying to your boss in order to play golf isn't as bad as stealing a ham. Actually it's just as bad but it's a lot more fun.

**[TOC]**

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Although I've tried to keep technical terminology to a minimum and to define terms as I go, the glossary in APPENDIX 1 is offered as a reference. You can use it, both in the initial read of this manual or if you simply want to look something up at a later time. I suggest that in the initial read of this manual you scan the glossary and only read those items that are of interest to you. You can then return to it if you encounter terminology in the text that you are unfamiliar with.

**[TOC]**

## THE BASICS



## EQUIPMENT

This is one of the few sports where the equipment is personal in nature and not normally shared with others such as in team sports. You will have to buy the equipment therefore you should get clubs that are suited to your height. Your local pro will help you in this endeavor.

## WOODS

*Woods* are long clubs for long shots, with a shaft length about 40-45 inches. They have large heads that are somewhat spherical in shape with a slightly bulging club-face and a flattened bottom that slides over the ground without digging in during the stroke. Originally the "wood" heads were made of wood but modern club heads are usually made of hollow steel or titanium, sometimes filled with foam. The shaft attaches to the head of the wood, in such a way that the face of the wood is roughly at a right angle to one side of the shaft. Woods are

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

used for the longest shots, ranging from 200 to 300 yards. The typical loft for the faces of woods range from 6 to 26 degrees. The #1 (One) wood is usually referred to as a driver.

**[TOC]**

### IRONS

*Irons* are used for shorter shots than woods, especially those shots approaching the greens. Irons typically range from 36 to 40 inches in length. Iron heads are typically solid with a flat club face. The typical lofts for irons range from 16 to 60 degrees. "Long" and intermediate irons (i.e. those with a lower degree of loft) are usually played from the fairway or other easy ground. "Short" irons (with a higher loft) are played from difficult ground and are used especially for approach shots to the green.

**[TOC]**

### WEDGES AND SPECIALTY CLUBS

*Wedges* are irons with a loft of more than approximately 50 degrees. *Pitching wedges* are similar to other irons while *Sand wedges* have specially designed undersides that make them suitable for shots from bunkers or from the rough. *Lob wedges* have a very high loft and are used for approach shots or from sand. There are other clubs that have a specific use such as a chipping iron and so called trouble clubs. We'll go into these clubs later in this manual.

**[TOC]**

### PUTTER

Don't buy a putter until you've had a chance to see how far you can throw it. Seriously, the Standard putter length for most club manufacturers is thirty five inches. Yet, the average putter length measured on the PGA Tour is thirty three and one half inches and on the LPGA Tour the average putter length is thirty two and one half inches. You may need to test the putter you are considering before

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

purchasing it.

The tour pros have discovered something fundamental to consistent putting. In order to be consistent with a pendulum-like stroke, straighter arms that hang comfortably below the shoulders work better than bent elbows. After you have picked your perfect putter take it to the pro shop at your local course and have the pro determine your optimum length. Also beware of a putter with an extremely light head, the heavier club will work without extreme exertion on your part. Choosing a putter is a lot like choosing a wife, or husband. Take your time and pick the one that is perfect for you and then stick with it. Unless there has been a drastic change in putting technology, you should resist getting another putter.

If your putting seems to have gone in the toilet, it's probably your fault and not the putter's. Forsake the golf shop and spend more time on the practice green. If your putter does not have white or contrasting lines on it to assist you in "squaring" the club face to the line of putt, you can add these. I use correction tape from an office supply store to add these lines to the top of the putter head.

### **[TOC]**

## **BALLS**

There are many different balls being manufactured and each serve a unique purpose. They range from "Practice" or Range Balls through Men's and Ladies golf balls. Golf balls used to be a wound ball with a balata (natural gum) cover. Nowadays most balls have a solid core and polymer cover. The core material contributes to the compression and rebound of the ball. The cover and its thickness contribute to the spin the ball attains. Varying cover designs have evolved to produce more or less spin, and the spin gives the ball its control (or lack of it) around the greens. The dimples on the cover of the ball increases and retains the boundary layer of air surrounding the ball and, because of the reduced friction of air sliding over air, they lengthen the flight of the ball.

"Why is it that a golfer delights in finding a lost golf ball even though he has dozens of them at home?"

**[TOC]**

## **COMPRESSION**

The term "Compression" when referring to the various types of golf balls is a measurement that defines how much force is required to deform a golf ball during club impact. Many golfers feel that using a higher compression ball will add distance to tee and fairway shots. This is a common misconception that is true only if the golfer has the strength to actually compress the ball. The ball compresses or deforms when struck by the club head and after traveling a short distance it then violently resumes its original shape. By so doing, it releases a small amount of energy which increases its speed and consequently, lengthens its flight. The higher the compression rating, the more strength it takes to compress the ball.

**[TOC]**

## **PRACTICE OR RANGE BALLS**

These are balls specifically designed for the driving range. They are of low compression, generally 60 or 80. By virtue of their lower compression, they allow a full stroke to be taken and the ball will not fly as far as a higher compression ball hit by a strong player. Therefore they allow for shorter, driving ranges.

**[TOC]**

## **LADIES BALLS**

Please spare me the guffaws when I say Ladies have balls also. These are not just pretty, pastel colored balls. They are lower compression balls, rated at 80 or 90. They are more easily compressed by the ladies and offer the best in control. Have you ever wondered why the ladies, although they don't hit the ball as far, have much more control of their shots.

**[TOC]**

### **MEN'S BALLS**

These are high compression balls, rated at 100 or 90. The higher compression ball when hit by a stronger player will fly further while the lower compression ball offers more control and is more easily compressed by a weaker player.

**[TOC]**

### **THE RIGHT BALL FOR YOU**

If you're a total beginner, you will probably lose balls before you wear them out. So buy the ones on sale or, better yet, buy used balls. Once you're able to get the ball reasonably airborne and can control distance around the green, any major brand of ball that advertises spin and distance qualities is appropriate. If you're choosing golf balls for yourself and you're an average player, here are some guidelines. If you don't know which golf balls are low trajectory and which ones are high trajectory, ask your pro. Knowing these things is what he is paid for.

What type of course do you play? If the fairway is hard and the ball runs for a longer distance on both fairways and greens, then you should get a low trajectory ball. Conversely, if your course demands that you carry lots of bunkers and has elevated greens, a ball with more spin and a higher trajectory is in order.

What are your weather conditions? If you play in a windy area, a low trajectory ball is better because it's less affected by the wind. Ask the pro at the course. He can help by recommending the appropriate type of ball. A good course of action would be to carry both types of ball in your bag and, based on your evaluation of the course and conditions use the type of ball best suited to the circumstances.

By the way, if you're buying golf balls for an accomplished player, get a gift certificate at the pro shop and let the golfer choose his or her preference. For a good player, the differences between brands are significant. See more on this later in the manual.

## [TOC]

### THE USGA'S ROLE IN BALL TESTING

The USGA (United States Golf Association) tests and certifies golf balls and ensures that manufacturers adhere to a certain standard. To be approved, the weight of the ball must not be greater than 1.620 ounces avoirdupois (45.93 grams) and shall be not less than 1.680 inches in diameter. This is tested by dropping the ball through a standard diameter ring when the ball is at a specified temperature of 23 degrees centigrade. The ball must have spherically symmetrical properties, in other words, it should be perfectly round. It must not travel faster than 250 feet per second when struck by a standard apparatus maintained by the USGA. Also the ball must not cover an average distance in carry and roll exceeding 280 yards. Try telling John Daly that.

What does this mean to you? It means that if you buy any popular make of ball, you will get a standard size and weight product with consistent characteristics. Therefore a good stroke will not produce a poorly hit shot and a poor stroke is just that -- a poor stroke.

## [TOC]

### GLOVES

The decision to wear a golf glove is largely a matter of personal preference. Some players like the feel of the small amount of tension that the golf glove affords while others prefer the unencumbered feel that bare hands provide. In any event, the glove is worn on the hand that provides the primary grip on the club. This is the left hand in the case of the right handed golfer and on the right hand in the case of the left handed person. A few people wear gloves on both hands but I wouldn't advise this as the ungloved hand provides a certain touch and feel tactility to the grip. Like people, golf gloves come in a wide variety of sizes, shapes and materials.

The predominant shape of the full glove is that it completely covers the thumb and the other fingers of the hand. A less popular shape is the half glove that leaves the first and second knuckles of the fingers and the thumb exposed.

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

Golf gloves come in a wide variety of sizes and the pro can help you get the perfect fit.

Gloves are normally made of very high quality, flexible leather that provide a no-slip contact with the club and actually adjusts to the individual hand shape of the player. This means that once worn, a glove should not be transferred to another hand. Therefore don't lend your glove to someone else unless you don't want it back. There are a variety of winter or cold weather use gloves that feature a warmer material such as reinforced cotton or wool with leather palm and finger pads.

Gloves are not mandatory and when playing in a very hot climate or if you perspire freely, you may wish to eschew the glove altogether. Keep in mind that this will change the feel of the club in your hands. Sweaty gloves are often slippery and this may cause you to want to dispense with it. I would suggest to those who normally wear a glove to find a non-slip model that is made for people with sweaty hands. Whatever you decide, glove or no glove, you should stick with your decision. If you want to change, make sure that you can spend a reasonable amount of time at the range in order to adapt to the new feel.

**[TOC]**

### **CARRYING BAG**

#### **THE STANDARD GOLF BAG**

This is the "Full Sized" bag. It has room for three or four woods, a ball retrieval tool and ten or eleven irons, wedges and what not. This bag also has pockets or attachments for balls, tees, an umbrella, towels, rain gear, hats and all the various and sundry items you could need and use on any given round of golf in any conditions. See "What to carry in your golf bag" for suggestions on what you may want to include. This bag is normally meant to be mounted on a pull cart or on a golf car. Get the best one you can that is consistent with price and utility. I advise a canvas bag that fulfills your needs at your level of play rather than the expensive leather type. When you go on the tour, that's the time for your big leather monster with your name embossed on the side.

### **THE "LIGHT WEIGHT" OR "SUNDAY" BAG**

This is a bag that is intended to be carried and not pulled on a cart or be transported by a golf car. It was first used by golfers who wanted to get a quick round in on Sunday and didn't want to lug their "Full Sized" or standard bag. It only has enough room for a minimal set of clubs and balls and tees. Many of these golfers carry little more than half their normal load of 13 clubs. Perhaps this would include; a driver, a three wood, 3, 5, 7, and 9 irons, a sand wedge and putter.

**[TOC]**

### **PULL CART VERSUS A GOLF CAR**

Throughout this book I refer to both golf cars and carts. The golf car is a motorized riding vehicle while the golf cart is simply a cart which you pull.

**[TOC]**

### **GOLF IS EXERCISE ALSO**

Golf is a rather large investment in time if you are truly serious about playing it well. That means that it is also an excellent opportunity to get in some exercise for those muscles that normally do nothing more than push a pencil over a piece of paper or dial a telephone. Take this opportunity to exercise your muscles to the utmost that you are allowed to. Keep in mind that some courses do not allow pull carts because they want to maximize speed of play and thereby increase their revenues. However, there are many courses that encourage pull carts and these are the ones you will want to support by playing there.

**[TOC]**

### THE PULL CART



This is a cart that will accommodate your golf bag and allow you to pull it behind you as you walk to your ball. They come in many variations and a basic pull cart can be rented for a very reasonable price from any course that allows them. These carts will all carry a standard sized golf bag. Some of them are of the type that will fold up and can be transported very easily in the trunk of your car. One very important advantage of a pull cart is that it is almost never restricted for use on the fairway . It should, however, not be parked anywhere within ten yards of the green or the tee box. This is only common sense and imposes no great hardship on the user.

**[TOC]**

### THE GOLF CAR



The golf car is a gasoline or electrically propelled vehicle of three or four wheels that is primarily used by two golfers. It may be covered or uncovered and with or without a windshield. It will accommodate your golf bags, jackets, coolers, drinks, extra balls, tees and other various and sundry items. Unless otherwise restricted, it is normally used on the fairways and up to twenty to thirty yards from the green. Its use is restricted and you must be aware and heed the signage placed on the fairway and near the greens. It is normal to restrict the golf car from driving on the fairway on par three holes and to allow its use only on the clearly defined cart path. The cart path on most courses may be constructed of concrete, macadam, gravel or merely compacted earth. Rules regarding the use of golf cars are clearly posted in the pro shop. These rules can change daily and one should ask the pro or starter for the "Rules of the day."

### **[TOC]**

## **WHAT TO CARRY IN YOUR GOLF BAG**

We all know that we should carry; clubs, balls, tees, a spare pencil, a spare scorecard, a golf towel, and a divot repair tool in our golf bag. I submit that you should give serious consideration to carrying the following items as well. This list is optimal and perhaps your circumstances don't warrant a particular item in this list but it's your choice.

### **WATER BOTTLE**

The value of keeping yourself hydrated cannot be overemphasized. Some courses don't provide water on the course therefore you may need to

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

carry your own water. A light plastic bottle with a carrying strap to attach to the outside of your golf bag will fill the bill. You can either buy or make the strap very easily.

### **RAINGEAR**

Keep it simple. A light-weight nylon poncho will serve very nicely and will fit easily into your bag. Of course many golfers carry an umbrella, but if it is raining so hard that an umbrella is necessary you probably should suspend play until the rain slacks off.

### **HAT**

As a minimum, a floppy brimmed hat to keep in your bag for wear in an emergency is a must, even if you don't normally wear a hat. Ideally it should be waterproof. Most golfers prefer a billed type cap but almost any type of hat that provides sun shade or, at least, eye shade is okay.

### **FIRST AID KIT**

The kit should contain Band-Aids, compresses for control of bleeding and antiseptic swabs.

### **SUNSCREEN LOTION**

A sweat resistant, solar protection lotion with vitamin C additives will protect you by preventing dehydration of the skin. It will provide protection from wind, sunburn and ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Use a product that provides, at least, a SPF rating of 30 and protects against both UVA and UVB. A good product will protect your skin from windburn in the winter and sunburn in the summer. Caution, use the lowest SPF rating that will give you the protection you need without the irritation of extra chemicals. The FDA recommends that you use no higher than SPF 30. When in doubt read the label.

### **SUNGLASSES**

The deciding factor here is durability, eye protection, shade and ultra

violet protection.

### **FACE TOWEL**

How nice it is to be able to wipe that mud from your face after you have just taken a stroke in the soft, wet fairway and as a result, showered yourself with muck. Also in very hot, dry conditions, a wet towel feels wonderful. Soak it and wrap it around your neck if necessary. For sanitary reasons the face towel is in addition to the towel you use to wipe your clubs.

### **BUG REPELLENT**

A very small can of aerosol bug spray is what is wanted here. Caution, bug repellent contains many harsh chemicals and can irritate your skin. Spray only your cap and clothes where the spray will not get onto your skin. I've also heard it said that fabric softeners sheets such as Bounce can be effective as well.

### **SNACKS**

I have a condition called "Dry Mouth." It means that I have to occasionally take a mouthful of water to reduce the acid level in my mouth and to prevent cavities. Another solution I use is to put some sugar free chewing gum and some sugar free lemon drops in a small baggie, date the baggie and keep it in my golf bag. They cause me to manufacture more saliva which keeps my mouth from being too dry. By the way I don't eat food on the course and save that as a reward for playing well.

**[TOC]**

## **CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF YOUR EQUIPMENT**

Care and maintenance of your golf equipment will not only save you money in replacement costs but will also improve your game. It stands to reason that dirty, uncared for equipment will not last as long nor function as well as clubs that have been taken care of.

### **KEEP IT CLEAN**

Cleanliness is next to godliness. The reason why most professionals tell you to replace your grips every year is because the average player doesn't take care of them. Grips become ingrained with oil and perspiration from your body as well as dirt, grease and grime. This makes them hard and smooth without that tacky feel of new grips.

Wash your grips periodically; I do it every two or three months depending on how dirty and slippery they are. Use warm water, a little soap or detergent and a good stiff brush to get the grease, oil and dirt off the grips. Then rinse them liberally, dry them off and place them aside to allow them to completely dry. Also I don't use any "Tacky" grip stuff such as you see in the golf shops as this just makes them more attractive to dirt and grime. At the same time as you clean the grips, you should thoroughly clean the club heads with soap and water applied diligently with your stiff scrub brush. I generally top the job off with a good application of auto wax or polish to the shafts. The result is a set of clubs that feel as though they were brand new.

Wash the soles of your shoes as well. Use the same technique you use for your club grips. Do this after every outing if possible, if not at least clean the soles of your shoes at the pro shop shoe brush station. By the way, this will keep the floor mats of your car a bit cleaner.

### **MAINTENANCE**

A good tip to increase the life of your grips is to repair the split ends with a couple of turns of strapping tape at the lower end of the grip. Under normal usage, i.e. putting your clubs back into your bag and pulling them out after each use can cause the rubber ends of the grip can become split and eventually ruin the grip. Before the split gets too pronounced, wind a couple of turns of strapping tape around the grip right at the very end of the grip nearest the club head. This could get you an extra season of usage before you have to replace the grips. By the way, get your Pro's advice on the best type of grip for your game. Guys and gals with larger hands may want to have their grips double wrapped for a better hand fit. The double wrapping of the tape that attaches the grip to the shaft will result in a slightly larger diameter grip that may be more comfortable for you.

### GRIP REPLACEMENT

Most golfers think that you must have your grips replaced professionally. This is incorrect and costly. Replacing your own golf club grips is a very simple job. You will learn a lot about your clubs, save yourself some money and won't be without the use of your clubs for a week.

Most of the materials you will need, you can find at home.

1. Cleaning solvent
2. Double sided tape
3. Exacto or sharp knife
4. New golf grips
5. Padded work bench vice

Follow these quick easy steps that will allow you to re-grip you own clubs:

1. Place the club in the padded work bench vise and tighten with the grip being fully exposed. Take the Exacto or sharp knife and cut the grip from the shaft up to the end of club, cutting away from your body.
2. Remove the old grip and clean the shaft of the club with the cleaning solvent using an old rag or brush. Then wash and dry the club off completely.
3. Wrap the double sided tape down the shaft the full length of the grip. Make sure that portion of the shaft is completely covered and remove the backing on the other side of the tape. If you want the grips double wrapped, place the second wrapping in the opposite direction of the first.
4. Pour some solvent over the tape. Line the grip up with the club and slip it towards the head of the club. Remove the club from the vice and place the head on the floor and make the minor alignment adjustments.

5. Let grips dry for a few hours.

This is a very simple and easy process and it can be a great deal of fun. So get busy and save that time and money.

**[TOC]**

### THE BASIC GOLF STROKE

The golf stroke is basically the same for all of your golfing shots. Any differences will be pointed out later in the appropriate section of this manual. The stroke consists of planning the shot, selecting the proper club, the grip, the stance and the swing which is further subdivided into the back swing and the fore swing.

**[TOC]**

### PLAN YOUR SHOT

Never hit a golf ball without a target in mind. Even on the driving range you should select a target and plan to hit that target. Some driving ranges provide, in addition to the traditional yardage marker sign or flagstick, a non-traditional target to shoot for. I've seen old cars, outhouses and even mock-up buildings used to provide a target for jaded golfers.

Establish your target, keeping in mind that it must be attainable by you. It should be within your range and its attainment should further you toward your ultimate goal, the green. It should avoid trouble spots such as ponds, ditches, woods and other obstacles even if it means "laying up" to avoid hitting into or rolling into them. It may also mean aiming for a point that is not in line with the green but will allow your next shot to be easier or more attainable. Determine your target line as being a straight line from your ball to the target.

### PROPER ALIGNMENT

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

1. Stand 4-5 feet away from the ball , directly behind it, and trace an imaginary line from the target back to the ball. It's important that you stand behind the ball to see this line. Trying to do it while standing in the address position will create an optical illusion and almost always, result in poor alignment.
2. With the club still held up on the ball to target line, pick a spot about 6-12 inches in front of the ball along that line This can be a blade of grass or discoloration. It's a lot easier to align to something close to you than 200 yards in the distance.
3. Step into the ball and align the club-face (the leading edge of the club) to that spot.
4. Now draw an imaginary line in your mind which is inside and parallel to the ball to target line (the one your club-face is now pointing on), that your body will align to.
5. Set your feet in position so they are square to this line and make sure your knees, hips and shoulders follow suit. If, like me, you flare your left foot out at address, make sure you turn your foot out after you've aligned your feet.

Now work on this – every time you practice! A good practice routine is to use alignment sticks or other clubs from your bag. Remember - your feet and shoulder should not be pointing at the final target - your club face should point at the final target.

**[TOC]**

### **SELECT THE PROPER CLUB**

It's no accident that you carry 13 clubs in your bag. Each one is designed for use in different situations and to give different results. An amateur should

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

carry the following clubs. Note that distances cited are "On the Fly" and represent the distance that the average middle-aged golfer should achieve. Remember that the ball will roll further than the "On the fly" distances cited depending on the hardness of the ground, length of grass, etc. Don't bother to even look at so called specialty clubs such as a chipper, driving iron or "Utility woods" until you are a much better golfer and by that time you probably won't need them. The table below shows yardages for the average golfer, not superman. The distance figures for both men and women, show yardages for light, average and heavy hitters. You'll quickly get an idea of whether you are a "long" hitter or "short" hitter by simply playing golf and comparing yourself to those you play with. There's no shame in being a short hitter, and being a long hitter doesn't guarantee anything, and certainly not a lower score.

The moral of that story? Don't compare yourself with the world's best players. Although some recreational players do outwit the pros, they are rare and you probably aren't one of them.

NOTE: Figures for Men and Women show yardages for light, average and heavy hitters.

Club	Yardage Men	Yardage Women	Remarks
Driver or #1 wood	200-230-260	150-175-200	For use on the tee box only. Resist the urge to use it on the fairway.
#3 fairway wood	180-215-235	125-150-180	Use this club on the fairway in close cut grass.
#5 fairway wood	170-195-210	105-135-170	This club is for use on the fairway or light rough.
#2 Iron	170-195-210	105-135-170	For use on the fairway or for long, low shots with a maximum of bounce or roll after the ball hits the ground.
#3 Iron	160-180-200	100-125-160	For use on the fairway or for long, low shots with a maximum of bounce

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

			or roll after the ball hits the ground. Because of its low trajectory, this is an ideal club to get out of the woods and back on the fairway.
#4 Iron	150-170-185	90-120-150	For use on the fairway or perhaps in the woods when you are trying to achieve a low trajectory.
#5 Iron	140-160-170	80-110-140	For use on the fairway or for a long bump and run shot on a close cut fairway. This club may be used for chipping if the grass is not long and not wet. Sometimes called a Mashie.
#6 Iron	130-150-160	70-100-130	For use on the fairway or for a short bump and run shot on a close cut fairway. This club may be used for chipping if the grass is not long and not wet.
#7 Iron	120-140-150	65-90-120	For use on the fairway or for chipping around the green when you are too close to pitch the ball using a wedge. You should use it for this purpose and not give in to the temptation to buy a special chipping iron.
#8 Iron	110-130-140	60-80-110	For use on the fairway or for moderate length chipping around the green.
#9 Iron	95-115-130	55-70-95	For use on the fairway or for short chips around the green. Sometimes called a Niblick
Pitching Wedge	80-105-120	50-60-80	For use on the fairway or for short

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

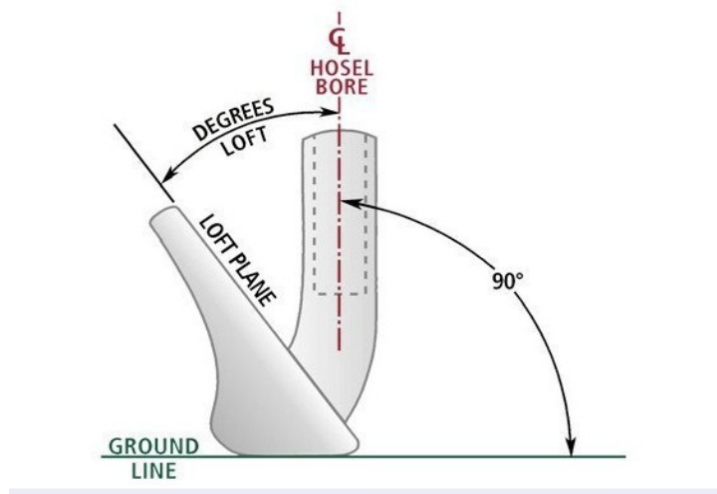
			<p>chips around the green. This is a lofted club that comes in a variety of loft angles. The normal pitching wedge has a 56 degree loft but it can come in as much as 60 degrees of loft in which case it is known as a "Lob wedge."</p>
Sand Wedge	60-80-100	40-50-60	<p>As the name infers, this club is for use in sand traps and bunkers. It has a heavy sole that allows it to carry through the sand without deforming your stroke. It can also be used for short pitch shots around the green and for getting out of long rough because of it's heavy sole. Some pros use the edge of the sand wedge for putting from off the green but I discourage this.</p>
Putter	Varies		<p>This is the money club and you should get as familiar with it as you possibly can. Half of your shots, if you are a par golfer, will be made with this club. We amateurs, and sometimes the pros also, when not putting very well often substitute new equipment for a few long, hard practice sessions. Try to resist this urge. You don't need a new putter, what you need is the ability to use the one you've got. The way to get that ability is to practice, practice and more practice. You should take some time to select the putter you'll be married to for life. It should be the right length for your height. Probably about 35 inches long for</p>

			player who is over six foot tall and 33 inches long for the five to six foot guy. For the ladies subtract 2 inches from these lengths. It should have a medium to heavy head because the putter should do the work of putting and not the player.
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**[TOC]**

## LOFT EXPLAINED

Loft angle or Loft: The loft angle which most golfers shorten to just "Loft" is a measurement in degrees applied to all golf clubs including irons and woods.



Technically the loft angle is the angle formed by a line that runs down the center of the shaft and a line running down the face of the club.

You can think of loft in these ways:

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

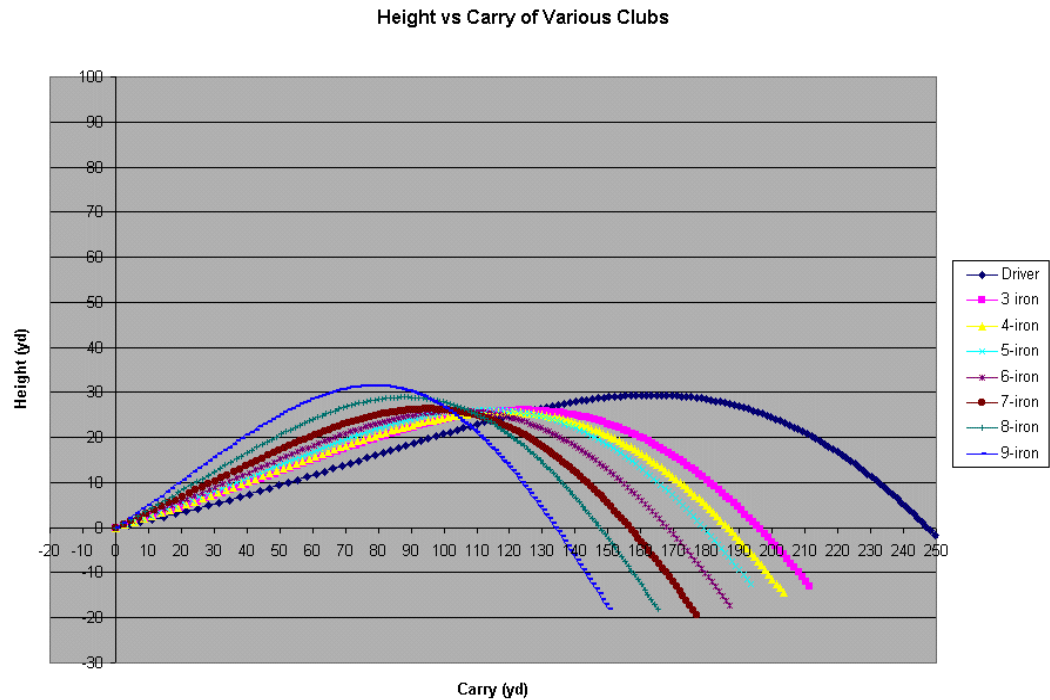
- a. Loft is how much the face of a club is angled upward; or
- b. Loft is how much the top of the club face is angled back from the shaft.

The club face of a golf club with a higher number of degrees of off will look more angled -- like a 9-iron; compared to the face of a golf club with a lower number of degrees of loft -- like a 5-iron which will appear closer to vertical.

Effect of loft on golf shots:

Loft on irons gives different trajectories at the beginning of the shot and different carry distances to the end of the shot. Each shot will have a different maximum height to them also.

In comparing a 5-iron trajectory to a pitching wedge, the trajectory of the pitching wedge will have a much higher trajectory and will have a much shorter carry. Below is a graphic showing height vs. carry of various clubs.



How loft in our irons helps us in golf.

Try to swing the loft into the ball or hit the middle of the ball with the club. Think of the golf ball as trying to pass a soccer ball. Hit upward on the ball and it will roll on the ground. Hit downward on the soccer ball and it will pop into the air.

HINT: Hitting chips and short pitch shot with no wrists will help you get the feel.

Swinging the loft of the club into the ball needs to happen with a slightly descending stroke. This maintains the loft and doesn't add loft.

One of the worst thing you can do is attempting to add loft through impact. This is know as scooping the ball.

## [TOC]

### GETTING A GOOD GRIP

"A proper grip is absolutely essential to a good golf swing," was said by more than one pro. "No single fault can cause as many problems." The grip we will discuss here is for all of your strokes except putting. The putting grip will be discussed in the section on putting. Grip your club like you would a bird. Don't crush it but also don't let it escape.

The three predominant grips in use today are the overlapping grip, the interlocking grip and the baseball grip. Since you are a neophyte, we'll stress only the overlapping and interlocking grips. People with longer fingers should use the overlapping grip and those with shorter fingers should use the interlocking grip. Try them both on the driving range and select the best one for you. If you are a "Leftie," just reverse the following instructions.

The left hand is the critical one, because not only is it the positioning hand, but it dictates where the right hand will be seated.

To achieve a proper grip, rest the butt end of the club at the base of the little finger on the left hand and diagonally across the first or finger nail joint of the index finger.

Now close your hand around the grip. This position not only provides the strength and control to keep the club from moving in your hands, but also allows it to release on the downswing.

As you grip the club with your right hand, keep the palm flat and wrap it and your right thumb over the top of your left thumb. The left thumb should sit in the valley of the right hand. In the overlapping grip, the little finger of the right hand should overlap in the valley between the index and middle finger of the left hand. When using the interlocking grip, place the little finger of the right hand between the index and middle finger and grip the left knuckles. Grip the right knuckles with the left index finger.

As you close down the grip and turn your left hand to the right, do not turn the club head. Your right thumb should be on the left side of the club and not directly on top of the club. This is so that pressure from your thumb will not affect

your swing.

Be sure to position your club on the ground so that the "V" formed by the thumb and the index finger do not point at the chin and right shoulder, but point half way between your chin and shoulder.

The focus of your grip should be where the fingers of both hands overlap or interlock. You should be able to waggle the club and feel tightness of the grip in the focal point and the looseness in both ends of your joined hands. Too tight a grip will cause tenseness in the forearm muscles and will distort your swing.

### **[TOC]**

#### **CHOKER UP ON YOUR GRIP**

Conventional wisdom tells us that you should select the correct club before taking your grip and should not choke up on the club. Sometimes when you are in a tournament and under a lot of stress it is desirable to choke up on the driver.

Grip down on the driver about two inches using your normal grip. Make a few practice swings to get more comfortable with your "new" length. It should feel like you are swinging a fairway wood.

Set up is very important. Position the ball even with your leading heel. This will ensure that the driver is making contact with the ball just beyond the bottom of the arc of your swing. Your weight should remain the same as in a normal drive. Do not "sway back" on your backswing. The backswing, downswing and the finish is pretty much normal.

Be sure you have practiced this shot on the practice tee before attempting it during your game.

### **[TOC]**

#### **TAKING THE PROPER STANCE**

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham



A proper stance is the foundation of a good golf swing. Critical elements of a good setup are posture and ball position. Stand behind the ball, look down the course and establish your target, which in many cases, may not be the green itself. This happens frequently; when there is a dogleg, there is a strong "Cross course" wind or you wish to "Lay-up" to avoid a hazard. Establish a target line which extends from your ball to the intended target. Then you can take a position to address the ball.

Your shoulders should be over the hips and your hips over your feet. Your feet should be approximately shoulder width apart with the toe ends of your feet slightly spread. Your body weight should be distributed from the balls to the heels of your feet and your body should be balanced in a ready position. The toes of your feet should be on a line which is parallel to the target line.

Your legs should be relaxed in a walking flex. Slightly bend your knees to ensure that they are unlocked.

Keep your back straight and bent over from the hips. Your butt is out with your weight toward the heels. Your club should make a 90 degree angle with your bent spine.

Your right shoulder should be lower than your left. A natural tilt will be created by the head and sternum being to the right of the belt buckle. Your weight is anchored on the right leg.

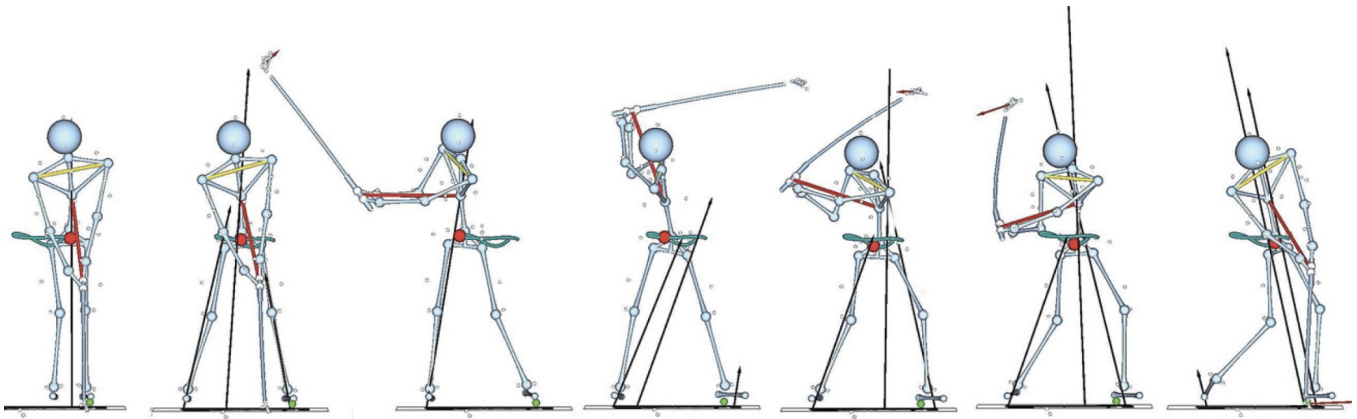
## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

The ball should be positioned on a line with the left shoulder for all clubs. For short clubs, the stance is narrower. For longer clubs, the stance is wider. The width of the stance should not exceed the width of your shoulders.

Don't bend your head down but hold it comfortably erect, in line with your shoulders, with your eyes looking downward at the ball. Let your arms hang relaxed. Relax and exhale. You are now ready to swing.

### [TOC]



## EXECUTING THE SWING

As was pointed out before, the swing consists of the back swing, the transition point and the fore swing. You may take a practice swing or two if it creates relaxation and confidence. Taking more than two practice swings only serves to; create slow play, destroy the course and cause anxiety. Practice strokes are most productive in putting, chipping and pitching. These shots require touch and distance control that is best rehearsed. For further explanation, I have broken the swing down into; the back swing, the transition and the forward swing.

### THE BACK SWING

When you begin the back swing, make sure that you move your arms, wrists and the club as one unit. This forces you to begin the swing with a swiveling motion of your hips. As you continue the back swing, you will be forced to bend your right elbow. Keep your right elbow close to your right side and don't cock it backward or upward. Keep your left arm and elbow

as straight as possible. To complete the back swing, cock your wrists to allow the club to become parallel with the ground over your head.

### **THE TRANSITION POINT**

The transition of the swing from the back swing to the fore swing is critical. It should be slow and gradual and should be initiated with the turning of the hips. Any jerking at this point will cause the swing to become misaligned and perhaps too deep or too shallow. The result will be hitting the ball on either the shank or toe of the club, digging the club into the ground, hitting the top part of the ball, or missing it altogether.

### **THE FORE (OR FORWARD) SWING**

The fore swing should begin slowly and rapidly build up speed until the maximum club head speed is obtained. This should occur just prior to making contact with the ball. During the first part of the fore swing, your wrists should naturally turn so that the club head, just prior to impact with the ball, is completely turned and its face is perpendicular to the line of flight.. Prior to making contact with the ball, your head should be perfectly still and should not be raised or lowered. You can help yourself to do this by keeping your eyes on the ball. After contacting the ball, continue the swing along its predetermined arc and allow your head to turn to the left as the swing progresses. You will turn at the hips and when the fore swing is completed, your belt buckle will point to the target. Remain in this position for a few seconds while you observe the flight of the ball.

### **THE WALK THROUGH GOLF SWING**

The walk through golf swing is for older players who have tender backs or may have had some prior back injury.

Although it is primarily for use on the tee box, it can be used in modified form for almost all strokes.

Set up as normal except the trailing foot is slightly behind the leading foot by about a couple of inches.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

After you take the normal stroke and when you would normally lift the heel of your trailing foot while turning toward the target, you simply completely raise your trailing foot and turn to face the target while taking a step toward the target.

I have found that for me it is easier to take a backward step with the leading foot which leaves me facing the target.

**[TOC]**

### A CHECKLIST FOR A PROPER STROKE

1. Select the appropriate club
2. Take a good grip.
3. Take the appropriate stance
4. Execute the back swing
5. Execute the fore swing including the follow-through
6. Pat yourself on the back

**[TOC]**

### DRIVING (THE CLUB, NOT THE CART)

The driver is the hardest club in the bag to hit because it's the longest club and has the least amount of loft to the club face. Being the longest means the head is the hardest to control. Having the least amount of loft means that the ball has less backspin and it is backspin that cancels the side-spin that causes a slice or hook. This is why some golfers will eschew the driver in favor of their 3 wood on the tee box. Don't fall into this trap. Select the proper length driver when you buy your clubs and spend some time with it on the driving range.

Use the driver only on the tee box. Tee the ball up so that the equator of the ball is at the top of the grounded driver. To tee the ball up higher or lower is only an adjustment that many poor players make to compensate for a poor, inconsistent swing. The ball is teed up in an area on the tee box that is defined

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

by an imaginary line drawn between the front edge of the tee box markers and extends backwards for two club lengths. Anywhere in this area is good but you should pick the part of the teeing area that gives you the best look at the green or target and avoids obstacles such as trees that may line the fairway. It is not necessary that you feet remain inside the teeing area only your ball.

Now you are ready to execute your drive. Remember that on short holes you may tee up and use a club other than your driver. The distance you are trying to negotiate is the deciding factor here.

Use the procedure outlined above in the basic golf stroke. Plan the shot, select the proper club, take the grip, take the stance and take the swing which is further subdivided into the back swing, the transition and the fore swing.

**[TOC]**

### FAIRWAY WOODS

Most golfers who have trouble hitting a wood from the fairway typically have the same faults. The problem usually can be traced to one of three areas -- the position of the ball, the shifting of your weight on the back swing, and left-side control on the forward swing. When hitting a fairway wood, position the ball about two inches inside your left heel so you can sweep the ball off the turf. Then, remember to shift your weight to the right foot by turning back with your left shoulder and arm. Finally, as you unwind and transfer your weight on the forward swing, you must maintain control of your left side as you hit through the ball in order to make consistent shots. Here's a drill that will help you do this. Place a tee about six inches in front of the ball. When you swing, use the tee as a reference point as you extend the club through the ball. Keep practicing this, and you'll start hitting long, accurate shots with your fairway woods.

**[TOC]**

### FAIRWAY IRONS

Ball position is a key factor when hitting irons. For a high handicap player, the safest ball position is in the middle of the stance. The low handicap player will tend to move the golf ball around in the stance, which can aid in shaping and

controlling ball flight.

When we hit an iron, we try to hit down on the ball, but when we hit a wood, we try to sweep up at the ball.

With an iron, we want our weight evenly distributed.

The ball should be in the middle of your stance, your hands ahead, and the club should come down on the ball.

When you are practicing, you should always devote equal amount of time using your woods and irons. You want to make sure you have both swings under control if you want to play your best golf.

### **[TOC]**

## **APPROACH SHOTS**

When you have a short iron in your hands, you shouldn't worry about trajectory or shot shape. From 120 yards and less, you should simply focus on the target and try to make a good, full swing. The short swing will come into play when chipping and pitching.

Success will come as a result of practicing these types of shots on the driving range. To get the feel of the chipping and pitching stroke, you should simply cock your wrists in the back swing and try to hold that position through to an abbreviated finish.

For most golfers, the ability to do well in the short game of pitching, chipping and putting can make up for their deficiency in the long shots.

## **CHIPPING**

This is for shots of six to fifty feet from the green. Take a normal stance and place the ball well back in your stance. Take your normal grip and place the butt of the club at your belt buckle. Lean forward slightly. As you take your stroke, don't break your wrists. Don't take a full back swing or a full follow-through. Your back swing should be only long enough to get the distance you want without affecting your balance. See the chipping drill section further on in this manual.

### PITCHING

The golf pitching technique is yet another important golf technique you need to perfect in order to excel in the game of golf. The golf pitching stroke is the shot where you would be required to hit the ball above and over any water hazards or bunker to reach the putting green. The correct technique can turn a potentially bad score positive. This is if you are able to loft the ball over the hazards near the greens close enough to the hole for the follow-through one-putt.

For the grip, the left hand secures the handle of the club while the right hand is the finger grip by the center two fingers, leaving the little finger to overlap the forefinger of the left hand. A constant light grip pressure is important in pitching. This light grip pressure is necessary to send the ball into the air and to land softly on the green. The grip promotes a freer use of the wrists to help to hit the ball further than when you are chipping the ball.

The correct stance for the golf pitching stroke is such that ball is below directly below your breastbone. Both feet should be toeing that imaginary line towards the target. The leg stance is narrower than that for the golf swing but wider than for the chipping shot.

For the right pitching technique, for the back swing, you will need to take the club back slightly above your waist. On the downswing and the follow-through, the club should finish slightly above the other side of your waist. When the club face meets the ball, the club shaft should be vertical and your hands should be directly over the ball. Note that the golf pitching motion is bigger than the chipping motion to ensure that it flies farther than it rolls.

Just as for the golf swing shot, regular practice at the driving range is probably the best way for the beginner to improve his golf pitching and chipping shots. It is important to contemplate after each shot, what went wrong and to make the necessary adjustments to improve your shots.

**[TOC]**

### PUTTING

I have broken this down in regular or normal putting and some

supplemental information on lag putting.

### **[TOC]**

## **REGULAR PUTTING**

Since putting can account for fifty percent of your score, its importance cannot be over emphasized. Preparation for the putt is as important as it's execution.

First determine the line of your putt by standing behind your ball on the green and observing the uphill or downhill slope of the green. Establish a target line where you predict how the ball will roll. Because you'll seldom be putting on the level, you should establish on the target line a point which you will putt to. This point will be either before the pin or behind the pin depending on whether you are putting uphill or downhill. Be sure to examine your target line for undulations and loose impediments (twigs, leaves, etc.) that could affect the roll of the ball.

If you are confused and unsure of the slope of the green then establish your target point right at the cup. Also if in doubt as to how much break there will be on your target line a good rule of thumb is to play for more break than you actually predict. We amateurs usually grossly underestimate the break of a putt.

The grip that most good golfers use is radically different from the grip they use on the tee or fairway. Since the right hand will be providing the power for the stroke, it should be taken first. Use essentially the same grip as the right hand assumes on your other clubs. The left hand provides the guidance for the putting stroke. You should then place the left hand with the fore finger of the left hand in the depression between the right ring finger and right little finger. Some players prefer to place the left fore finger in the depression between the right middle finger and right ring finger with their left middle finger in the depression between the right ring finger and right little finger. Initially try both grips and see which one is more comfortable for you and then stick with it. Also some golfers like to extend their right fore finger along the shaft of the putter to give them more control. Some players prefer the "Reverse grip" with the left hand lower on the shaft than the right hand. It doesn't matter what grip you use (I prefer the

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

conventional grip) as long as you are consistent and don't change back and forth.

Basically, then you want to get a comfortable stance. Once you have determined what is your perfect stance at the practice green don't change it on the course. Place your feet at shoulder width for optimum balance. Flex your knees slightly to ease tension in your legs and get your eyes directly over top of the ball. A sideways turn of the head will help you see the line your putt should take.

You should bend at the waist with the ball relatively close to you. When putting, you want your arms loose rather than in a position that reaches for the ball.

The ball should be just off your left heel and when you take a stroke, you want your club to have a nice even pendulum type pace, so that your blade (club face) accelerates through the ball.

You want to putt with the same speed of stroke in bringing the putter back and through. You can't be slow in drawing it back and fast in following through.

Most golf experts agree that the ideal putting stroke emulates a pendulum. Based on a study of most professional golfers, the stroke is about a 1 to 1.5 length ratio of back swing to follow-through. In other words, the follow-through is at least 50% longer than the back swing.

When you hit the practice green, you should start with attempting small putts and then moving further from the cup, See "putting drills" later in this manual. Establish a routine for your observation, planning, setup, and stroke. Whatever you do, don't vary your routine on the golf course. The place for changing your routine is on the practice green.

You need to build up some success and learn the speed of the green. Everybody seems to practice distance shots (by hitting long putts). You need to develop some consistency in your putting. Do this by paying attention to the short putts which are the most frequently missed.

According to Dave Pelz, the putting Guru, a golfer should stroke a putt only hard enough to get the ball 18 inches past the hole. He claims this will increase the chances of holing it by 68 percent, or four times, over the "let it die in the cup" method. Hence the saying, "Never up, Never in."

A good putting drill is placing a dime or a quarter on the green and

using it as your target so that you get "more geared" to getting your putts close to the hole.

Check these Statistics: PGA TOUR players miss 50 percent of putts from six feet or less. They hole only 20 percent from 12 feet. Putt-testing robots miss 50 percent of their putts from 10 feet.

### **[TOC]**

## **LAG PUTTING**

A "lag putt" is a long putt which, because of its length or complexity, the golfer does not expect to make but hopes to get close to the cup. If it goes in the hole, great! But if it doesn't, you want to make sure you are left with a short, manageable second putt that you won't miss.

Another way to think of lag putting is that it refers to demonstrating excellent distance control on the putting greens when a long or tricky putt requires caution, so that you leave your golf ball in a safe position. A golfer who is a good lag putter is a golfer who rarely three-putts.

The first thing a player should do on a practice green before a round is hit a half dozen or a dozen lag putts to get a feel for the speed of the green. Making them is great, but concentrate more on the speed of the putt and getting the ball to stop hole high.

An old and excellent guide for lag putts is to try to hit them into a washtub instead of the hole. Aiming at the imagined bigger target will ensure no more than a two or three-foot second putt.

On longer putts, open up your stance a little bit, stand a little farther from the ball, and loosen my grip on the club a little bit. These little changes can make a big difference because on a lag putt what you want is to free the arms and shoulders up to swing back farther and come through harder and give the ball a good strong rap without pulling it off-line. A good

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

tip for reading long putts is to go halfway between your ball and the hole, and look both ways. You should be able to see the slope, if there is any, clearly from that spot.

**[TOC]**

### **ETIQUETTE (The Golden Rules of Golf)**

Always check the "Local Rules" prior to playing every round because they sometimes change. The "Local Rules" are always posted in the clubhouse and are sometimes printed on your scorecard. Respect for others is a particular and traditional aspect of the game of golf. Be courteous and respect the other players as well as the Groundskeepers who have to clean up behind you and cart away your trash. Also insist that the members of your group adhere to the golden rules. Many times they may not know that they are being discourteous or destructive. Of course they may just be asses in which case you probably won't play with them again.

**[TOC]**

### **HONORS VS "READY GOLF"**

#### **HONORS**

This is the system of play used by all professionals and most amateurs and is clearly stated in the Rules of Golf. The order of play on the first tee box is determined by lot or, most often, the toss of a tee. The players gather in a rough circle and someone tosses a tee in the middle of the group. The player that the tee most nearly points to will tee off first. Successive tosses of the tee determine the rest of the teeing order. Once play has started, the order of succession is determined by the lowest score on the prior hole. If two players have the same score then succession is determined by the hole previous to the prior hole and so on. This system is most fair because the player with the lowest previous score is at a slight

disadvantage because of unknown winds and unseen pitfalls on the course. On the course play is successive with the next player to hit the ball being the one whose ball is furthest from the flag. This is also true on the putting green however a player can be allowed to "Hole out" when other players agree. Where the system of "Honors" breaks down is with amateur play. When the player with "Honors" takes an inordinate amount of time getting to the tee box or to his ball on the course, setting up and hitting the ball then time is wasted and everyone is slowed down.

### **READY GOLF**

This is where the order of play on all tee boxes is determined by readiness to play. In this system, everyone gets a chance to clean a club, clean their ball, take a drink of water or go to the facility generally provided at most golf courses. The first player that is ready tees up and hits his ball without respect to "Honors." This can significantly speed up play. Another aspect of Ready Golf is that players on the course play their ball when they are ready and not wait for the player who is furthest from the flag to play. Of course many times it is helpful for one player to help others by watching where their ball goes. Lost balls significantly slow down play. Also if two players are in close proximity, one should wait. Ready golf can extend to the green also but usually all golfers will be on the green at about the same time. In that case they can play as in the honors system.

### **[TOC]**

### **HOW TO COPE WITH SLOW PLAYERS**

At the first tee box get a consensus that you are going to play "Ready Golf." Keep reminding slow golfers that they must be ready for each shot. If there is no-one behind you that is waiting for your group to play then you can relax and play a little slower. If you are holding up others, then you must do everything possible to speed up your group even if that means playing out of order.

If you are behind a group of slow players you should exercise restraint and not hit into their group. In this case the only recourse you have is to ask them if your group can play through or to complain to the ranger when

he comes around.

### **[TOC]**

## **TAKING CARE OF THE COURSE**

It's amazing how a golfer who never helps out around the house will replace his divots, repair his ball marks, and rake his sand traps.

### **DIVOTS**

It's been said that everyone replaces his divot after a perfect approach shot.

Check local rules, sometimes written on your score card or posted in the club house, for repair of divots. Some golf courses prefer that you do not repair divots because some types of grasses have long roots and do better if the roots are exposed. If advocated by your course, you can fix your divots by pressing them in from the sides with your feet or tamping with a club. Be sure to use the soil or sand and seed mix if provided on the cart. Normally, these containers can be refilled at par 3 holes and by the Rangers.

### **BUNKERS**

Be sure you leave no trace after you have hit your bunker shot and exited the bunker. Smooth out footprints and other indentations with a rake, if available, or at least with your feet and club. Also do the next poor soul that encounters that bunker a favor and clean up footprints that another, less courteous, golfer has left.

### **GREENS**

Fix ball marks on the green by using a tee or divot tool to lift the grass from the side, fill the ball mark and tapping it flat with the sole of your putter. Check the clubhouse for instructions on how to properly repair ball marks. A good rule of thumb is to repair any ball marks that you have made plus one more. Also lay the flag and pole down carefully on the green and don't

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

just drop it as I have seen many golfers do. Also, don't lay your clubs on the green. Someone could step on them or trip over them and thereby hurt themselves or, worse yet, damage the green. Don't walk on the green unnecessarily. The less traffic on the green, the better it will be for you and others. A good rule of thumb is that you should leave the green better than you found it. Don't look for anyone to thank you; you'll get your reward in heaven where you'll be given a pass to the very best courses there.

**[TOC]**

### **GOLF CAR USAGE**

Keep golf cars on the paths where required and follow the operating rules which vary from day to day. No cars on or near the green. This goes for pull carts as well as powered cars.

**[TOC]**

### **SENSITIVITY TO OTHERS ON THE COURSE**

Voices carry so keep it down to a dull roar.

Don't stand or move closely behind someone who is hitting or putting their ball. Avoid casting a moving shadow on their line of putting.

Attend the flagstick when you are closest to the hole on the green, and replace it when you are the first to hole out. Be sure to lay it carefully on the green or give it to someone else when it is your turn to putt.

Avoid the temptation to yell at or hit into the slow group in front of you. If they are very slow, mention it to the ranger who is responsible for the speed of play.

We all hate to lose a ball but lost balls account for most of the delay in golf. You are allowed to look for your ball for no more than five minutes but I submit that this is too long. If you haven't found your ball in three minutes, you aren't going to find it in five minutes.

## **[TOC]**

### **WHAT TO WEAR**

Most municipal golf courses just require pants or shorts, shirt and shoes. Most privately owned public courses, resorts and country clubs require shirts with collars and twill type slacks or shorts. Almost all courses have outlawed jeans.

Most of today's courses require "Soft spikes" as opposed to metal spikes and frown on the use of sneakers instead of cleated golf shoes.

Don't take a chance on being refused play, wear a shirt with a collar and almost any type of slacks or shorts that are not denim or "Jeans." Also wear cleated, soft spiked golf shoes as they are far more effective than "Flat soled" sneakers.

## **[TOC]**

### **THE RULES OF THE GAME**

There are two types of rules you should be aware of, in addition to good common sense. These are the Official USGA Rules and Local Rules.

#### **USGA RULES**

These are defined in a booklet entitled "The Rules of Golf " which is published every year by the United States Golf Association and is available everywhere. The language in this booklet is very difficult to read and interpret and you may want to also purchase a simplified rules of golf at your local pro shop or golfing retail outlet. It has been my experience that if you spend a little time with the USGA rule book and re-read the important parts, you should not need that "Simplified" version or that video. The "Rules of Golf" discuss both Match and Stroke play so you should envision them as two distinct games with distinctly different rules. Match and Stroke (Medal) are discussed at greater length in the Glossary (Appendix I). Purchase a copy of these rules and keep them in your bag.

#### **LOCAL RULES**

Local rules are those that are adopted by each course to accommodate a particular situation that can be encountered on that course. The extent to which facilities can establish local rules is made a part of the USGA rules and you should be familiar with this section. For example, one local rule may be where to leave the bunker rakes. Some courses prefer that they be left outside the bunker for ease in using their tractor pulled bunker smoother. Other courses that are more attentive to the players, allow you to leave the rake in the bunker. I, for one, believe that the correct course of action, in the absence of any published local rule, is to leave the rake in the bunker near the edge where it will be less of an obstacle to play.

**[TOC]**

### AMATEUR STATUS

Starting in 2002, two important changes went into effect for amateur golf. One allows amateur golfers to qualify for the PGA Tour or LPGA Tour without losing their amateur status. The second change will allow amateur golfers to accept golf balls, clubs and merchandise without affecting their amateur status.

**[TOC]**

### COMMON RULES QUESTIONS

1. Hitting another players ball by mistake. The penalty is on the one who hit the wrong ball not the player whose ball it is. The wrong ball hitter must find his ball and play accordingly with penalty. Actual owner of the ball wrongly played may place another ball at the position of the ball that was wrongly played and continue from there. Advice: Take a bright colored permanent magic marker and mark your ball with a distinctive mark so there's no question as to whose ball it is. I use my lovely wife's most flamboyantly colored fingernail polish and mark all of the balls I play. My partners soon learned "My Mark" and subsequently avoid hitting my ball.
2. How do you play with a person who cheats? If you're in a tournament you must call the cheater out and ensure that he or she plays by the rules. If

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

you're in a "Pick-up" game where his cheating doesn't affect you, you may simply ignore their cheating and concentrate on your own game. If it bothers you and he is not bigger than you, then you must call him or her out and insist on playing by the rules."

**[TOC]**

### **USGA HANDICAPPING SYSTEM**

No golf manual would be complete without an explanation of the USGA Handicapping system this includes the USGA Handicapping formulas and how to use your handicap. Take a look at APPENDIX II for a complete explanation of handicapping. If you are a total beginner, skip this appendix for now and take a look at it later.

You are encouraged to join the golf club at your favorite course. Most golf clubs offer a handicapping service for a very nominal amount. You should take advantage of this and keep track of your progress.

**[TOC]**

### **TIPS AND TECHNIQUES**

#### **FIXING A HOOK**

The fault in most golfers who hook their shots is that they don't use their lower body properly in the down swing. Therefore Their hips spin out which causes them to hit it off the toe of the club.

To correct the problem, a modification in the address position is required.

Keep your right knee cocked in toward the target and drive through with the right knee cocked. This will make the hips move toward the target rather than have the left side pull away from the ball and the target.

The cocked right position helps keep your center of gravity more stable and reduces swaying in your swing.

Hooked shots can also be caused by a poor grip. If your right hand is

gripping too strongly, it can cause a hook.

Another suggestion is to open your stance and turn slightly to the left.

### **[TOC]**

## **CORRECTING A SLICE**

A true slice results from an outside to inside swing path in relation to the target line.

That swing path causes the club face to cut across the ball in such a manner that it produces the side-spin that causes a slice.

To help correct a slice, learn to get your club face square and getting your swing on the proper plane or path to eliminate the outside to inside swing.

Good alignment, a proper swing path, and then a proper release of the arms in back swing are the keys to correcting a slice.

Golfers who try to "play" their slice by aiming to the left to compensate for the ball curving back right are only hurting themselves. The further you aim to the left, the more you come across the ball and the more you slice it.

### **[TOC]**

## **HITTING A DOWNHILL LIE**

This is one of the more challenging shots. The key to hitting a downhill lie comes before you address the ball. Because you will need to get the ball up in the air more quickly than you would with a flat fairway lie, you should take less club (higher numbered) than you would normally hit. Depending on the severity of the slope, select one or two clubs less than normal since the ball will shoot off the downhill lie with a lower and hotter trajectory.

When you address the ball on a downhill lie, the ball should be more toward your back foot. the steeper the lie, the farther you move it back. Your weight should be on your front side.

Your shoulders should be set to the contour of the terrain but with a level feel. Because of the lie, you really have to concentrate harder about staying

down through the shot, otherwise you are more likely to top the ball.

Because downhill lies have a tendency to go right, you will want your alignment to be a little more left of the target.

Make a compact swing with less weight shift and lower body turn. Swing down along the slope and within yourself while maintaining your balance.

Among the most common faults I see are golfers putting too much weight on their back foot and taking a too shallow of a swing arc. They catch the ball on the up-swing and top it.

### **[TOC]**

## **HITTING AN UPHILL LIE**

In many respects, hitting an uphill lie is the reverse of hitting a downhill lie.

Uphill lies tend to be the easiest of the uneven lies to play. The ball is sitting there, ready to be launched easily upward. The main challenge here is to remember that because the ground is angling upward, more loft will be added to the club causing the ball to fly higher and shorter than a regular swing would produce. You should use at least a club or two more than normal (lower numbered) because the ball will fly higher. You want to take a normal grip and not choke down on the club.

Set up with the ball placed toward the front foot and make sure your shoulders and upper body are more contoured with the lie. Your right shoulder will be a bit lower than normal at address on an uphill lie. Do not lean into the hill.

Your weight should stay on your right foot and you should avoid swinging flat-footed. Stay still in your address and swing with your arms.

Because uphill lies have a tendency to go left, you will want your alignment to be a little to the right of the target.

Move assertively through the ball so that you don't fall back and pull the ball left.

Most golfers have a tendency to lean into the hill. That can cause them to tend to swing into the ground or hit behind the ball or bury the club in the ground. You don't want to create too steep an angle.

**[TOC]**

### HITTING A SIDEHILL LIE

Unfortunately, not all your shots on the golf course are going to be off level lies. Few of us realize how to play these shots. If you are clear on the adjustments you need to counteract these odd stances, these will be playable golf shots which can save instead of spending strokes during play.

When the golf ball is above or below your feet, maintaining balance is a must. If you can achieve balance in your set up and maintain this throughout the swing, your ball striking will improve on these shots. While it is true that balance may be lost after impact due to the severity of the uneven lie, this should not affect the solidness of contact because you have already hit the ball.

The following actions will help you get set up for the sidehill, lies you might face. Although your set up is somewhat altered for these shots, be sure that the measurement of the angle between your arms and clubshaft at address stays consistent with what you do well on a regular full shot.

### BALL ABOVE THE FEET

The swing in this situation will be flatter -- a baseball type of swing where the ball is far above your feet on a sidehill lie. You feel as if you are swinging at a pitch that's knee high.

1. Move your hands down on the club handle to shorten the club. You want to compensate for the fact that the ball is closer to you than it would be from a level lie.
2. Take a club less than for the distance you normally would hit because of the lower hooking trajectory of the shot.
3. Align yourself a bit right of your target since the flatter swing plane causes a closing club face which results in a pull or hooked shot.
4. Play the ball a bit farther back in your stance which could counteract the tendency to hit this shot fat.

**[TOC]**

### **BALL BELOW THE FEET**

The ball is below your feet on a side-hill lie. When striking the ball, you will tend to lose your balance and it will tend to peel off to the right. This is a challenging shot for most players because of the difficulty of maintaining address posture, resulting in a low slice or topped shot.

1. Bend slightly more than usual when addressing the ball, flexing the knees and tilting more from the hips. It's like you are going to sit on the hillside. Resist the fact that gravity is trying to pull you downhill.
2. Take a wide stance and make sure your weight doesn't get out on your toes.
3. Take plenty of club and aim fairly far to the left, allowing for a loss of distance.
4. Swing normally and within yourself, concentrating on good balance and keeping your head down. Try to maintain your posture at address. Keep your weight on your heels and your knees flexed. You may take a three-quarter swing because your immediate goal is to get back to the fairway.
5. The swing plane on this shot will tend to be more upright than when the ball is above your feet.

### **[TOC]**

### **HITTING A FADE**

When you set up on the ball, you will want your body on a line slightly left of the target. Your club face will be pointed slightly left as well.

The position of the ball should be slightly forward so that the club face appears slightly closed.

You do not need to change your swing path when hitting a fade, rather swing along the line of your body. Your right arms will be working underneath your left.

You can modify your grip a bit so that it does not allow the club to roll over during the swing. Turn your left hand slightly back.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

The one fault I see most is that golfers try to change their swing path during the actual swing. They take the club up and outside and then cut down to outside.

**[TOC]**

### HITTING A DRAW

Hitting a draw is nearly the opposite of hitting a fade.

When you setup, you want your body on a line slightly to the right of the target and your club face should be pointed a little right as well.

The ball position should be slightly back in your stance, thus the club face will appear slightly open.

Swing your club on the same path as you normally would and swing along the line of your body.

When you finish your swing, your left arm will feel as if it is rotating counterclockwise.

If you modify your grip, turn your left hand slightly to the right which will allow your hands to roll over through the ball and help close down the club face.

**[TOC]**

### GETTING MORE DISTANCE

You don't have to be an NFL lineman to hit the ball far. If you are beyond the amateur stage and want to reach your potential, you have to start with equipment. The first thing is that golfers should do is to use the optimal loft driver and have their club shaft length properly fitted. Your local pro is the best source of guidance on this.

Players may have the ability and technique to add distance to their swing, but their clubs may not be matched to their style. Therefore their clubs may not allow them to generate the club head speed necessary for longer distance.

Some people try to swing as hard as they can. What they do is overswing, lose control (of their swing) and it throws them off balance so badly that they fall

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

back on their right side when they finish. Swinging hard is not necessarily the key to longer distances.

Players should work on their shoulder and hip turn in order to tap the strength of the body's bigger muscles.

Hit the ball on the sweet spot. This takes practice and some time on the range. Experiment with varying the distance you stand from the ball.

### [TOC]

#### HITTING OUT OF A DIVOT

No matter where you play on any golf course in the world, occasionally your ball is going to run into a divot. In the old days when a ball was in a divot, golfers were told to take out a 6 or 7-iron and play the ball back in their stance. Then they would just have to try to gouge the ball out of the divot. But now, with the new fairway hybrid golf clubs with ridges on the sole, we have a tremendous option. This type of club can actually allow you to get the ball on the green and stop it very quickly. The way you play this shot is almost exactly like you would a 3, 4, or 5-iron off the fairway, which means you're still going to hit down on the golf ball with a descending blow.

Most people, when hitting out of a divot, tend to try and lift the ball into the air. That's a bad mistake that you really don't want to make. Another mistake you don't want to make is having the ball too far forward in your stance.

Instead of trying to sweep the ball off the ground, you want your body to stay down through impact and hit down into the ball. You've got to trust that the loft of your fairway wood will get the ball into the air.

Give your high-lofted fairway wood a try the next time your ball is in a divot. Technology can really help you out of this unfortunate situation.

### [TOC]

#### BUNKER PLAY

The simplistic answer is to avoid bunkers. Chose your club and craft your shot to avoid them. The television pictures that show a pro getting up and down

in two from a bunker is overdone and not realistic for us duffers. Although many Pros maintain this is the easiest shot in golf, the actual fact is that the average tour player saves par from a bunker only about 50 percent of the time.

**[TOC]**

### THE GREENSIDE BUNKER

Always select a club with sufficient loft to clear the lip of the bunker. Play the high percentage shot when you select your target. To execute your shot, set up with the ball in the middle of your stance. Get a good, solid stance. Distribute your weight with more weight on your leading foot to prevent a swaying motion during the shot. The swing should be a rapidly descending swing to hit through the sand and not make contact with the ball. Allow the loft of the club to send the ball, and a little sand, on the proper trajectory out of the bunker. Remain steady with your feet and body and don't over-swing. You should practice this shot as much as you can.

To make sure that you take a little sand with your bunker shot practice placing the ball on the center of a dollar bill sized piece of paper. Position the piece of paper with the long side parallel to your stance. A proper shot will carry both the ball and the piece of paper intact out of the bunker. If you are a little wealthier than I am, use a dollar bill and if you're a lot wealthier, use a twenty dollar bill. Save the bill, you may need it to buy scotch tape.

**[TOC]**

### THE FAIRWAY BUNKER

Select a club with sufficient loft to clear the bunker. Play the high percentage shot when you select your target area. To execute your shot, set up with the ball in the middle of your stance. When taking your stance, distribute your weight so that you have more weight on your leading foot. This is to prevent a swaying motion during the shot. The swing should be slow and low to the ground and not a rapidly descending swing. When your club face returns to the impact area, your leading hand should be bowed to

prevent hitting behind the ball. Make contact with the ball first and then the sand. If you hit the sand first, or hit it "Fat," the ball most certainly will not go to your target area. If you hit it too thin, you may be hitting your next shot from the bunker. Allow the loft of the club to send the ball on the proper trajectory out of the bunker. Remain steady with your feet and body and don't overswing. You should practice this shot occasionally when circumstances permit.

**[TOC]**

### THE LOB SHOT SIMPLIFIED

This is a very valuable shot used around the green. Your grip will be a little stronger than normal. Align your feet so that you are facing the target more than normal. Open the club face depending on how far you have to hit the ball. Position the ball forward in your stance and ensure your weight is positioned on the leading foot to brace yourself from swaying during the back swing. The swing is much like the bunker shot swing with the back swing more upright than normal. Downswing with a steep descending blow that will make contact with the grass so that it will act as a blanket between the ball and the club. Pop the ball up into the air and softly onto the green. Use more arm swing than body movement so that the ball will not travel so far after landing on the green or short grass. The ball will have less back spin so expect it to roll a bit further. To control the distance of the shot is twofold; first the amount the club face is opened or closed will control the trajectory, and second the length of your swing will control the distance the ball flies. Use the same club speed on all shots for simplicity of shot making. As always make this a part of your practice routine.

**[TOC]**

### THE BUMP AND RUN TECHNIQUE

The bump-and-run shot is a very simple stroke that can be played from almost anywhere around the green. Learn it and you can lower your scores.

Bring your feet close together for a narrow stance with the ball in the middle of your stance. Keep most of your weight on your left foot – you should feel like

you are leaning toward the target. Slide your grip down on the club so you can stand closer to the ball. Press your hands forward to take some loft off the club. This will help promote a downward strike and a lower shot. Make a short backswing with no wrist action. The shorter the backswing, the better. Think of this as the same length as your putting stroke. Keep your wrists firm through impact. Strike down and through the ball. The ball will come out low and run to the hole. This shot should fly a short distance and roll the rest of the way. Shorten your follow-through. The backswing and follow-through should match each other in length. Practice this technique whenever possible.

### **[TOC]**

#### **UP UP AND AWAY (GET OVER THAT OBSTACLE)**

Okay so your drive wasn't all that you had hoped for and you find yourself stymied by a tree. You can't hook or slice the ball enough to go around the obstacle and you can't go under it so you conclude you have to go over it. What club do you use? You could open the face of the club you select to achieve a higher trajectory and you may have to. A more simple and therefore more "doable" approach is to "step on it." Select the club you think is right and to see if it is the correct club, stand directly behind the ball in line with the pin or target. Lay the club on the ground beside the ball with the club face up. The club should be 6 to 8 inches from the ball with the shaft and grip pointed toward the target. After this is done, step on the club face and allow the shaft to point toward the sky. If the shaft is pointing into the tree or other object, it does not have enough effective loft to get over the object. Repeat this process until you find a club that serves your need.

Go through your pre-shot routine as normal with the following differences. When you take your stance, position the ball forward, toward the leading foot. This is so you hit the ball on the upswing, causing a higher than normal shot. Position yourself with more of your weight on your trailing foot and take the stroke with your weight kept behind the ball. If in your selection process, you have selected your club with the most loft and it still doesn't clear the obstacle, you could open the club face but, of course, this is a judgment call. Make a swing where your head is kept very still and hit the ball cleanly. If you've done everything right, you should clear the obstacle and be back on the road to success. All of these efforts will let you advance the ball. All that being said,

sometimes it is more prudent to simply chip or pitch the ball back to the fairway and forget about advancing it.

### **[TOC]**

#### **TIMING**

In the golf swing, timing is defined as the sequence of movements. Not to be confused with tempo which is the rate of movement, fast or slow. An accurate description of timing is PSM (Proper Sequential Motion). This is achieved when all the elements of the swing are assembled in their correct order. PSM is experienced when a golfer hits an extremely solid shot that goes further than expected, yet the execution seems effortless. Timing is critical.

Everyone has experienced good timing, it's just a matter of experiencing it more often than not. There are three simple ideas you should employ in your shot routine to ensure your timing is on. The biggest mistake a person can make is being too technical. The good thing about timing is that it is far from technical. With each shot you play on the course, or in practice, try implementing these three ideas to help your PSM.

1. Don't take a full blown, true to form practice swing. Instead, make a smaller, rhythmic, relaxing swing without trying as though you were going to hit for distance. The relaxed, short swing will result in a pace that allows the parts of your body to work in the right order throughout the full swing.
2. Use the "One, two count" while you hit your shot. On the driving range and the course, say to yourself "One" on the back swing and "Two" on the down or fore swing. The purpose of this is to achieve a natural sequence.
3. Relax. Tension causes poor timing. Before you strike the ball, make sure your hands, arms, shoulders and jaw are tension free. If your grip is too tight, it will cause your forearms to be tense which leads to tension in your shoulders and neck, then down through your back. The tension will cause a loss of flexibility which will deform your shot. Another point to consider is that a tensed muscle is more subject to

injury than a relaxed one. Take a deep breath and relax.

### **[TOC]**

#### **PLAYING WITH STRANGERS**

If your playing with people who are very articulate and never stop, then tell them you're preparing for competition and you're working on concentration. Any excuse will do if it works. A word to the wise, everyone is not interested in your favorite topics and you should limit conversation to the game you are sharing with them. Save chatter for lunch or, if you so desire, over a beer at the clubhouse. You may just have made a life-time friend.

### **[TOC]**

#### **HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR GAME**

Ask your friends to play on a Par 3 or executive course so that you can work your way up into regulation-sized courses over time. A Par 3 or executive course will allow you to practice two of the three essential skills you need the most on a regulation course. They are; Pitching or Chipping and Putting. Also, If one is available to you, join a putters group. This will allow you to practice and improve your putting. The group will probably shout or talk while you are putting and even cast their shadow on your line. This is where you learn concentration and how to ignore outside influences. Putting is the one single thing that everyone can work on and improve their scores.

### **[TOC]**

#### **WHAT TO CARRY IN YOUR POCKETS**

Carry two balls, four or five tees, a greens repair tool, a coin to mark your ball on the green, a pencil, a score card and a cloth or paper handkerchief. Put the rest of your stuff; wallet, keys, change purse and condoms or diaphragm into a plastic sandwich bag and but them into your golf bag. If you plan to have a beer or soft drink on the course, courtesy of the concessions cart, keep this

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

money out also. You may also want to keep a 3X5 card or a couple of business cards to make notes on or to network with. You can replenish any of these items from your golf bag if you have to. Why should you do this? The pro's, who carry only one tee, a coin, a pencil and a score card, know that excessive crap in your pockets only tend to throw your balance off. Also try finding your ball marker in a pinch with a pocket full of junk.

**[TOC]**

### **PLAY WITH TUNNEL VISION**

You should always play with "Tunnel Vision." Pay attention to where you want to hit the ball and not where there is trouble such as a blocking tree, a fairway bunker or a body of water. If you worry about the pitfalls on the course you could cause a "Self fulfilling" prophesy. Plan to hit a good stroke and not worry about hitting a poor stroke. Eliminate the negative, latch on to the positive and your strokes will be somewhere in between or maybe better. Don't consciously pretend that the obstacle is not there, just forget about it.

**[TOC]**

## **FITNESS FACTS**

### **GEARING UP FOR GOLF**

Golf is rapidly becoming the sport of choice for many Americans and even more-so with the ladies. While some view the sport as slow paced, golf actually requires a great deal of strength and stamina, not to mention skill. While you may not have to be in the best cardiovascular shape to play golf, your muscles, particularly those of the legs and upper torso, must be both strong and flexible to keep your scores and handicap below an embarrassing level.

**[TOC]**

### THE KEY COMPONENTS

To be successful in golf there are three components of fitness that you should focus on: strength/power, flexibility and cardiovascular endurance. These also are the three most important components of any well rounded fitness program.

#### **[TOC]**

### STRENGTH AND POWER

Developing muscular strength and power is essential for generating club head speed, a determining factor in how far you can hit the ball. The exercises shown below list specific exercises that will help you generate more power in your upper body as well as stabilizing strength in your lower body. One or more sets of eight to twelve repetitions of each exercise should be performed three days per week.

A recent study found this regimen to be extremely effective. As this and similar studies have shown, strength training brings about significant improvements in lean body weight, reduced body fat, increased leg strength and joint flexibility and a reduction in systolic blood pressure. But more important, at least to the golfers in this study, was the significant improvement in club head speed. The exercisers increased the speed of their swing by an average of five mph. The control group experienced no such improvements.

#### **[TOC]**

### FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is another important key to developing a full, fluid golf swing. Simply swinging the club is not enough. You can increase the range of motion in your shoulders, trunk, lower back and hamstrings with just a few minutes of daily stretching. It's OK to do a few stretches before you tee off on the first hole, but don't stretch only in the five minutes before you tee off. Flexibility exercises must be done every day, and you should always warm up your muscles prior to playing to increase flexibility and prevent injury.

## **[TOC]**

### **STRETCHING TO IMPROVE YOUR SWING AND PROTECT YOUR BODY**

How tense your body is will severely impact your swing. Also overly tense muscles can be damaged with the golf swing which requires a full range of motion of your legs, shoulders and back.

#### **QUAD STRETCH**

Using a club for balance, grab the front of your ankle and pull your heel toward your back pocket. Maintain an upright posture to maximize the stretch. Hold this position for a few seconds then release your ankle and relax. Do this with both feet.

#### **POSTERIOR SHOULDER STRETCH**

Bring one arm to shoulder height and hold it horizontally across your chest then grab your elbow with your other hand. Pull your elbow toward your chest until you can feel the stretch in the back of your shoulder. Hold this position for a few seconds and release your elbow and relax. Repeat this stretch with your other arm.

#### **ROTATOR CUFF STRETCH**

Hold a club vertically behind the center of your back with your right hand over your shoulder and grab the shaft with your left hand from behind. Slowly pull the club up with your right hand until you feel a stretch in the shoulder of your left arm, which should stay relaxed. Hold for 10 seconds then pull the club downward with your bottom (left) hand until you feel a stretch. Reverse positions and repeat.

## **[TOC]**

### **CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONING**

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Finally, cardiovascular conditioning is essential to help you keep your energy up during a long round of golf. Such conditioning can help you deal with the stress of making a crucial putt or of getting out of a sand trap. Try to fit in at least twenty minutes of brisk walking, cycling or whatever aerobic activity you prefer, three or more times per week.

Improving your golf game requires a bit more than simply playing a lot of golf, but it doesn't mean you have to spend hours in the gym. Try the exercises outlined here and you'll not only come closer to par, but you'll also reap numerous health benefits, such as increased lean body weight, reduced body fat, lower blood pressure and increased strength and flexibility.

While it may be difficult to motivate yourself to stretch or begin strength training, the fact that you might lower your handicap may be just the ticket to get you to head to the gym. Or you can work out at home, whichever is most convenient. The point is to do it, regardless of whether it's for health or for a better score.

### **[TOC]**

#### **EXERCISES TO IMPROVE YOUR GOLF SWING**

Ideally, golfers should perform one set of from eight to ten repetitions of each of the following exercises three days per week. Check the Internet if you are confused about how to do these exercises.

- § Abdominal curl
- § Biceps curl
- § Chest cross
- § Chest press
- § Lateral raise
- § Leg curls
- § Leg extension
- § Leg press
- § Low back extension
- § Neck flexion

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

- § Front lat (lateral) pull
- § Triceps extension
- § Weight assisted chin-up

**[TOC]**

### HYDRATION AS A KEY TO SUCCESS

Drink plenty of water well before you play. Chugging an Evian on the first tee doesn't cut it. You need to drink the proper amount of water every day and a bit extra for a couple of days before you go out to play golf. The proper amount is from 2.5 quarts when inactive to 6 quarts when active or playing golf. By the time you are conscious of being thirsty, you are already dehydrated.

### ON THE FIRST TEE BOX BEFORE PLAY

Do your stretches as described above. Do the quad stretch, the posterior shoulder stretch and the rotator cuff stretch. Four or five repetitions are enough to loosen you up. When it is your turn to tee off do a deliberately a slow, easy swing, you'll be shocked by how far the ball goes.

**[TOC]**

### PRACTICE DRILLS

Golf, like all motor skills, is a matter of routine. You should establish a routine for practice just as you do for playing a game. It's OK to change your routine as long as you understand why the change is necessary or desirable. Don't forget to include, along with driving range practice and putting practice, the seldom practiced parts of the game. These are pitching, chipping and bunker play. Dedicate a portion of each practice session these three activities. To do this you don't need a dedicated green but can use any open space for pitching and chipping. The rub comes in when you need to devote some time to hitting bunker shots, to do this you need to find a practice bunker. It's the only way to improve this aspect of your game.

## [TOC]

### THE ADDRESS POSITION

This technique is strongly recommended by my Pro David Leadbetter who wrote.

“When your body is angled properly at the start, you have the foundation for a repeating swing. It allows you to coil around a constant axis and swing the club up and down on the proper track.

The key towards a good setup is to tilt toward the ball from your hip joints, not your waist. The difference is subtle but bending at the waist causes the back to get rounded. It's tough to make a good swing from this un-athletic position.

Try this: Stand tall in front of a mirror, tuck your fingertips into the joints at the front of your hips, and tip your upper body forward as you push your hips and backside out behind you. Keep your shoulder blades flat, and add a little flex to your knees. You should feel athletic and relaxed with no tension in your arms. Try to re-create this hip-hinged position when you play. You'll look like a pro and maybe hit a few like one too!”

## [TOC]

### USING THE DRIVING RANGE

Try to find a driving range that will allow you to practice the elements of the short game as well as whaling the ball.

1. Make it a fun thing.
2. Use your own clubs.
3. Don't over practice.
4. Take along a friend to watch your swing (Maybe a pro).
5. Start with the high number clubs and proceed downward to the driver.
6. Always hit to a target. The golf course demands that you choose and align

your shots to a target. Just like playing, your practice should include aiming at targets.

7. Pick a corridor. Your ball must land between two objects that define a probable fairway. A corridor gives you a way to define errant shots.
8. Practice the short game. The short game consists of pitching, chipping, sand shots and putting. If your practice doesn't include the short game, you won't improve your score by much, even though you hit the ball better. Statistics show that about 65 percent of your score takes place from 45 yards or closer. Wedge or chip shots account for about 23 percent of your game and putting takes up the remaining 42 percent.

**[TOC]**

### THE CHIPPING DRILL

This drill is to help you decide the length of your back swing. Make sure there are several balls within easy reach in front of you as you don't want to move your position once it is taken. Take the position you would normally use to chip the ball. Then bring your feet together so that the heels are touching and the toes are splayed while keeping the rest of your body stationary. Practice a few swings to loosen up. Place one of the balls in the normal position centered between your feet. Chip the ball to a target that you have prearranged about ten feet from you. Continue chipping until you are comfortable with your swing and satisfied with your accuracy. Step down from your position and arrange your target ten feet further out. Repeat the drill procedure and successively move further from the target until you are satisfied that you can keep your balance and strike the ball crisply and accurately. See the section on chipping under Approach shots.

**[TOC]**

### THE BUMP AND RUN DRILL

Almost all the better golf courses and driving ranges provide a practice green for pitching and chipping. The bump and run stroke is for use when you are near the green but out of chipping range. See the bump and run technique in

the tips and techniques section of this manual. Place a head cover or other suitable object about two feet behind your ball when practicing. Make your stroke without hitting the head cover. This drill will help you to hit down on the ball and make a small divot. Do not try to help the ball into the air.

### **[TOC]**

## **PUTTING DRILLS**

The best putting drill is to start relatively close to the cup. Start with a one foot distance and putt three or four balls. Move further away and repeat this procedure. You should do this at a distance of, one, two, four, eight, sixteen and thirty two feet. Each putt should be taken with the same planning and deliberation that you would use on the course.

Another drill is to putt one ball at varying distances from the cup and complete the sequence of putting until the ball is in the cup. Never back-hand the ball in regardless of how far it is from the cup. Some wag once said: "Nonchalant putts count the same as chalang putts."

Also another good drill is to putt the ball with one hand. Take your normal grip and get into your normal stance. Place your non-dominant hand behind your back take the stroke with one hand. Don't worry where the ball goes. The objective here is to feel the weight and balance of the putter. After doing this several times do the same thing with your eyes closed. You will acquire a sense of balance that will aid you in putting with your eyes open and both hands on the club.

The eight second rule: Most amateur players tend to "Overthink" their putts. After you have taken your grip and stance then mentally count to eight. You should have taken your putt before you reach eight. If you realize that you made a mistake, correct it on your next putt.

Focus and concentration are important in putting and you should be able to effectively putt regardless of movements and sounds in your environment. The way to do this is to encourage others to putt with you on the putting green.

Many good golfers will use their friends and a putting green to set up a mini competition where scores are kept. This is one way of relaxing while putting and enjoying it to the fullest while improving your planning, aim and stroking.

## [TOC]

### **BALL POSITION DRILL**

This simple drill gives you perfect ball position for pure strikes with every club. And it all starts with a clap of your hands:

#### **1. CLAP YOUR HANDS**

Get into your regular, full-swing address position, but without a club. Let your arms dangle at your sides, then bring your hands together in a clapping motion, with your palms facing each other and your fingers pointing toward the ground.



#### **2. IRONS – GET TO THE POINT**

Notice where on the ground your fingers are pointing. This is the spot on which you should position the ball on most iron shots. With your hands properly centered, your shoulders will be even. Perfect.

### 3. LONG IRONS & WOODS – ADD TILT

Slide your right hand down your left hand a few inches. As you do, let your right shoulder drop to create some upper-body tilt to the right. Position the ball wherever your right-hand fingers point on the ground. You're now set to rip long irons and woods.

### 4. DRIVER – ADD MORE

Drop your right shoulder until the base of your right thumb is even with your left-hand fingertips. Play the ball where your right-hand fingers point when hitting driver. Swing (maintaining that tilt), and prepare for more clapping—from your playing partners!

**[TOC]**

## SAFETY

### LIGHTNING STRIKES

Lightning is to be taken very seriously. You and your clubs, as well as surrounding trees, are lightning magnets. As of the initial writing of this manual, there is an average of 73 deaths per year from lightning in the United States. A good rule of thumb is that when you see lightning or hear thunder, you should mark your ball and suspend play until the "All Clear" signal, generally a siren, is given from the clubhouse. I am told that the sound from the lightning, or thunder, travels at approximately one mile in five seconds so you can time the distance from the observation of the flash and the sound of the thunder. Remember also that lightning can travel ten or more miles before you hear any thunder. Be safe.

### DRIVING A CART NOT A CLUB

Just like our highways, a golf course is a dangerous place to be driving. I suspect that the people that design golf courses don't ever talk to the people who layout and install cart paths. If they did, then this section of the manual wouldn't be necessary. The best advice anyone can give you about driving on a golf

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

course is, "Expect the unexpected." Drive slowly enough that you can react to whatever pitfalls awaits you. Things like a pothole just around that sharp corner or worse yet a person or animal who decided to take a walk on that teensy, narrow paved or unpaved pathway. Also it is difficult to tell you about the lack of brain power of the golf cart driver who drives merrily along with his foot hanging out of the cart. My all time favorite is the guy, or gal that drives up the grade of a hill because he doesn't want to walk to his ball. Golf carts are notorious for turning over, and over, and over and coming to rest on top of their driver. If you, as the driver of a golf cart were to stop to think – you'd think to stop. And by the way what are you doing riding in a vehicle when you should be walking and getting some exercise.

### **[TOC]**

## GOLF FACTS AND TRIVIA

- 125,000 golf balls a year are hit into the water at the famous 17th hole of the Stadium Course at Sawgrass.
- 22.8% of golfers are women.
- Courses and holes: The highest course in the world is the Tactu Golf Club in Morococha, Peru, which sits 14,335 feet above sea level at its lowest point. (Play this one with oxygen masks?)
- Courses and holes: The largest bunker in the world is Hell's Half Acre on the 585-yard 7th hole of the Pine Valley Course in New Jersey.
- Courses and holes: The largest golfing green is that of the 695-yard, 5th hole, a par 6 at the International Golf Club in Massachusetts, with an area in excess of 28,000 square feet.
- Courses and holes: The longest course in the world is the par 77 International Golf Club in Massachusetts which measures a fearsome 8325 yards
- Don't feel bad about your high handicap - 80% of all golfers will never achieve a handicap of less than 18.
- Golf Balls: Balls travel significantly further on hot days. A golfer swinging a club at around 100 mph will carry the driver up to eight yards longer for each increase

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

in air temperature of 25°F.

- Golf Balls: The first golf balls were made of thin leather stuffed with feathers. Tightly-packed feathers made balls that flew the farthest. Feather balls were used until 1848.
- Golf Balls: There are 336 dimples on a regulation golf ball.
- Golf Balls: Tightly-packed feathers made balls that flew the farthest. Feather balls were used until 1848.
- Golf in Scotland from 1457 to 1502 was banned to make sure citizens wouldn't waste time when preparing for an English invasion.
- Hole in One: For a professional golfer the odds of getting an "Ace" are 2,850 to 1 according to Golf Magazine.
- Hole in One: For an low handicap golfer the odds are 5,000 to 1 against getting an "Ace."
- Hole in One: For an amateur golfer the odds are 12,600 to 1 against getting an "Ace" according to the National Hole-in-One Foundation.
- Hole in One: The chances of making two holes-in-one in a round of golf are one in 67 million.
- Hole in One: The first recorded ace was struck by "Young Tom" Morris on September 14, 1868 at the No. 8 "Station Hole" at Prestwick in Scotland.
- Hole in One: Tiger Woods snagged his first ace at the tender age of eight years old.
- Phil Mickelson, who plays left-handed, is actually right handed. He learned to play golf by mirroring his father's golf swing, he has used left handed golf clubs ever since.
- The driver swing speed of an average lady golfer is 62mph; 96mph for an average LPGA professional; 84mph for an average male golfer; 108mph for an average PGA Tour player; 130mph for Tiger Woods; 148-152mph for a national long drive champion.
- The longest drive ever is 515 yards. The longest putt ever is a monstrous 375 feet.
- The longest golf hole in the world is the 7th hole (par 7) of the Sano Course at the Satsuki Golf Club in Japan. It measures an incredible 909 yards.(at 150 yds per

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

swing it'll take me 7 strokes just to get there!)

- The term birdie comes from an American named A. B. Smith. While playing in 1899, he played what he described as a "bird of a shot", which became "birdie" over time.
- The word golf does not mean "Gentleman Only, Ladies Forbidden." The word golf, it is thought, comes from the Dutch word "kolf" or "kolve", meaning "club". Historians believe this was passed on to the Scottish, whose own dialect changed this to "golfe," "gowl" or "gouf". By the sixteenth century, this had evolved into the word we know today.
- The youngest golfer to shoot a hole-in-one was Coby Orr, who was five years old at the time. It happened in Littleton, in 1975.

**[TOC]**

### **GOLF HUMOR (Lame)**

- A Law of Physics -- it's easier to get up at 6:00 AM to play golf than at 10:00 to mow the grass.
- Sometimes it seems as though your cup moveth over.
- A good drive on the 18th hole has stopped many a golfer from giving up the game -- think about it.
- Golf is the perfect thing to do on Sunday because you always end up praying a bunch.
- A good golf partner is one who's always slightly worse than you are.
- That rake by the sand trap is there for golfers who feel guilty about skipping out on yard work.
- If there's a storm rolling in, you'll be having the game of your life.
- Golf balls are like eggs. They're white. They're sold by the dozen and a week later you have to buy more.
- It's amazing how a golfer who never helps out around the house will replace his divots, repair his ball marks, and rake his sand traps.

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

- If your opponent has trouble remembering whether he shot a six or a seven, he probably shot an eight (or worse).
- It takes longer to learn good golf than it does brain surgery. On the other hand, you don't get to ride around on a cart, drink beer, eat hot dogs while performing brain surgery.
- When asked by a gushy reporter, "You are spectacular; your name is synonymous with the game of golf. You really know your way around the course. What's your secret?" Phil Mickelson replied, "The holes are numbered."
- I saved the best for last. A plaque on my Tax Accountant's wall says, "The Income Tax has made more American Liars than Golf ever will."

### **GIFTS FOR GOLFERS**

Does your golfer have a favorite course? Often courses, both public and private, sell a multi-play pass at a very good rate per round. Check for expiration or limits on tee-off times to be sure it's usable when your golfer is available to play.

Does your golfer need or want to get better? Most teaching pros offer gift certificates or packages of lessons, or even one lesson. Caution, make sure that your golfer is compatible with the pro you select. This may be one case where you need to do a little detective work first. Also driving ranges have discount cards and other value programs.

Golf clubs are sometimes a good bet. The technology in clubs has increased distance, provides better control and offers more comfort than some older models. Drivers, putters, wedges and other specialty clubs are a great gift. Since choosing these clubs is really best left to the golfer, a gift certificate is probably in order here.

If clubs are too pricey, perhaps golf balls might make a great gift. Softer, higher spin balls are the best bet for most average golfers. Any ball from a major manufacturer with a distance/spin combination is a good bet. Be careful, most experienced golfers have very strong opinions as to the make and model and characteristics of ball they prefer. If you are sure that you know what their favorite ball is, go with it, but if not, the gift certificate is the safest approach.

Other options are golf clothing, golf bags, pull carts and other golf gadgets such as score keepers, head covers, water bottles and repair tools. Again, be sure of your golfer's tastes before you purchase something that he or she will truly hate and despise.

**[TOC]**

### AND NOW FOR SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT

Keeping score in golf can be more fun than merely counting strokes. An amazing number of games offer a fascinating variety of competitions.

They're especially designed for players with varying skill levels; For anyone bored with stroke play, or for fun-loving golfers who like to wager. These games below offer lots of spice and are widely popular throughout the world.

#### **BINGO-BANGO-BUNGO**

Regardless of handicap differentials, this wildly popular game allows two to four players to be competitive. Number of strokes doesn't matter. On every hole players can earn points in the following manner. Bingo means the first ball on the green scores one point. When everyone first gets on the green, bango is awarded to the owner of the ball nearest the pin. Bungo signals another point for the first ball in the hole. The player with the highest point total at the end is the winner of that hole.

#### **NASSAU**

In this game, the teams can be one-person or two-person teams. The game consists of three matches. The front nine makes up the first match and the back nine the second. The 18-hole total comprises the third match. The game can be treated as match play (lowest score for each two-person team) or medal (stroke) play. Nassau, too, is a widely popular mode of competition for individuals or teams. It's generally considered a betting game, with \$2 or \$5 riding on each match. It can get more complicated. Some people allow a team that gets down by two holes to "press" a beat." That means that a new fourth bet begins at that point. You can read more about it in the book *Chi Chi's Golf Games You Gotta Play* by Chi Chi Rodriguez and John Anderson. This game also tends to work better if handicaps are used, not outright score.

**[TOC]**

### SKINS

Here, the value of a skin is determined before play is started and it usually consists of a point value or a dollar value. The value can be the same for all holes or it can vary hole by hole. The player with the lowest score on a hole wins the skin. But if two or more players shoot the same for that hole, then no one wins the skin. Most skins games are played with carryovers. That means if no skins are won on a hole, then that skin is added as a carryover to the next hole. For example, if there's a tie on three consecutive holes, then the next hole would be worth four skins. Using players' handicaps usually makes everyone hunker down and concentrate more, knowing they have a shot at winning the hole's skin.

### NINES

This one is great for threesomes. Each hole carries a value of nine points. A player who shoots the best score gets five points. Second gets three, and the worst score earns one point. If two players tie for first, then each gets four, and the worst gets one. If two golfers tie for second, each gets two. If all three players tie for the best score, each player gets three points. Another version of this game fits four players with points awarded in a 6-4-2-0 sequence, and ties share points equally.

### **[TOC]**

### SCRAMBLE

This popular game is commonly used for group outings and amateur or corporate tournaments. Foursomes usually comprise the teams, with each team starting simultaneously on a different hole (Shotgun Start), with every team playing all 18 holes in sequence from where they start. In a scramble each team member hits a tee shot, and the best ball is selected. The other team members move their balls to the selected spot, and all play a second shot from that location. The best second shot is selected, and the procedure repeats until one team member holes out. The score is, of course, generally very low. Long ball hitters are an advantage off the tee, but shot making skills are essential for the team to post a competitive score. Each team plays in a closely packed group and has a great time.

### SHAMBLE

Similar to a scramble this game is also popular for group outings. Again, each foursome plays as a team against the other foursomes. Each team member hits a tee shot, and they select the best drive. From that spot each foursome player hits a second shot and then continues to play their own ball and finish out the hole. Each team member's individual score helps make up the team "score for the hole." But only the following scores earn points; par gets 1, birdie gets 2, eagle gets 3, and double eagle earns 4 points. Players apply their handicap, and points earned are based on net scores of each individual player, so that every team member has an opportunity to contribute regardless of skill level.

### [TOC]

### TRIFECTA

When playing trifacta, players can score "Trifacta" points only on the last three holes of each nine. Players hit a tee shot in the fairway, make the green in regulation and hole out in two strokes or less, then they have a trifacta and earn one point.

### THREE IN ONE

A foursome plays this game by splitting into a pair of twosomes to make up a team. The teams remain the same throughout the round. The round itself splits into six hole segments. For each segment the game type is different. An example would be six holes of twosome best ball, then six of lowball-low total and the final six in a two-layer scramble. This format allows players to experience a variety of games during one round.

### LAS VEGAS

A pair of twosomes also compete in this game. On every hole each pair arranges their two scores to make the lowest possible two-digit number. For example, if one team member has a 4 and the other a 5, their combined score for

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

the hole would be 45. On each hole the difference between the two team scores creates the points per hole. If team A makes a 45 and team B scores a 55, then team A wins 10 points for the hole. The team that wins has the highest total score at the end.

Many golfers take their game way too seriously and agonize about every stroke. At the other extreme, some play without keeping score at all. The golf games illustrated above offer a much happier alternative for maintaining the joy of golf. After all, golf is simply a game, and it ought to be fun.

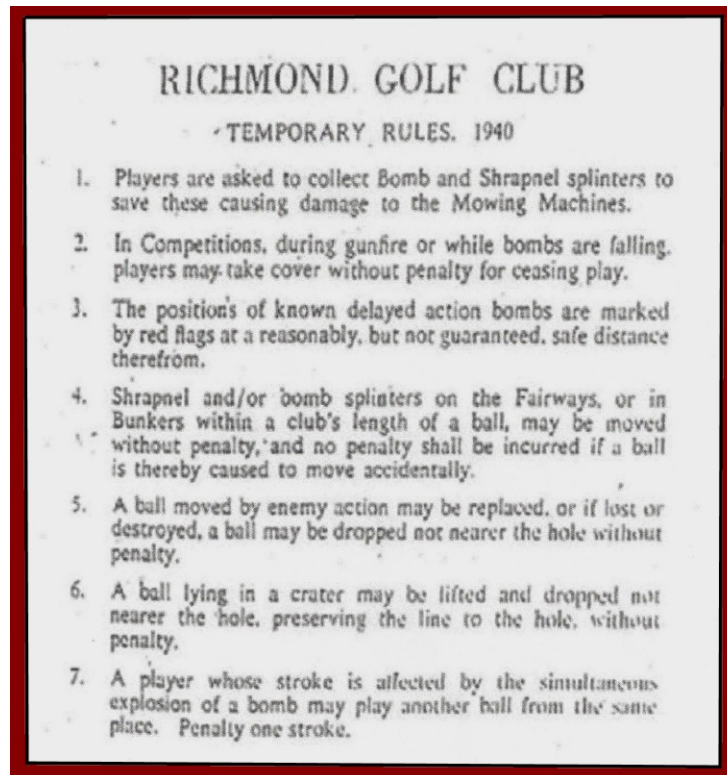
**[TOC]**

### THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE GAME: THE GOLFER

Mark Twain called the game of golf "a good walk spoiled." Golf club designers have tried to make it more difficult for golfers to spoil their fine walks with bad shots. Many golfers say the new forgiving clubs make a huge difference in their game. Variations are available for all levels of strength and experience, but choosing the right club and using it well are up to the golfer.

A poor choice of club and a bad swing can still produce the worst of shots from the best of clubs. And that's a good thing because it means ***the quality of the golfer is still of some importance in the game of golf***. That being said, the most important rule in the game of golf is that the golfer, regardless of how good a player they are, should concentrate on "Just having fun." No matter how bad you are playing, it is always possible to play worse so lighten up.

I hope you are as motivated as the Men and Women of the Richmond Golf Club were during WWII. This sign was sent to me by a very good friend who is a good golfer and very motivated.



Now that you fully understand the game of golf, conquered your fears of appearing the fool, acquired the best of equipage available and spent a small fortune at the local driving range. Get out to your local golf course and have some and bring your buddies along with you.

The end.

**[TOC]**

## APPENDIX I - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Address	Your position in relation to the ball as you prepare to strike.
Albatross	A score of three under par on a hole.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Alignment	How your body is aligned in relation to an imagined ball-to-target line.
Approach putt (or lag putt)	A putt not directly aimed at the hole, but close enough to make the next putt a certainty.
Approach shot	A shot whose target is the green when made from the fairway.
Backspin	The spin on the ball caused by the loft of the club face.
back swing	The first part of the swing, when the club is taken away from the ball to behind the shoulder.
Ball Hawk	A person who, in spending time looking for balls other people lost, unnecessarily delays play of the game.
Banana ball	A bad slice, so called because the flight of the ball resembles the shape of a banana
Barber	A player that talks to the point of annoyance.
Birdie	A score of one under par on a hole.
Blind	A hole or shot where you can't see your target.
Bogey	Originally the expected score in which a good player was reckoned to complete a hole, but now replaced by par. Bogey has come to mean one over par on a hole.
Borrow	How much you have to aim right or left when putting to allow for the slope of the green to bring the ball back to the hole.
Bunker	A natural or artificial depression on a fairway or round the green. It is usually half -filled with sand but can be made of earth or grass.
Caddie	A helper who carries a player's bag around the course and may advise on the course or the game.
Carry	The distance that a ball must travel in order to go over an

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

	obstacle.
Casual water	Water on the course which is not part of the design, such as rain puddles or over-watered areas. If a ball or the players feet is in such water, one can take a free drop. If there is casual water on the green, a ball on the green may be moved to the nearest place equidistant from the hole from which the putt will avoid water.
Chip	A shot played from around the green with more roll than height. Usually played with a seven iron.
Chip and run	A low shot that runs towards the flag played from near the green.
clubface	The area of the club that you use to hit the ball.
Clubhead	The part of the club attached to the lower end of the shaft, and used for striking the ball.
Collar	Edge of a sand hazard.
Compression	This number defines the deflection that a golf ball undergoes when subjected to a compressive load. It simply measures how much the shape a golf ball changes under a constant impact weight. It is a value expressed by a number in the range from 0 to 200 that is given a golf ball.
Cup	The tubular lining sunk in the hole. Also the cup is the hole itself.
Deep stuff	Grass left to grow so that off-line shots are made more difficult. Also called 'rough'.
Divot	A chunk of turf removed by the club head when you play a shot, usually on the fairway.
Dog-leg	A hole with a fairway that bends sharply. A hazard is often positioned at the angle of the dog-leg to put you off driving across it.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Double bogey	A score of two over par for a hole.
Double eagle	A score of three under par on a hole (also called an Albatross)
Downswing	The part of the golf swing from the top of the back swing to striking the ball.
Draw	A shot with a slight, controlled curve through the air, from right to left for a right-handed player and right to left for a left-handed player. See also Fade.
Drive	A shot which is played from the tee, usually with a driver (a 1 wood).
Driver	The 1 wood, the most powerful club in the set, used for getting maximum distance off the tee.
Drop	When a ball must be lifted under penalty or otherwise, the player, standing erect, holds the ball at arm's length and shoulder height and drops it making sure that it does not land any nearer the hole.
Eagle	A score of two under par on a hole
Face	The surface of the club head that strikes the ball.
Fade	A shot designed to curve slightly in the air, from left to right for a right-handed player and right to left for a left-handed player. See also Draw.
Fairway	The cut grass, and proper route, between the tee and green.
Fairway Flag	This is a red or white flag placed in the center of the fairway to designate aiming points for holes that are drastically doglegged.
Fairway woods	2, 3, 4, 5, and sometimes higher-numbered woods designed to be used when the ball is in play after the tee shot.
Flagstick	Also called the pin, flag, or stick, the flagstick marks the hole.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Follow-through	The part of the swing beyond impact with the ball.
Fore!	The shouted word by which golfers warn others on the course that they are in danger of being hit by the ball.
Fourball	A matchplay or strokeplay game of two players on each side, all four striking their own ball.
Foursome	A matchplay or strokeplay game between two sides of two players each, the partners striking the ball alternately.
Fringe	The collar of slightly longer grasses around the closely-mown putting surface of the green.
Full set	The 14 clubs which are allowed for playing a round. A full set usually consists of three or four wooden clubs or metal woods, nine or ten irons and a putter.
Get legs	A term shouted by a golfer when a shot just made is assumed to be short of the intended goal.
Gimmee	Baby talk for "give me," a putt of two feet or less that a friendly opponent declares does not have to be holed out.
Grain	The angle at which the grass of a green grows. Putting "against the grain" requires more effort than "with the grain."
Green	The closely mown, carefully manicured target area in which the hole is cut.
Grip	The part of the club you hold, and the way you hold it.
Gross score	The number of shots taken to complete the course before deduction of handicap to give the net score.
Ground under repair	Area of a course temporarily out of play, from which a ball may be removed for a drop without penalty. A ball outside the area may also be moved if the lie would cause the player to stand on it.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Guttie	A ball made from "gutta percha" or Natural latex. It lost popularity when the wound ball was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century.
Half set	The odd or even irons, two woods and a putter. A half set of clubs is all a beginning golfer needs to start playing.
Handicap	A system devised to make play between golfers of different standards an even match. See Appendix II - The USGA Handicapping System.
Hazard	A bunker, stream, ditch, lake, or pond are all hazards. Hazards are defined by a course committee.
Heel	The part of the club head beneath the end of the shaft.
Hole	This can mean the actual hole that you putt into or the entire area between tee and green.
Hole out	A situation where a player, with his opponents permission, elects to continue putting until he has finished.
Hole Handicap	Each score card indicates a handicap number for each hole. The lower the number, the harder the hole is to play. Some courses split odd and even handicap numbers between the front nine and back nine while others handicap all eighteen holes together. For example, the front nine can have handicap numbers 1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15 & 17 while the back nine have 2,4,6,8,10,12,14,16, & 18. In this case, the number 2 handicap hole isn't necessarily the second hardest hole on the course. It's the first hardest hole for that nine. A lot of golfers prefer to have all eighteen handicapped together but it is up to the course to decide.
Honor	To play first off the tee, the privilege of the winner of the preceding hole.
Hook	Faulty stroke when the ball curves to the left for right-handed players and right for left-handed players.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Iron	Irons are metal-headed clubs used for most shots between tee and green. Sometimes you can use them from the tee at holes where accuracy is more important than distance. The sand and pitching wedges are also irons.
Lateral water hazard	A ditch, stream, or pond that is roughly parallel to the line of the hole. A ball picked out may be played from either side, with a one-stroke penalty.
Laying up	Deliberately hitting a shorter shot that you are capable of in order to avoid an obstacle.
Lie	Where the ball is in relation to the ground it is resting on. The more embedded in the grass or sand the ball is, the worse the lie. Lie also refers to the angle of the sole of the club head to the shaft.
Links	A seaside golf course, typified by sand, turf, and course grass, of the kind where golf was originally played.
Loft	Loft or Loft Angle is the angle of the club face to the ground. The more loft a club has (indicated by how high the number is on the club) the higher the ball goes and the shorter distance it travels. See further explanation in this manual.
Long game	Shots over about 180 yards (164m) long, played from the tee or on the fairway with woods or low-numbered irons.
Loose impediments	Twigs and leaves, not actually growing, and not stuck to the ball, which may be removed from around it without penalty. The ball must not be moved.
Lost ball	If after a five-minute search, a ball cannot be found, a competitor is penalized one stroke and plays another ball from the spot where the first one was hit, counting as the third shot.
Marker (Ball)	To identify the spot on the green where a player has picked up a ball for cleaning or to clear the way for another player's putt.
Match play	A game between two players or two sides which is determined

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

	by the number of holes won or lost.
Medal Play	A competition in which a player's total strokes for a round are recorded and compared with the total scores of other competitors after handicapping. 'Stroke play', the correct term, is often referred to as 'medal play'. Match play is the other method of scoring.
Mulligan	A second shot permitted without penalty. Usually only one is allowed per round and is limited to tee shots although the number can be agreed upon by players before the round begins.
Net score	A player's score for a round after the handicap allowance has been deducted.
Out of bounds	A ball is out of bounds if it lands anywhere prohibited for play - Usually beyond the courses boundaries.
Par	The standard score for a hole, usually based on its length. Holes up to 250 yards long are par 3's, up to 475 yards par 4's and any longer than that are par 5's. Course committees are now authorized to vary par when a hole's difficulty warrants not sticking rigidly to the distances laid down.
Penalty	In stroke play, a rule infringement usually costs two strokes; in matchplay, the hole is generally lost.
Pin	Informal name for the flagstick in the hole.
Pitch	A reasonably high shot onto the green (more air than roll), traveling anything from a few yards to 120 yards. You generally use a 9 iron, a pitching wedge, or a sand wedge.
Pitching wedge	A short iron with a large degree of loft, used for pitching high but short shots onto the green.
Play-off	If a competition ends with a tie, the winner is decided by playing further holes. Currently, the winner is usually the first competitor to win a hole. The U.S. and British Opens are exceptions.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Provisional	A ball played when it seems likely that the preceding shot is lost or out of bounds. It will count, plus a penalty.
Putt	The rolling shot taken on the green, with a putter.
Rating/Slope	See Appendix III - The USGA Slope/rating.
Reading the green	Looking at the slope and contours of the green to decide the line and speed of your putt.
Rough	Grass left to grow so that off-line shots are made more difficult. Also called 'deep stuff'.
Sand trap	Alternate name for a bunker.
Sand wedge	Also called a sand iron, the shortest, most lofted iron used for playing out of bunkers and for very short pitch shots.
Scramble	Team competition in which all players play from the site of their team's best drive, best second shot, and so on.
Scratch player	A golfer with a handicap of zero.
Shaft	The length of the club down to the club head
Shank	Area of an iron's club head at the hosel; hence a shot hit by the club face at this point, which flies off to the right (right-handed player).
Short game	Chipping, pitching, bunker play and putting on the green and around it up to a distance of 100 yards (90m) away.
Skulling	Hitting a chip or pitch shot too hard and sending the ball past the green.
Slice	Faulty shot which curves left to right in the air (right-handed player).
Slope/Rating	See Appendix III - The USGA Slope/rating.
Snipe	A sharply hooked ball that dives quickly.

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Square	When the club face is placed at right angles to the imaginary ball-to-target line.
Stableford	A popular system of scoring by points for holes completed: par = 2 points, 1 under par = 3 points, 2 under par = 4 points, 1 over par = 1 point.
Stance	The position of your feet just before playing a shot.
Standard scratch score or (SSS)	The score expected of a scratch player or a golfer with a handicap of zero on any given course.
Stroke	A shot in golf.
Stroke and distance	The penalty of one stroke and the return to the site of the shot before, when a ball is unplayable.
Stroke index	The numbers on a score card indicating the order of the holes at which a handicap player receives strokes.
Stroke play	A competition in which a player's total strokes for a round are recorded and compared with the total scores of other competitors. 'Strokeplay', the correct term, is often referred to as 'medal play'.
Swingweight	The weight and balance of a club. All the clubs in your set should be the same swing weight.
Tagged it	Used to refer to a good golf shot. Usually a tee or fairway shot that is long and on target.
Takeaway	The start of the back swing.
Tap in	A putt that is very short, requiring only a tap to hole it.
Tee	The area of a hole from which you play the first shot.
Tee peg	You can put the ball on this device for your first shot to help raise

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

	the ball off the ground. It is then much easier to attain height.
Tempo	The timing and rhythm of your swing, which should be even and smooth throughout.
Thin	A long, low shot hit by mistake with the leading edge of the club (blade).
Three off the tee	If a ball is lost, out of bounds, or unplayable from the tee shot, the player is penalized one stroke and tees off again - the third shot.
Tiger	Someone who is playing unusually well.
Top	A shot mistakenly hit with the bottom edge of the club, so that the ball is embedded in the ground before popping up, and in most cases traveling only a short distance.
Trap	A sand bunker.
Triple bogey	A score of three over par on a hole.
Unplayable	A player may choose to deem a ball unplayable, taking a penalty stroke and dropping the ball no nearer the hole. A ball that is unplayable in a bunker must be dropped in the bunker or stroke and distance taken.
Uphill lie	When a ball is positioned on ground sloping up ahead of the player.
Waggle	A player's loosening-up movements at address.
Wedge	A club with an extremely lofted face (pitching and sand irons).
Whiff	A complete miss of the ball on a swing. Also called a fan.
Wood	A club normally used for distance shots. It can be made of wood, metal, or graphite.
Yardage (distance)	A plan of the holes on a course showing the distance from one

chart	point to another. It can be printed by the course or prepared by the golfer or his caddie.
Yardage Book	A booklet published by the golf course that shows the distances to features on every hole from both from the tee and the green. Features such as fairway traps and prominent trees are generally shown.
Yips	A condition where the played is so anxious about his putting that he can't swing his putter back, and the stroke becomes a jerky jab at the ball.

## **[TOC]**

### **APPENDIX II - THE USGA HANDICAPPING SYSTEM**

The USGA, along with the Royal And Ancient Order of Golf at St. Andrews in Scotland, is the creator and sole arbitrator of handicapping in the United States and the world. An explanation of the USGA Handicapping system includes the USGA Handicapping formulas and how to use your handicap.

#### **USGA HANDICAP FORMULAS**

A USGA Handicap Index is a number that represents the potential ability of a player on a course of standard difficulty. Potential ability is measured by a player's best scores, and is expressed as a number taken to one decimal place. These scores are identified by calculating the handicap differential for each score. The USGA Handicap Index is calculated by taking 96 percent of the average of the best handicap differentials, and applying section 10-3 for golfers with two or more eligible tournament scores.

#### **HOW TO DETERMINE HANDICAP DIFFERENTIALS**

A handicap differential is computed from four elements: adjusted gross score, USGA Course Rating, USGA slope rating, and 113 ( The slope rating of a course of standard difficulty ). To determine the handicap differential, subtract the USGA Course rating from the adjusted gross score; multiply the difference by

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

113; then divide the resulting number by the USGA slope Rating. round off the final number to the nearest tenth.

Handicap Differential = (Adjusted gross score-USGA Course Rating) x  
113 / USGA Slope Rating.

Adjusted Gross Score

(a) This is your gross score which includes scores for incomplete holes, conceded strokes and holes not played, up to 6, minus Equitable Stroke Control (ESC). Adjusted holes are marked with an "X" on the score card. This is also known as your "Posting" score.

### Equitable Stroke Control

8 hole course handicap	Max # posted on any hole
9 or less	Double bogey
10 through 19	7
20 through 29	8
30 through 39	9
40 and above	10

(b) Plus Handicap Differential

When the adjusted gross score is higher than the USGA Course Rating, the handicap differential is a positive number. Following is an example for determining a differential using an adjusted gross score of 95 made on a course with a USGA Course Rating of 71.5 and a USGA Slope Rating of 125:

Adjusted Gross Score - USGA Course Rating:  $95 - 71.5 = 23.5$

Difference x Standard Slope:  $23.5 \times 113 = 2655.5$

Result / USGA slope Rating:  $2655.5 / 125 = 21.244$

Handicap Differential ( Rounded down) = 21.2

### c) Minus Handicap Differential

When the adjusted gross score is lower than the USGA Course Rating, the handicap differential is a negative number. Following is an example for determining a differential using an adjusted gross score of 69 made on a course with a USGA Course Rating of 71.5 and a USGA Slope Rating Of 125:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Adjusted Gross Score - USGA Course Rating:} & \quad 69 - 71.5 = -2.5 \\ \text{Difference x standard Slope:} & \quad -2.5 \times 113 = -282.5 \\ \text{Result / USGA slope Rating:} & \quad -282.5 / 125 = -2.26 \\ \text{Handicap Differential (Rounded )} & = -2.3 \end{aligned}$$

## USGA HANDICAP INDEX FORMULA

The USGA Handicap Index Formula is based on the best handicap differentials in a player's scoring record. If a player's scoring record contains 20 or more scores, then the best 10 handicap differentials of the most recent 20 scores are used to calculate his USGA Handicap Index. The percentage of scores used in a scoring record decreases from the maximum of the best 50 percent as the number of scores in the scoring record decreases. If the scoring record contains 9 or 10 scores, then only the best three scores (30 to 33 percent ) in the scoring record will be used. Thus, the accuracy of a player's Handicap Index is directly proportional to the number of acceptable scores he has posted. A USGA Handicap Index shall not be issued to a player who has returned fewer than five acceptable scores. The following procedure illustrates how to calculate a player's Handicap Index if the number of acceptable scores in the player's record is less than 20.

The procedure for calculating Handicap Indexes is as follows:

- i. Use the following table to determine the number of handicap differentials to use:

### Number of acceptable Score Differentials to be used

Acceptable Posted Scores	Differentials to use
--------------------------	----------------------

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

5 or 6	Lowest 1
7 or 8	Lowest 2
9 or 10	Lowest 3
11 or 12	Lowest 4
13 or 14	Lowest 5
15 or 16	Lowest 6
17	Lowest 7
18	Lowest 8
19	Lowest 9
20	Lowest 10

- ( ii ) Determine the Handicap Differentials;
- ( iii ) Average the Handicap Differentials being used;
- ( iv ) Multiply the average by 0.96;
- ( v ) Delete all numbers after the tenth digit. Do not round off to the nearest tenth.

Example 1: (11 scores available)

Total of lowest 4 handicap differentials: 103.5  
Average ( 103.5 divided by 4 ): 25.875  
Multiply average by 0.96: 24.84  
Delete digits after tenths: 24.8  
USGA Handicap Index: 24.8

### HOW TO USE YOUR USGA HANDICAP FORMULAS

Why doesn't your handicap improve with each play? The key here is to not worry about it. The primary ingredient in improving your handicap is YOU. There are no magic bullets and no special equipment which will improve your play. The key is to use your handicap and report all of your scores and have fun. The reason for the handicap is to give you the same chance at winning a tournament as the guy with a zero handicap. If you play well and he plays poorly, you win. And what's wrong with winning? The guy with a zero handicap is nothing more than a target for all of the other players. Do NOTHING to artificially lower your handicap because it will be to your detriment in the end.

**[TOC]**

### APPENDIX III - THE USGA SLOPE/RATING SYSTEM

The United States Golf Association has committees all over the country that go to member courses to evaluate and assign each course a rating and slope. It is not an arbitrary number the USGA assigns -- it's not meted out just because the officials think the course is tough, or the wind was blowing and taking most shots out of bounds on a given day.

The course rating is based on a course's difficulty for a scratch golfer, and the slope rating is the measure of difficulty for a non-scratch golfer. The USGA says that a course with a 113 slope rating is one of average playing difficulty. Slope ratings can range between 55 and 155. The highest rating is 149 for the Kiawah Island Ocean Course, a layout which the greatest pros in the world view as nearly impossible to conquer.

So, when you see a slope of 115, you are looking at a decent course with slightly above average difficulty values. From 115 to 125 slope? Expect a good challenge. From 125 to 130? A stronger test. From 130 to 135 is getting into the very demanding territory of the top-rated courses, and those that are trying to be. Above 135, bring an "A" game -- preferably Tiger Woods' A game!

In many cases the rating committee will not even play the course. The committee

## **Golf ... What Is It Good For?**

**By James R. Latham**

meets with the club pro or general manager to gather information such as totals course length, length of the holes into the wind and length of holes downwind. They measure the speed of the greens, the height of the fairways, the height of the rough and the roll on the fairway. They also view and evaluate the tees, the landing areas and greens.

Topography, bunkers, out-of-bounds areas, water hazards and presence or absence of trees, naturally, also come into play when determining the rating and slope. Other factors include target areas, blind shots and holes that force the golfer to lay up. After all variables are accounted for, the numbers are calculated and the course rating and slope are assigned.

What does all of this mean to you and me? If you have a 10 handicap and a USGA index of 12.5 (you have an index if you have a handicap) and you traveled to another course with a higher rating and slope than your home course, your handicap would be adjusted. At the tougher course your 12.5 index factored into a handicap computer results in a higher handicap on that course.

A consistency problem can arise if your home course -- where you established your 10 handicap--happens to be very difficult. Your friend might have a handicap of 10 that was established on an easier course. The catch? If you put your respective indexes into the handicap computer at the same course, both of you will have the same adjusted handicap. Although the system is imperfect, it is the best one that we have so far. Many have suggested alternative formulas, but so far none has USGA approval.

So, for good or for ill, those rating and slope numbers on the score card are not just pulled out of the hat and applied to the course. Time, effort and calculations have been put into making the playing field as level as possible for all golfers.

**[TOC]**

### **APPENDIX IV - SELECTED COURSE LISTINGS**

#### **Tucson and Southern Arizona**

What's so special about Tucson and Southern Arizona? That's where I live. If the

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

phone number has changed, look it up in the phone book. This list needs to be updated but you can find several excellent websites that allow you to find the nearest course to you and also prices. Some websites will allow you to schedule tee times.

### Open to the Public

Arizona National Golf Club  
9777 E. Sabino Greens Dr., Tucson, AZ 85749-8184  
Phone: (520) 749-3636  
Fax: (520) 760-8815

Arthur Pack Golf Course  
9101 North Thornydale Road, Tucson, AZ 85742  
Phone: (520) 744-3322

Canoa Hills Golf Course  
1401 W. Calle Urbano, Green Valley, AZ 85614  
Phone: (520) 648-1880

Del Lago Golf Club  
14155 E. Via Rancho del Lago, Vail, AZ 85641  
Phone: (520) 647-1100  
Fax: (520) 647-1200

El Conquistador Country Club  
10555 N. La Canada Dr., Tucson, AZ 85737  
Phone: (520) 544-5000

Forty Niner Country Club

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12000 E. Tanque Verde Road, Tucson , AZ 85749  
Phone: (520) 749-4212

Heritage Highlands Golf & Country Club  
4949 W. Heritage Club Blvd., Marana, AZ 85653  
Phone: (520) 579-7000  
Fax: (520) 579-8939

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort  
10000 N. Oracle Rd., Tucson, AZ 85737  
Phone: (520) 544-1770  
Toll Free: (800) 445-8667  
Fax: (520) 631-0714

Lodge at Ventana Canyon  
6200 N. Clubhouse Lane, Tucson, AZ 85750  
Phone: (520) 577-1400  
Toll Free: (800) 828-5701  
Fax: (520) 577-4065

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort  
7000 N. Resort Dr., Tucson, AZ 85750  
Phone: (520) 299-2020  
Toll Free: (800) 234-5117  
Fax: (520) 299-6832

Mountain View Golf Club

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**By James R. Latham**

38691 S. Mountain View Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85739  
Phone: (520) 818-1100

Omni Tucson National Golf Resort & Spa  
2727 W. Club Dr., Tucson, AZ 85742  
Phone: (520) 575-7540

Oro Valley Country Club  
200 W. Valle Del Oro Road, Oro Valley, AZ 85737  
Phone: (520) 297-3322

Randolph North Golf Course  
600 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85711  
Phone: (520) 791-5161

Rio Rico Resort & Country Club  
1069 Camino Caralampi, Rio Rico, AZ 85648  
Phone: (520) 281-1901  
Toll Free: (800) 288-4746

San Ignacio Golf Club  
4201 S. Camino del Sol, Green Valley, AZ 85614  
Phone: (520) 648-3468  
Fax: (520) 648-2389

San Pedro Golf Course  
926 N. Madison, Benson, AZ 85602

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Phone: (520) 586-7888

Toll Free: (866) 301-7888

Fax: (520) 586-7889

**Skyline Country Club**

5200 E. St. Andrews Dr., Tucson, AZ 85718

Phone: (520) 299-1111

Fax: (520) 299-1412

**Starr Pass Golf Club**

3645 West Starr Pass Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85745

Phone: (520) 670-0400

Toll Free: (800) 503-2898

Fax: (520) 670-0590

**Sun City Vistoso Golf Club**

1555 E. Rancho Vistoso Blvd., Oro Valley, AZ 85737

Phone: (520) 825-3110

Fax: (520) 825-0432

**The Gallery Golf Club**

14000 N. Dove Mountain Blvd., Marana, AZ 85653

Phone: (520) 744-4700

Alt Phone: (520) 744-2555

Fax: (520) 744-3323

**The Golf Club at Vistoso**

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955 W. Vistoso Highlands Dr., Tucson, AZ 85737  
Phone: (520) 797-9900  
Fax: (520) 797-6725

The Golf Villas at Oro Valley  
10950 N. La Canada Dr., Tucson, AZ 85737  
Toll Free: (888) 388-0098  
Fax: (520) 498-5150

The Pines Golf Club at Marana  
8480 Continental Links Dr., Tucson, AZ 85743  
Phone: (520) 744-7443  
Toll Free: (866) 746-3718  
Fax: (520) 744-7373

The Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa  
3800 E. Sunrise Drive, Tucson, AZ 85718  
Phone: (520) 742-6000  
Toll Free: (800) 937-8461  
Fax: (520) 577-5878

Tubac Golf Resort  
P.O. Box 1297, Tubac, AZ 85646  
Phone: (520) 398-2211  
Toll Free: (800) 848-7893  
Fax: (520) 398-9261

Tucson City Golf

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Main Tee Time Number: (520) 791-4336

### Tucson Golf Travel

5055 E. Broadway Blvd., Suite. C214, Tucson, AZ 85711-1213

Phone: (800) 887-0664

Fax: (800) 887-0779

### Turquoise Valley Golf, Restaurant, & RV Park

1794 W. Newell St., Naco, AZ 85620

Phone: (520) 432-3091

Fax: (520) 432-7233

### Voyager Resort - RV Resort, Restaurant & Inn

8701 S. Kolb Rd. , Tucson, AZ 85706

Phone: (520) 574-5000

Toll Free: (800) 424-9191

Fax: (520) 574-5037

**[TOC]**

## APPENDIX V – RESOURCES

Here are a few resources for you to consider.

Books:

Power Golf by Sam Snead

## Golf ... What Is It Good For?

By James R. Latham

Internet:

General Information

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golf>

<http://www.golfguideweb.com/>

Book Tee Times on-line

<http://www.teetimes.com/>

**[TOC]**

**The End**