

TEE IT HIGH, LET IT FLY

A few years ago, one of the golf club manufacturer companies sent out a questionnaire to all of their clients. The questionnaire was not designed to find out how they enjoyed the product that they had already purchased, but instead it asked only one question. That one question was, what is the most important thing you want from a new set of clubs?

As the question reads, this is a very open ended question. You can well imagine that for those that responded to the questionnaire, there were many different responses. Some of the feed back included affordability, cosmetic, availability, awareness and playability.

I found this study very interesting, because as an instructor, I would have thought that playability would have been the most important feature golfers were looking in a club. What this means is that the club is easier to hit and the ball will fly straighter. Strangely enough, playability was the second most common response from the survey.

The most common response by those surveyed was they wanted a club that hit the ball further! Distance, distance, distance. This was the overwhelming response to the survey. There seems to be more satisfaction by the golfing public to hit their driver 300 yards and have bragging rights than there is to hit the ball straighter and score lower.

Essentially, as a result of this survey, golf manufacturers began designing their clubs with this thought in mind. The keys features they change were longer clubs, less loft and a more flexible shaft. Making these changes to irons and woods enabled all that used the clubs to achieve their number one goal which is to hit the ball further!

There is no question that having the proper equipment fitted too you will assist in more distance. The most important component of the club is the shaft. You want to ensure that the shaft you have in your club is properly fitted to your swing speed. If you play with a club that is too flexible, then your ball flight will be too high and the direction will be inconsistent. Alternatively, if you play a club that has too stiff of a shaft for you swing speed, then the ball flight will be too low, direction will be compromised and the over all distance will be shorter than you desire.

It is very important to have the proper equipment to increase your distance however, it is your swing that will send the ball further and straighter. Good fundamentals and the proper motion will assist you in getting the most out of your drives.

Distance is determined by speed! The faster you make that club go, assuming you make square contact, the further you will hit the ball. The most common mistake golfers make is that they attempt too swing hard at the ball, especially when they have the driver in their hands. Swinging hard and creating speed are two totally different things. Below are a few key swing fundamentals necessary to hitting the ball further.

The first swing fundamental necessary to increasing your distance is to increase the size of your arc. Arc is defined by the distance the club head travels throughout the swing. In

theory, the wider the arc, the faster the club can travel by the time it makes contact with the ball.

A player's physical dimension's influences the size of the arc. What this means is that players who are taller, with longer arms will have a bigger arc than shorter players with shorter arms. This does not mean that you can not hit the ball further than you already do.

One of the key fundamentals to a bigger arc is to ensure that your target arm (left arm for right handed golfers, and right arm for left handed golfers), remains straight through out the swing. Many players will bend (collapse) their target arm in the back swing, therefore making the size of their arc smaller. As a result, the left arm generally stays bent through impact causing inconsistent contact and a slower swing speed.

Grip pressure can also influence the speed at which you swing the club. Too many players will grip the club too tight at the address position and as a result throughout the swing. Gripping the club too tight causes you to control the club throughout the swing. Your grip pressure needs to be relaxed so that you can hinge the club in your back swing, and as a result release the club through impact assisting in creating maximum speed.

Finally, and most importantly, you need to ensure that you swing through to a full finish position. A good finish position includes: all of you weight on your front foot; your body (or belt buckle) facing the target; your club above your shoulder pointing towards the ground (not the sky); and your back foot rolled up on its tip toe.

I see too many golfers stopping short of the full finish position. The key to hitting the ball further is to ensure that you are creating the maximum possible speed that you can with your club head through impact. If you do not swing to a full finish position, then this would tell me that your club is actually slowing down as you make contact. This will result in a definite loss of distance as well as inconsistent contact with the ball.

Although these are only a few fundamentals necessary for increased distance, they are the most common mistakes most golfers make. Applying them to your swing will most certainly assist you in hitting the ball further. **TEE IT HIGH, LET IT FLY!**