

The Backswing – part 1

“Turn your swing on”.



We continue our coaching series with Garrick Barnard who is the coaching professional at Houghton Golf Estate in Johannesburg.

One of the fundamental requirements in the modern game is to generate width of arc through a **BIG** turn

with the trunk of the body – a movement more commonly known to you and I as the back swing.

Is this an easy movement? You bet it is – they even tell you which part to use, your back i.e. there is no mention of a hand swing, or an arm swing!

Seriously though.....the core physical movement really is simple and uncomplicated; simple enough that is until you look along that line of fellow sufferers that might be with you on the driving range on any given weekend, where you will be treated to some of the most fantastic physical contortions possible – this has to be a Chiropractor’s dream!

The following drill with Garrick should help to dispel any lingering doubts you may have that the physical demands of the back swing movement have anything specifically to do with golf:

- Put your hands in your pockets (or flat against the hips, in the absence of pockets).

PIC 1.

- Set your feet at about shoulder width and parallel to a selected target line.



PIC 1.

- Create a compelling image in your mind (i.e. a favourite film star - naked!) and ‘put’ the picture behind you.

- Now – **smoooooothly** rotate the trunk of your body and shoulders away from the target and look at the image behind you.

PIC 2.

- Now - smoothly rotate in the opposite direction at look at the image over the opposite shoulder.



PIC 2.

PIC 3.

- Now repeat the movements with the addition of a slight bend forward from the waist as if you were addressing



PIC 3.

the golf ball; please remember to keep the slightly bent angle between the trunk of your body and your waist the same – i.e. don’t stand up as you turn.



PIC 4.

PIC 4.

- Now repeat the movement, but focus your eyes on an imaginary golf ball.

PICS 5 – 7.

- You should now be the proud possessor of the raw physical ingredients needed to make a golf back swing. Simple isn’t it! Other than the slight forward bend from the waist, the only difference with the above movements and the ‘real thing’ will be the introduction of the club into the hands and all the immense psychological hurdles associated with this momentous step!



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PIC 5.



PIC 6.



PIC 7.

At least you will now be the envy of your friends and be able to make the essential movements required to turn the body away from the ball and back through it, without the uncomfortable looking tilts and alarming shoulder dips (not forgetting the wild look in the ‘back’ eye as it struggles to keep the ball in sight!) that many amateurs seem to think are a prerequisite for one of the simplest physical movements required by the golf swing.

The requirement of turning into the back swing and then back through the ball uses a set of muscles and movements that you use almost hourly every day without even noticing. The real key to making these types of movements work for you is to find parallels in your everyday movements (the film star image was only one example), which will make the transition from these reflex activities so much easier to incorporate when you pick up a golf club.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

John Cockayne is the author of ‘How to Practise Less More Often’. He is a founder member of the PGA of South Africa and he has spent over 30 years coaching this frustrating game! A key current focus for John is as the Programme Director at Corporate Golf Academy and The Green Pages Golf School. The Golf Academy provides innovative tailor made clinics and golf academies for companies and The Green Pages provides coaching for individuals.