

MASTERS PREVIEW

PROS DISH ON WHO CAN WIN & WHO CAN'T 4 SHOTS THAT TAME AUGUSTA TIGER'S ROMP, 20 YEARS LATER

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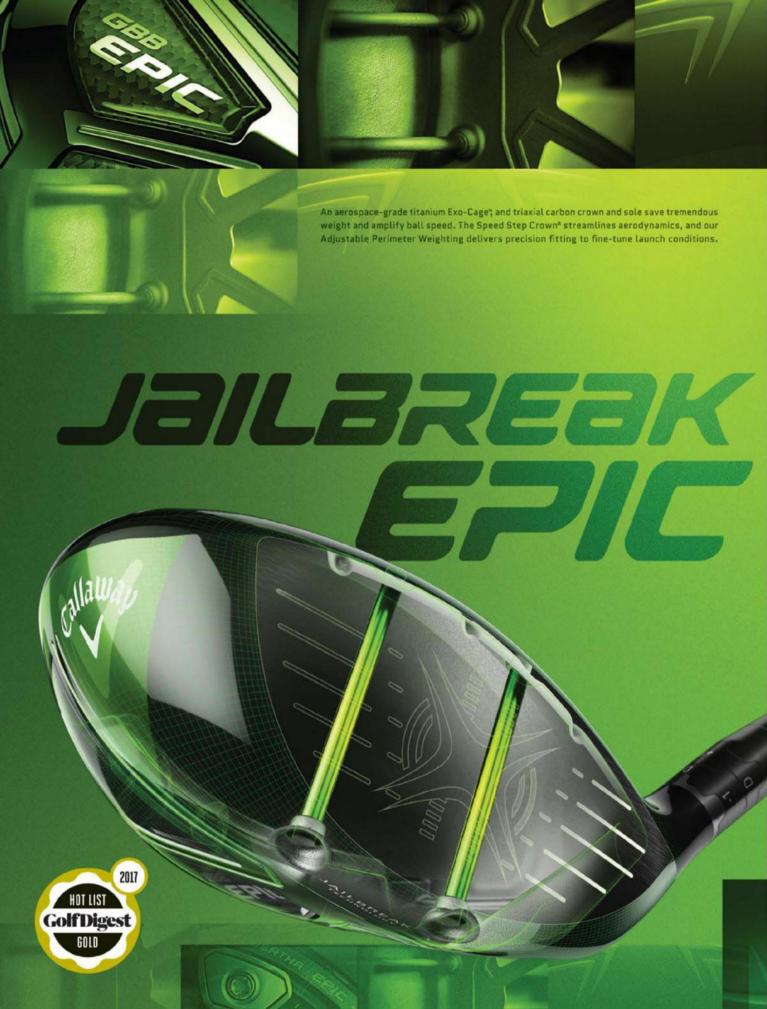
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Editor's Letter



Forgive Us Our Press Passes

JERRY TARDE

Chairman and Editor-in-Chief

an Jenkins, the Ancient Twitterer, will be presiding at his 67th Masters and fourth media center this April. When he showed up for his first, in 1951, the press was housed in a canvas tent with openings at each end and 40-watt light bulbs strung along tent poles above the typewriters. "We wore coats and ties and snap-brim hats and felt pretty lucky to be there," he says.

A Quonset hut replaced the tent in 1953, nestled beside the first fairway, and it was still there in 1978 when I arrived with my first press pass. Despite tight quarters and the rat-tat-tat of rainstorms, it seemed pretty grand to me: free barbecue and all the chocolate milk you could drink as long as you didn't take any food out of the building, manned by a 400-pound Pinkerton security guard with the preposterous name of Tiny.

The "new" media center appeared in 1990 in the same place, and it resembled the General Assembly auditorium at the United Nations, enormous and international, or so we thought. It was state of the art, then as now, but Masters chairman Billy Payne decided to build us a new one this year on adjoining property recently acquired by the club in South Carolinaheh, heh, only kidding here, Billy-and when unveiled it'll no doubt be the greatest media center this side of Saturn.

I do have one suggestion, and I'm not kidding, and it's more than coincidental this year because we'll be observing our first Masters in 63 years without the historical presence of Arnold Palmer, who it goes without saying enriched the lives of every golfer and especially every journalist who ever lifted a pimento-cheese sandwich. Indulge me for just a moment longer.

We've always had great characters in the press center, none more idiosyncratic than the ex-World War II POW and British scribe Pat Ward-Thomas, whose voluble nature made his problems everyone's crises. One year he lost his sunglasses at the Masters, which led to a massive search-and-rescue effort with the entire tournament desperately looking for them until late in the day when he sat down to write his dispatch and removed his hat, only to find the missing spectacles perched on his head. "There you are, you little sh -- s!" he cried out, bringing a hundred fellow writers to a standing ovation.

The Masters interview room has also been a source of raw entertainment over the years, as two green-jacketed officials charged with conducting the player interviews were labeled Big Silly and Little Silly by the Texas legend Blackie Sherrod. Even Southerners make fun of the Southern accents of Augusta National members. The daily introduction of pros to the press always began with the same question asking how a player should review his round: 'What's yo' plezh-uh, jennamin? Buhdies and bogeys, or hole by hole?"

My favorite exchange at the Masters became a staple of New York Times columnist Dave Anderson's hilarious after-dinner talks. He'd recall



The Dean of Augusta Dan Jenkins, on the last day of the 2016 Masters, will have another new workplace in April.

that a young Curtis Strange played in the 1976 Masters and finished as low amateur, which got him a trip to the interview room. The chosen member seated next to Strange on the stage asked a disinterested gaggle of reporters if there were any questions. Nobody had any questions because they were more intent on the arrival of the new Masters champion and wanted Strange off the stage as quickly as possible. The member clearly took this as an affront to Bobby Jones and amateur golf and decided to ask his own question.

"Cuh-tis, I have a question for you," he said. "You went to Wake Forest University on an Ahh-nold Pal-mah scholarship. Today you got to play Augusta National with Ahh-nold Palmah. What an honor that must have been for you! How'd it feel getting to play with Ahhnold Pal-mah in the Mas-tuhs Toon-a-mint?"

"Sir, I didn't play with Mr. Palmer," Curtis replied, now wishing he could exit as quickly as the press wanted him to.

There was a pause, "Oh, that's right," the member said. "You didn't play with Ahhnold. You played with Jack. The greatest golf-ah of all time. How'd it feel playin' Augusta National in the Mas-tuhs Toona-mint with Jack Nicklaus?'

"Sir, I didn't play with Mr. Nicklaus," Curtis said. The press was starting to pay attention.

"You didn't play with Ahh-nold? You didn't play with Jack?" the member said. "Who did you play with?"

"Gay Brewer," Curtis said

Out of the back of the interview room a lone voice pierced the silence: "How'd it feel playin' with Gay Brewer?" The Quonset hut rattled with laughter.

There's serious business done by the media every day at the Masters. And a press building of Trumpian scale and lavishness will be welcomed by a new generation of global journalists. But let's not fail to see that the best way to celebrate the cheers and the joy and, maybe most of all, the humanity of the Masters would be to hang a little sign on the outside of the building that says quite appropriately: "The Arnold Palmer Media Center." 6





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Whether it's shooting 59 or 99, these tips will help your scoring

BY JUSTIN THOMAS

o put it mildly, I had a pretty awesome start to 2017. Winning in back-to-back weeks in Hawaii, shooting a 59 in the first round of the Sony Open, you couldn't ask for a happier new year. I'm playing well for a lot of reasons. First, it's confidence. I don't get riled as much when I bogey a hole. I know I can get the stroke back. Second, I've been working hard on my game, particularly from 150 yards and in. Now I'm really taking advantage of hitting my tee shots as far as I do. When I stand over a full short-iron shot, a pitch, a chip, even a longer putt, I feel like I'm either going to get it close or knock it in. It's a great feeling to have, believe me. If you'd like to improve your scoring, try some of the adjustments I've made, as well as some strategies I've learned over the past few years. Here's your first tip: When hitting a full short-iron shot, you might be able to fly a 9-iron 150 yards—if it's downhill, downwind and you blade it—but you're going to be a lot better from that distance if you take your 8-iron, make a smooth swing, and focus on hitting the ball solidly. Turn the page for more scoring tips.

-WITH RON KASPRISKE

Want to

PITCHING & CHIPPING

CHECK YOUR SETUP AND LEAD WITH THE HANDS

Setup is super important when hitting pitch or chip shots. A perfect example is what happened to me at the first event of 2017, the SBS Tournament of Champions. I was practicing these shots, and Patrick Reed saw me struggling. He came over, adjusted my feet and body, and then I started hitting them way better. What he noticed was my body was too open (aligned left of my target), and my lower body looked wobbly when I hit the shot. So he told me to keep my feet a little open, square up the rest of my body a little more, and make sure my legs felt stable when I swung.

As far as my technique, grip is key. I weaken my left-hand position on the club when I want to hit a higher pitch (meaning I rotate my hand so the thumb is more on top of the shaft). For a low checker, I strengthen my lefthand grip. And I'll even go to a putting grip for a bump-and-run shot. When swinging, remember two things: (1) Keep your body rotating toward the target well past impact; (2) Let your hands lead the clubhead. That means the shaft should be leaning toward the target or upright on contact (near, right).

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Scrambling (PGA Tour rank: 29th)



One-putt percentage (PGA Tour rank: 4th)

make more putts? Make sure your eye line is level.'



PUTTING

SET YOUR EYES, QUIET YOUR BODY, ROLL THE BALL

I liked blade putters for the longest time, but I couldn't make anything late last year, so it was time for a change. At The Barclays tournament, I switched to a Scotty Cameron Futura X5 mallet just to try something different, and it has been in my bag ever since. It's really helping me keep the face square to my putting line. Another thing I changed was my routine. Unless it's a super-long putt, I don't take a practice stroke. I get a feel for the speed behind the ball, then I walk up, address the ball and make a stroke (below). When you don't spend too much time over the ball, your natural hand-eye coordination kicks in.

Mechanically, two areas that will help your accuracy are getting your eye line right, and quieting your body when you hit the putt. To get your eye line correct, it needs to be level-any head tilt can alter the putting path-and your left eye should over the ball. To check this, drop a ball from the bridge of your nose (near, left). It should land on the ball you're addressing (or really close to it). And when you make a stroke, everything but your shoulders and arms should stay very still.

To make putting practice less boring, I have all sorts of games and drills. Like I'll hit four putts using only one ball from five different spots between four and eight feet from the hole. The game ends when I make at least 16 out of 20. Give that game a try, and remember my other greenside tips to see if you can't get your scores down. Way down.





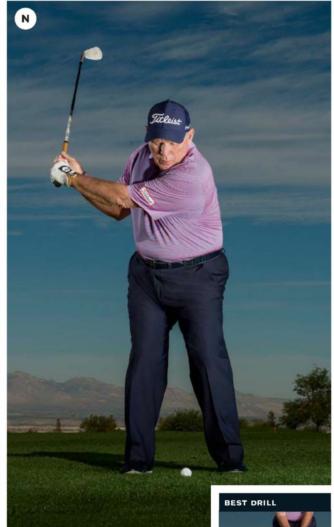












Hinge Watching

Pitch it better with less wrist action

n pitch shots, the No. 1 skill is controlling distance. If you work that back, the key to distance control is making predictable contact with the ball. Hitting it fat or thin-even a little-puts your distance all over the map.

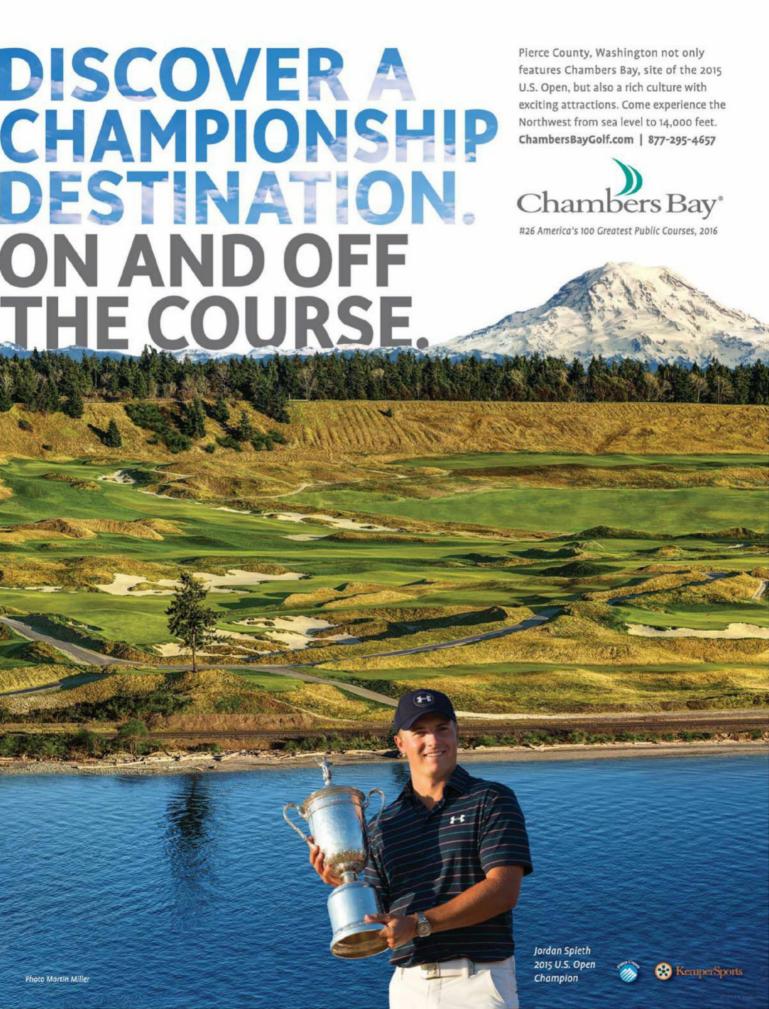
A common reason for poor contact in pitching is too much wrist hinge during the backswing (above, right). A big hinge leads to a steep downswing and, often, hitting behind the ball. Even when steep swingers hit it solid, they take deep divots-they're always on the verge of fatting it.

I prefer less wrist hinge going back (above, left) so you can brush the ground through impact. Steve Stricker is the best practitioner of this style: He keeps his wrists firm going back and turns his body in sync with his arms. Then, coming through, everything turns together again. It's very solid, very repeatable.

So pitch like Strick. Use your most lofted wedge, play the ball about middle and favor your front foot. Swing back wide, with minimal hinge, then turn and swing through. You'll see quick improvement in your contactand start sticking them close.

Butch Harmon is a Golf Digest Teaching Professional.

Like wrist hinge, reducing weight shift on pitch shots will lead to better contact. You want to favor your front foot, because that'll help you hit the ball before the ground. Try this drill: Set up to hit a pitch, then lean toward the target and angle your back foot in and up on the toes (above). Hit shots like this, and you'll learn to stay on your front side.



Here's a snag that might exist somewhere at your course, too. The ninth tee box at Augusta is nestled in a protected perch. You

don't sense the wind much, so you have to remember to pay attention to its strength and

direction as you're walking up the eighth.

REMEMBER THE WIND

JUST GET IT IN PLAY

Maybe you prefer to hit a

fade, or you just like the idea

of making sure you don't take yourself out of the hole early.

Either way, there's plenty of

trade-off is a longer second

room along the right. The

shot, which is a real cost

because of this tiny green. Come up just a few paces

the ball might roll 60 or 70

yards back down the hill. Go

chip back across the green

same place. The consolation

is, if you push the drive way

right, there are windows in

those trees. A well-judged

punch from that pine straw

can hold the green.

that could wind up in the

short with your approach, and

long, and you'll face a delicate

'A difference of 10 or 15 yards might mean everything."

Setting up the Second Shot

It's part of Augusta's charm

ugusta National is the quintessence of a second-shot golf course. Wide fairways prevent you from feeling like you're in a straightjacket off the tee, but that doesn't mean you can mindlessly whale away. The perceptive player recognizes that his ability to attack the flag with the approach is largely determined by the drive-much more than on an average course. A difference in position of just 10 or 15 yards in the fairway might mean everything. On a secondshot course, you use the tee shot to truly create your second.

This type of design happens to be my favorite. To me, hitting driver is the most fun part of the game. A second-shot course encourages everyone to let it fly all day. Low-handicappers are engaged by the spectrum of conservative-to-aggressive choices off every tee. Beginners take comfort in the relative ease of starting with a ball in play.

Illustrated here is Augusta's par-4 ninth, which runs back to the clubhouse. It's a perfect example of the second-shot philosophy, though we could've analyzed almost any par 4 on the property.

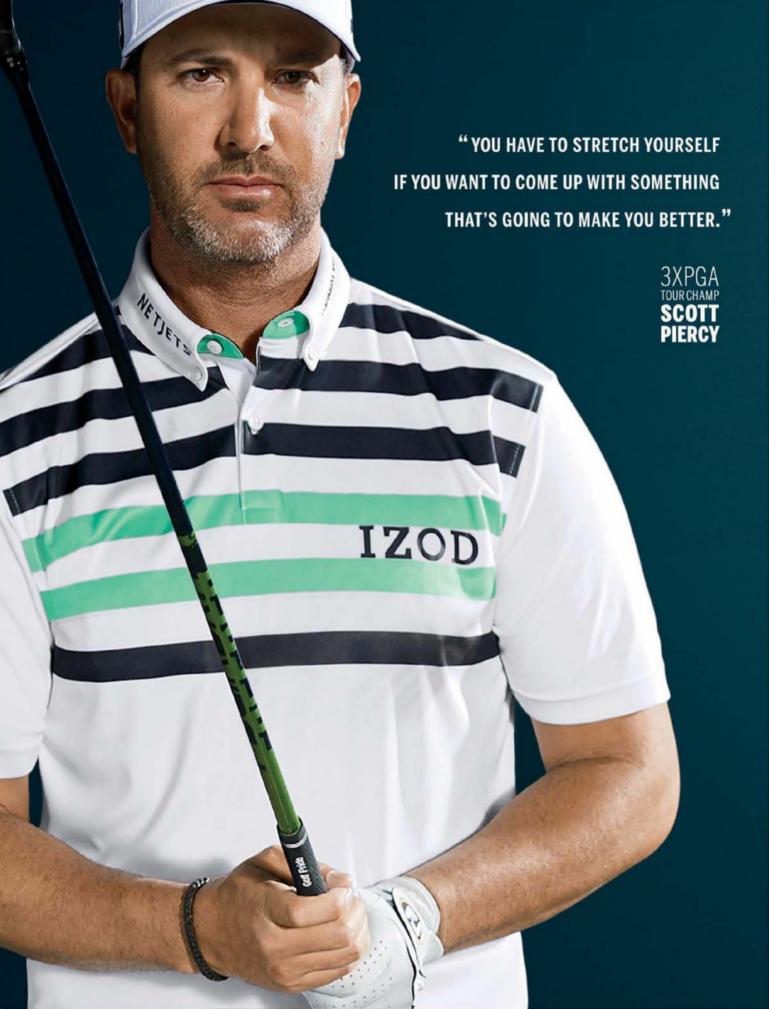
-WITH MAX ADLER

WORK THE ANGLE

On first glance, this wide fairway seems to say "hit it anywhere." But a tee shot that's worked right to left makes this 460-yarder play shorter and easier. A really big drive that reaches the downslope with speed can roll all the way to the bottom. Now you've got a short-iron approach from the only flat spot in the fairway. Going into this small, three-tiered green, every yard closer makes a difference. Of course, the risk is commensurate with the reward. Overcook a drive into the left trees, and you'll find that the angle of the green, along with the bunkers, make it impossible to hold.



For my six Masters wins, Augusta National was even more of a second-shot course than it is today. Take the seventh hole. We used to play a wide variety of tee shots there, but now with trees thick along the left, everyone just hopes to hit it straight. Anywhere in the fairway works. The inventiveness on the second shot begins and ends with the location of the flag.



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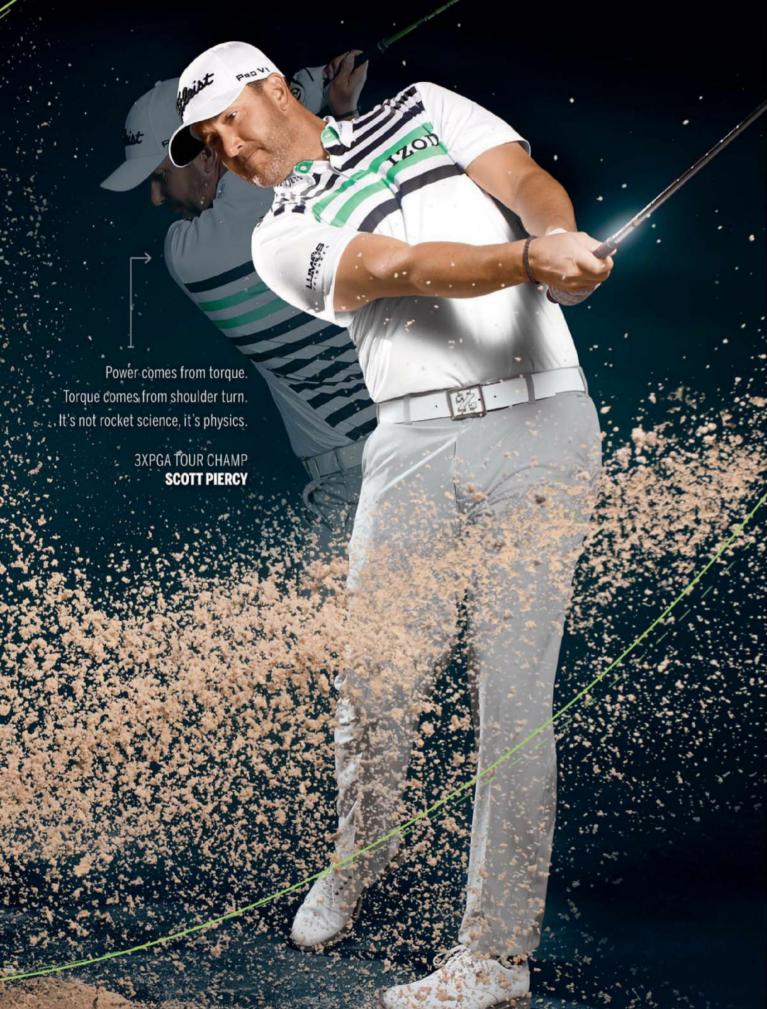
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The celebration of the 2016 Ryder Cup win lingers on as golfers are flocking to Minnesota for the state's great variety, quality, affordability and value of courses. Don't miss out – visit and play Minnesota's "bucket list" of courses: ExploreMinnesotaGolf.com.

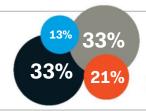
Giants Ridge is the only Minnesota golf resort that has two courses that each have been named the best public course in the state and have been named to Golf Digest's America's 100 Greatest Public Courses list. *The Quarry* course is currently the #25 public course in the U.S. and #1 in Minnesota with *The Legend* currently #4 in Minnesota. In terms of quality and value there are few destinations that can compare to Giants Ridge.

Breezy Point Resort, located in the Brainerd Lakes area, is a complete resort featuring hotel-style lodging, condos, and vacation homes with 2 to 11 bedrooms as well as fine and casual dining plus spa, lounges and nightly entertainment. A golfer's favorite since the 20's, Breezy offers three 18-hole courses including "Deacons Lodge" - an Arnold Palmer signature course named after Arnold's father. The 500 wooded acres, 3 lakes, wetlands, steep bluffs and 40 acres of bent grass greens, tees and fairways makes this a MUST PLAY on everyone's list!

Madden's on Gull Lake was voted 53rd in Conde Nast Traveler's Top 100 Hotels & Resorts in the World. Madden's offers four courses, fine dining, a spa, and unlimited recreational amenities in an upscale lakeside resort. The Classic at Madden's, where caddies are available and walking is encouraged, is challenging and memorable—a purists dream. It measures over 7,100 yards from the tips and features 56 Ohio's Best white sand bunkers, water on 16 holes and greens stimping at over 11. The Classic is ranked among Golf Digest's Top 100 Public Courses and 5-Stars!







- It's been at least since my last shank.
- ▶ A couple of holes: 33%
- ▶ 6 months: 33%
- ▶ 3 weeks: 21% ▶ 2 years: 13%

SOURCE: GOLF DIGEST READERS



Holy Shank!

Don't let one bad shot become an epidemic

itting just one shank can put fear in your mind that another's on its way, and that kills your confidence. They often happen because your hands are farther away from your body at impact than they were at address, causing the club to strike the ball off the hosel. Fear not the shanks. Use these steps to cure them.

David Leadbetter

operates 34 golf academies worldwide.





Anxiety from shanking leads to a lot of tension in the forearms and hands. So before you swing again, be sure to lighten your grip pressure and relax your arms. If you don't, you won't be able to swing the club smoothly.

2.WATCH YOUR TOES



▶ If you stand too far from the ball, you'll shift your weight out to your toes, and that can force the club farther from you when you swing. Try standing a little closer to the ball and turning your toes upward so the weight shifts back toward your heels.

3.STAY BACK

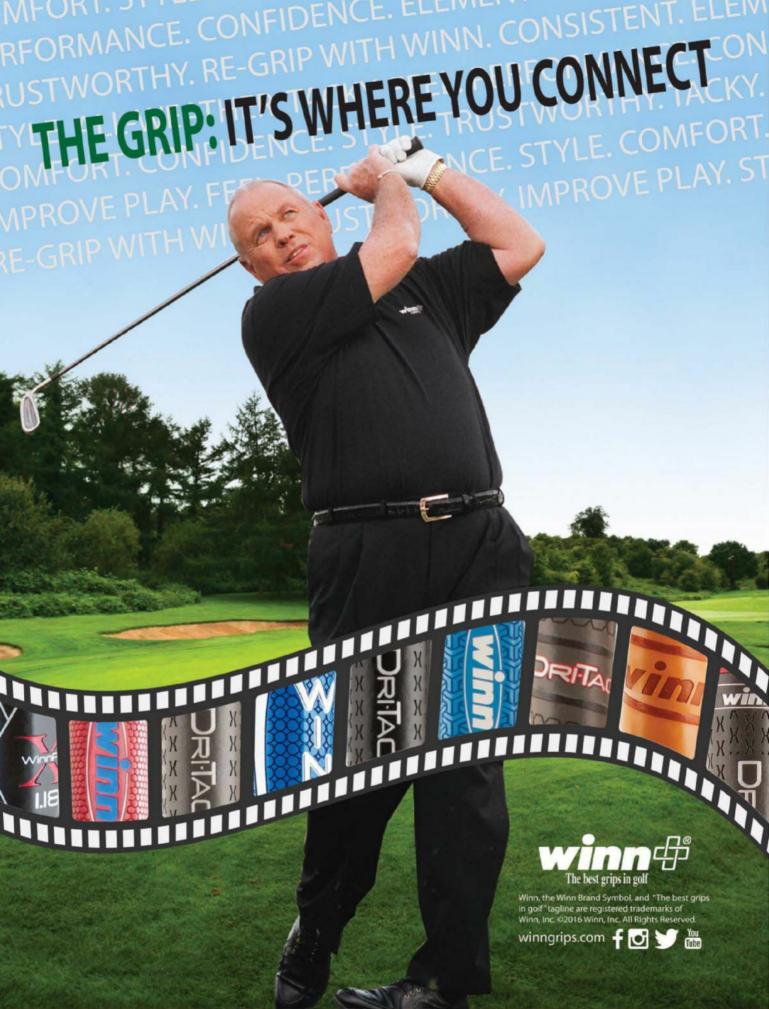


▶ When you hit your next shot, maintain the "toes up" feel. Losing your balance is one of the main causes of the shanks. That's why it's important to keep your weight toward the back portion of the feet. You have to swing in control.

4. YELL 'FORE!'



Just kidding! Your final thought should be to feel as if you swing the handle of the club in closer to your legs through impact. This helps slot the club on the right path and encourages centerface contact. Do this and kiss your shanks goodbye. ILLUSTRATIONS: TODD DETWILER • JOS. A. BANK: SHIRT • HOUSE OF FLEMING: BELT



Play Your Best | Swing Sequence

nly a few tour pros have a shot that can make other tour pros stop what they're doing on the range and have a look. Dustin Johnson has one.

Some golfers hide big power in a deceptively compact package. But Johnson is built like an NBA guard, so the 340-yard lightning bolts he hits with his 122-mile-per-hour clubhead speed don't seem that surprising.

His PGA Tour Player of the Year season in 2016 came in big part after moving away from a more volatile draw to a consistent baby fade. "I don't try to fade it," Johnson says. "I just set up a hair more open, aim at the left side of the fairway, and I swing. If I'm working to make the ball go left to right, something is off."

Not much was off last season when he

won three times, including the U.S. Open, led the tour in money, scoring and birdies, and was second in driving distance and strokes gained off the tee.

"He probably drove it better than anybody all year," says Butch Harmon, who has worked with Johnson since 2010. "I think he'll have an even bigger year this year."

—MATTHEW RUDY



Dustin Johnson

Kids, don't try this swing at home

CREATING SPACE

Johnson's swing is among the biggest and fastest on tour, and it requires a foundation that can handle that extra horsepower. "He's very athletic at address in that nice, wide stance," says his coach, Butch Harmon. "His upper body is angled a little back, which sets his head behind the ball and gives his left shoulder room to turn."

THE RIGHT SHIFT

One of Johnson's tendencies is to leave his weight on his left side going back-which can cause him to lift the club too abruptly. Harmon says better knee action will help any player make a good weight transfer. When DJ gets that left knee moving in and not toward the ball, his weight moves to his right side perfectly."

FULLY TORQUED

Johnson's bowed left wrist, which shuts the clubface, is his swing's signature. But notice his windup, Harmon says. "His hands are high, and his head has rotated away from the target, which lets him make a massive shoulder turn. From there, he knows he has to move left and fully unwind, or he risks hitting a hook."

► CLUBHEAD SPEED



Dustin Johnson (8th)



Tour average



Andrew Loupe (1st)

► AVG. CARRY DISTANCE



Dustin Johnson (5th)



Tour average



J.B. Holmes (1st)



GROUND GAME

Copying Johnson's swing isn't easy, but there is one part you can steal for your game: his smooth transition from backswing to downswing. "Look at how his left hip moves toward the target," Harmon says. "This shows he's making his transition from the ground up. Also, his footwork is very quiet."

FULL THROTTLE

There's no laying up with this swing, Harmon says. "His right heel is leading his right toe at impact, so there's no hang back. His head is rotating toward the target, which helps him keep turning through with his body. And look at that firm left wrist. My dad used to say that wrist should feel like steel, not linguine, when you hit the ball."

WATCH IT GO

One indicator for Harmon that this sequence is perfect is Johnson's ideal finish. "Dustin is straight up and down over his left foot. You can see there's no weight scrunched down on the toe of his right foot," Harmon says. "And his right shoulder is closer to the target than his left, proving he made a great body rotation."

PRO-FILE

DUSTIN JOHNSON 32 / 6-4 / 190 pounds Columbia, S.C.

DRIVER

TaylorMade M1 10.5 degrees

BALL

TaylorMade TP5x

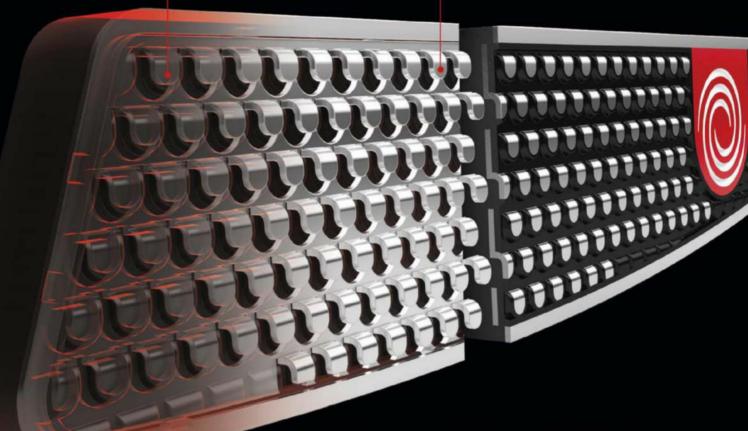
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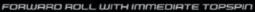




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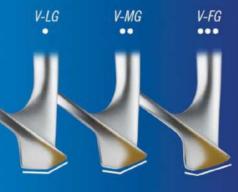








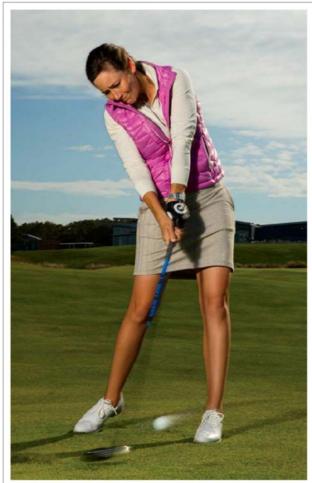
Three New GET
V Sole Grinds GET
To Help You GET
CLOSER
to the Hole «



*V shape promotes more consistent head speed, helping get you closer to the hole than any wedge we have ever made. See the proof at clevelandgolf.com/RTX3.



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Shift left, then brush it off the turf

ddress the ball with your feet a little wider than your shoulders and the left shoulder slightly higher than the right. The ball should be played a little farther back in your stance than a driver, roughly in line with the left side of your chest. Also, check that your weight feels directly under the shoelaces in both feet and not in the toes.

As you swing back, your body, arms, hands and club should turn in unison until your back is to the target and your weight has shifted into the inside of your right leg. When you swing down, press into the ground with your left foot and let the club swing down, striking the ball before brushing along the turf.

Use this drill to get a feel for a downward strike: Make a swing, hit a tee and try to slide it forward (above). —WITH KEELY LEVINS

Alana Swain teaches at Atlantic Golf Club in Bridgehampton, N.Y.



"It's easy to lose your tempo with a fairway wood. To get it back, pull a wedge, 7-iron and fairway wood. Hit one ball with each club a few times in

club a few times in that order. Taking confident, smooth swings with your wedge and 7-iron will instill good tempo in your fairway-wood swing."

EARL COOPER EARL COOPER GOLF WILMINGTON, DEL.

"The average angle of attack with a fairway wood should be a few degrees down, meaning the club should be moving toward the ground at first contact. To make sure you're doing that, try to leave a thin divot in the ground after contact."

TJ YEATON GOLF JACKSONVILLE

"Make sure your lower-body weight is forward enough at setup and stays that way until you finish the swing. Two good checkpoints at address: (1) You should be able to lift your back foot up without falling over. (2) Your hips should feel tucked under your torso."

STEPHEN SIERACKI INDIAN SPRING C.C. MARLTON, N.J.

"Another adjustment that will help you hit slightly down on the ball with your fairway woods can be made at setup. The more narrow your stance, the steeper your swing path will be. A V-shape swing path is what helps you hit down on it."

PLAINFIELD C.C. EDISON, N.J.



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CLOSER

to the Hole <<<

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*The new Cleveland Golf RTX-3 wedge features patent-pending Feel Balancing Technology. Our research showed a traditional wedge's center of gravity was too close to the heel. Feel Balancing Technology redistributes 9 grams of mass from the hosel to shift the CG location closer to the impact zone. Not only does this technology improve feel, but it also has been proven to help get you closer to the hole than any wedge we have ever made. See our proof at clevelandgolf.com/RTX3.

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Draws on Command

for better

y natural shot is a draw, and most good players know how to curve it right to left when they need to. But sometimes, bending the ball isn't enough. There are times when the height of the shot is just as important as the draw itself. This is certainly true at a course such as Augusta National. Whether you need to take it up and around the trees on the famous par-5 13th, or you need to chase it up to a green from under some branches off a fairway, the trajectory is crucial to success.

I'm going to make the "how to" adjustments simple: When you grip the club, do so in a stronger position than normal. That means turning both hands to the right a bit, but make sure the face is still square with your target. Now adjust your setup.

For a low draw (right), play the ball back an inch or two from your normal ball position, which will naturally set your left shoulder lower than it would be for a standard shot. For a high draw, play the ball forward in your stance an inch or two, which will set your left shoulder slightly higher.

These alterations in your grip, ball and shoulder positions will result in your shot drawing left at the desired height. Remember, if you can change trajectory on command, you're playing at a higher level than most.





then grip it Make sure the club is square to the target after you strengthen your grip.

ELEMENTARY WATSON

Sometimes you don't need a draw; you need a hook. To really get the shot curving to the left, focus on making sure the clubface is significantly closed in relation to its path as you strike the ball. This is a feel shot as much as any, so be sure to practice it a lot to get a sense of how much the ball will curve.

Tom Watson is a Golf Digest Playing Editor.

ILLUSTRATION: FELIX SOCKWELL . POLO GOLF.

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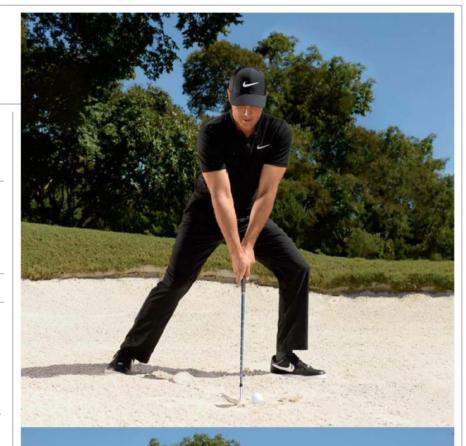
5-Minute Clinic

Steal my favorite greenside tips from the tour

BY CHRIS COMO

ne of the coolest things about spending time around the best players in the world is learning the tricks they're generous enough to share. All these guys have a special shot or practice technique around the greens that helped them become successful. A lot of times it's something that has been passed down through the years from pro to pro and has proved to work under pressure. The best thing about these tips is they can help you, too. Here are four of my favorite from the PGA Tour. To improve your short game like these pros, give them a try. — WITH MATTHEW RUDY

Golf Digest 50 Best Teacher Chris Como is at Dallas National Golf Club. He works with Tiger Woods and Jamie Lovemark.







IMMELMAN'S HIGH SAND SHOT

Create a sharp angle with your setup

➤ Trevor Immelman showed me how a few adjustments can help clear a steep bunker lip or stop a ball quickly out of the sand. Use your setup to promote a more V-shape up-and-down swing. Take a wide stance and set your weight on your left leg so you feel it in the thigh (above, right). Keep your shoulders level and your hands low. Now swing with an aggressive, right-hand throwing motion, feeling like the back of the clubface slides just under the ball (right) and keeps moving.



'TREVOR'S WAY TO GET THE BALL UP QUICKLY IN A GREENSIDE BUNKER IS TO MAKE A STEEPER, V-SHAPE SWING.'

40 GOLFDIGEST.COM | APRIL 2017 Photographs by J.D. Cuban

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AROUND THE GREEN

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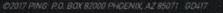
milled to increase spin

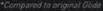
and control on full shots.



.004"

28°







2

RODGERS' LOB SHOT

Swing the handle around your body

▶ Phil Rodgers is one of the best instructors in the world, but he used to be a tour pro-one who was known for his wedge skills. He taught me how to hit a simple and effective high pitch from a tight lie. Set up with the face open and your feet turned slightly toward the target. When you swing, keep your hand path tight to your body and the handle of the club at the same level throughout the swing. Your arm swing and hand action should hinge the club up so that the butt of the handle is near your left pocket when you're at your finish (left).





FAXON'S SPEED-CONTROL DRILL

Make the first putt great

▶ Brad Faxon is a great putter, and he says the way he judges good speed control is by watching a golfer's first putt of the day on the practice green. Anybody can drop three balls and get the third one close to the hole. It's how well you do on that first one that shows if you've got the touch you'll need when you play. There aren't any do-overs on the course. When you practice, start with a 40-footer with a decent amount of break. Judge yourself based on how well you weighed the speed. For the rest of your time on the practice putting green, concentrate on your first-putt distance control more than anything else.



LOVEMARK'S GREEN-READING TECHNIQUE

Feel the break in the dark

▶ Everybody has picked what they thought was a no-doubt break on a putt only to watch the ball stay straight or turn in the opposite direction. It happens because your eyes can sometimes be fooled into a misread. To improve your ability to detect a putt's break, rely on what your feet and equilibrium are telling you-not just your eyes. Last year at the tour stop in New Orleans, Jamie Lovemark practiced at dusk using a glow stick to mark the cup. He read the greens with his feet and nearly won the tournament.

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HIGHER MOI

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EMILIANO GRILLO

AGE 24

LIVES Tampa, Fla.

STORY Named 2016 **PGA Tour Rookie of** the Year. Won rookie debut at 2015 Frys .com Open.

A FAVORITE TRADITION

When I locked up my Masters invite at The Barclays, it was such a relief. It's a dream come true to say I'm headed to Augusta for a second straight year. I honestly think it's a course that suits my game. I finished T-17 last year, and I'm really excited for 2017.

YOUNG MONEY

Seeing the success of guys like Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas, who I've been competing against for years, certainly motivates all of us young guys.

-WITH STEPHEN HENNESSEY

CLUB	YARDS
DRIVER	285
3-WOOD	265
HYBRID	235
4-IRON	218
5-IRON	198
6-IRON	188
7-IRON	180
8-IRON	165
9-IRON	150
PW	140
gw	125
sw	117
LW	96

On the biggest stage It meant so much to represent Argentina at the Olympics last year. For us young guys like Rickie Fowler and me, it was surreal to be in Rio.

PUTTER

SPECS Odyssey Versa Jailbird Mini, 3° loft, cut to 34.5 inches

This is the first time in 15 years that I've used a mallet. I'm finding it much easier to line up than a blade putter. Rather than adjusting my hands for a consistent setup, this has made my stroke more automatic.



Life's a beach I like to say I'm on a weekly vacation. My wife, Macarena, and I have been married for a year and a half. We still need to take a honeymoon.

FAIRWAY WOOD

SPECS Callaway Great Big Bertha Epic, 13.5°, Aldila 2KXV Blue 70X shaft, 42% inches, D-0 swingweight

My go-to shot shape off the tee is a fade. But I've been hitting a slight draw with my new woods. It was an adjustment at first, but I'm trusting it now.

HYBRID

SPECS Callaway Apex, 20°, Golf Pride grip

I've had this hybrid since last yearit's easy to flight. Depending on the week, I switch this out for an Epic Sub Zero 5-wood.



Reel 'em in We bought a new place outside Tampa. It's right on the water, so it's perfect for fishing. If I'm not on the golf course, you can find me there or just relaxing.

WEDGES

DRIVER

IRONS

SPECS Callaway Great Big Bertha Epic,

9°, 451/4 inches, Aldila RIP Alpha

Testing a new club isn't about

distance as much as it is seeing

my expected ball flight. I started

of the year, and I put it in play at

the CareerBuilder Challenge.

SPECS Callaway Apex

Tour Velvet 58 round

(logo on underside)

MB, 4-iron through pitch-

PJX 6.5 shafts, Golf Pride

We bent my 4-iron a bit

stronger last summer

gaps. I also added a

to help fill my distance

3-iron in February and

took out my 50-degree.

ing wedge, True Temper

testing this driver at the beginning

60X shaft, D-0 swingweight

SPECS Callaway Mack Daddy 2 (50°, 54°, 60°), True Temper Dynamic Gold S400 shaft

Always be open to changes that will help your game. I've had a bunch of wedge setups over the years. Find the setup that gives you versatility in the short game and lets you cover any distance.



No special spotter

Lusually carry an Argentine coin in my bag, but I'll use whatever my caddie, Jose Campra, gives me. I'm the opposite of superstitious. Line drill I switched to the Callaway Chrome Soft++ at the Players last vear. It's the ideal combo of strong feel with good performance in the wind.





allawa

POP



"I WAS SHOCKED AT HOW STABLE THE BALL IS. THE ACCURACY AND AERODYNAMICS ARE INCREDIBLE."









Though Horan's first love is music, his passion for all sports, especially golf, runs deep. "It was around the time of Tiger's domination, and I loved staying up late to watch," he said. "The Masters is the one I remember most, especially that Tiger chipin in 2005.'

It was around that time Horan joined the local golf club in his hometown, Mullingar, with a few friends. He was hooked from the beginning. So much so that when touring years later, he would often sneak away for a round with bandmate Harry Styles.

"My schedule has allowed me to get across to the Masters and Ryder Cup and enjoy some of the best golf events in the world firsthand," Horan says. "I've also been able to play a lot more and get my handicap down to single figures."

It helps when you can lean on pals like Rory McIlroy for lessons. The four-time major winner grew up a couple of hours away in Northern Ireland, and the two have become good friends through the game, with Horan having caddied for McIlroy in the Masters' annual Par-3 Contest in 2015.

Horan is just as serious about giving back, too. Last year, he teamed with Justin Rose and his wife, Kate, for a charity event and sent a signed guitar to Jason Day for auction at another function.

Extending his generosity to those in need has been important to Horan throughout his career, and he has been involved in a number of other charitable endeavors as well, which is why he's being honored by Golf Digest with an Arnie Award.

"I appreciate how lucky I am to be in this position," said Horan, who helped raise nearly a million pounds for Cancer Research UK Kids & Teens and the Kate and Justin Rose Foundation designed to fight childhood hunger in the United States. "From the very start of the band, we've all made an effort to give back as much as we could." Next on the radar: the Masters Tournament Foundation, which invests in development programs for golf.

He's not stopping there, either. Horan has launched Modest! Golf Management, a boutique representation agency focused on the game's rising young talent.

"I wanted to get into supporting the next generation of golfers, and obviously I feel myself and my management company, who have a long history of looking after clients and all their needs from schedule planning to corporate deals, are very well placed to do this," he says. "We brought in Mark McDonnell and Ian Watts, who between them have 30 years' experience in the golf industry, to assist us."

Already, they've signed twotime South African amateur champion Thriston Lawrence and Italian standout Guido Migliozzi, and they hope to add about 10 more players.

"It's a fun way to get more connected to golf," Horan says. "I feel like my time growing up in the spotlight, with all the contracts we signed as a band and the media stuff we dealt with, I can help these young guys." 6

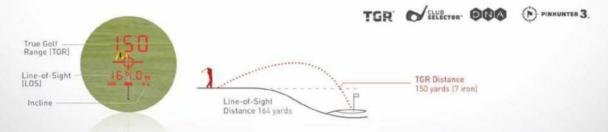




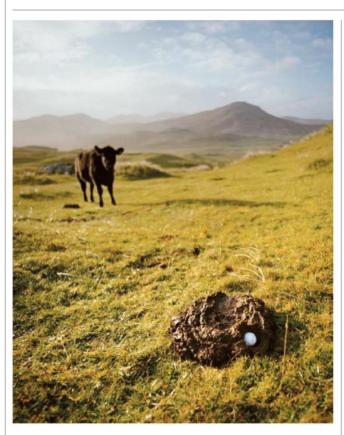
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Are You S**tting Me?

Some of our favorite offbeat Local Rules

Nearly every golf course has unique features needing special governance, also known as Local Rules. When traveling, keep an eye out for Local Rules posted on bulletin boards, scorecards or signs. They could save you a stroke or two, orlike these odd ones we collected here-make you smile.

SHOT ON THE ROCKS

▶ When shots miss the fairway and rough at Sky Mountain Golf Course in Hurricane, Utah, they often land on volcanic rock. A Local Rule allows golfers to carry and use a 15th club-a "rock club"—to avoid damaging their regular clubs.

ON COURSE BUT OUT-OF-BOUNDS

If a ball flies to the right of the O.B. stakes on the fourth hole at Hanover Country Club in Abbottstown, Pa., even if it comes back into play when landing, it's out. Winthrop (Minn.) Golf Club has a similar "internal aerial out-of-bounds" on its sixth hole. A ball that goes to the right of a flagpole 200 yards off the tee is O.B. (Both are protecting adjacent holes.)

WHAT THE ELK?!

▶ In Alberta, animals run past golfers as if the course were a shooting arcade. Banff Springs'

Local Rules state that "any shot striking an elk or other animal may be replayed without penalty." Jasper Park Lodge also extends the rule to all creatures: "Any shot striking wildlife may be replayed without penalty."

KLEPTOMANIACAL CRITTERS

Alaskan animals seemingly take it to the next level. At North Star Golf Club in Fairbanks, America's northernmost golf course, a Local Rule states: "If a raven or fox steals the ball, take a free drop at the scene of the crime."

IMAGINATION STATION

Space is in such short supply at nine-hole Bogalusa (La.) Country Club that the outline of a pretend water hazard is painted on the 455-yard dogleg first hole to challenge the second shot-and retain its integrity as a par 5.

NO SNAKE CHARMER

At Lake Powell National Golf Course in Page, Ariz., a "casual rattlesnake rule" is used if your ball is within the vicinity of a rattler. You can gather your ball, drop without penaltythen presumably swing fast and run like hell.

PLAYFUL PACHYDERM

Think you should get relief in event of an elephant stampede? Not at Elephant Hills Golf Club near Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, where a Local Rule states that the golfer "shall be allowed to return to his ball, which shall be played as it lies, whether or not the animal had trodden thereon."

WASTE NOT

England's Royal North Devon is home to sheep and horses that roam where they will. This pastoral setting has its limits. A Local Rule details how to handle a specific

type of sticky situation: "A ball which lies in or touches heaped or liquid manure may be lifted without penalty, cleaned and dropped." Tavistock Golf Club in southwestern England wants golfers to be clear that "relief from manure interfering with a player's stance is denied." In other words, you don't have to play out of crap, but you might have to step in it. Tavistock's Local Rule offers relief from other horse evidence on the green, including "a hoof mark, pony bite [or] urine burn."

WRONG KIND OF ACE

▶ At Caverns Country Club in Luray, Va., the opening to a cave is located in the middle of the par-5 first hole. If your ball goes into the hole, you don't win a free round, but you do get to use a new ball—and take a free drop without penalty.

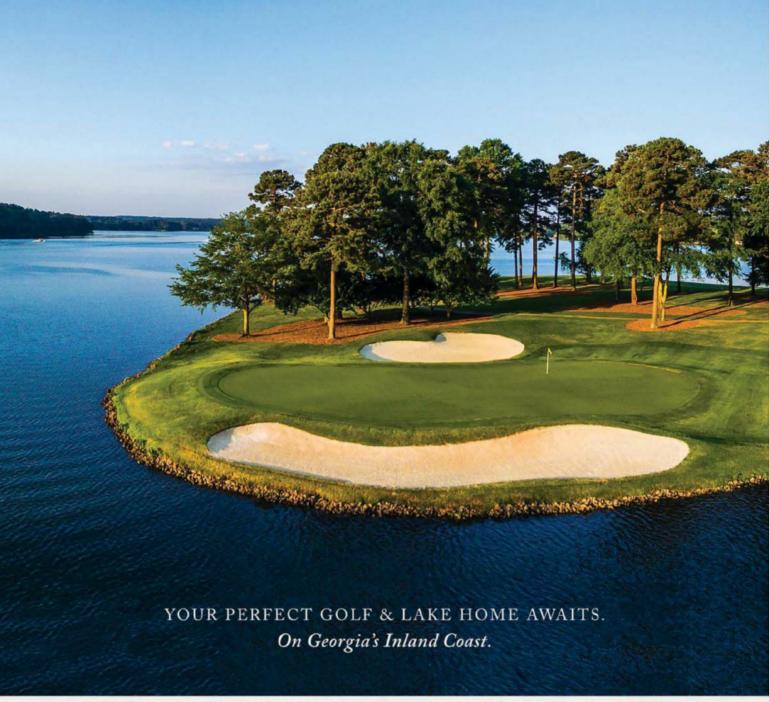
THE BETTER HALF

▶ At historic Oakhurst Links in West Virginia, where golfers play and dress as in the hickory-shaft era, a Local Rule covers what happens if your gutta-percha ball breaks apart during play: You must hole out using the largest piece.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

▶ Playing with half a ball might sound tough, but how about playing 18 holes with bombs going off around you? At Richmond Golf Club in Surrey, England, among seven rules in 1940 was this: "A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb may play another ball from the same place. Penalty: one stroke." - CLIFF SCHROCK

NOTE: Local Rules, including some of these, sometimes violate the Rules of Golf. Wondering if a Local Rule is legit? Email the details to rules@usga.org for more information.



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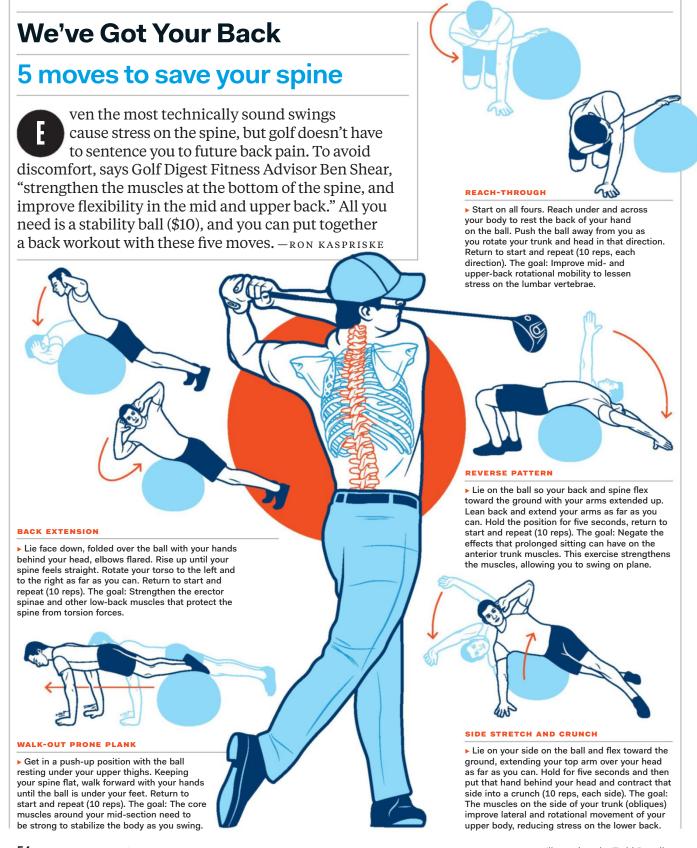
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Undercover Tour Pro

What we really talk about inside the ropes

think most fans would be very surprised by the conversations that go on during tournaments. When my caddie and I are waiting on a tee box or standing in a fairway, it might look like we're in deep debate over what club to hit and how, but nine times out of 10 we're not talking about anything remotely related to golf. Everybody out here knows to speak just above a whisper so the gallery won't hear. And obviously, if there's a TV microphone in sight, we keep it clean. No sense getting fined for telling a story.

I usually play six rounds a week. Most are over four hours, with the occasional pro-am fivesome that drags past six hours. If I was thinking about golf even half the time, I'd go insane. Sure, if it's the back nine on Sunday and we're on the leader board, I don't mind giving a little extra attention to each shot, but other than that, my caddie knows to keep it to sports (football, basketball, baseball, hockey, go-cart ballet ... whatever), restaurants, random gossip (usually sourced from other caddies), movies, music, vacations, jokes. My latest caddie actually reads joke books. He's always got new ones, of varying length, and they're nearly all terrible. The kind that begin, "An Irishman, a Scotsman and an American are walking across a bridge, yada, yada." My caddie's probably a little loud for some, but I think he's one of the

They must be contemplating, how much break to play. 0 I'm sure they're talking about the direction of 0 0 0 the grain. 0 0 90 Maybe they're not sure who's away? =0= 0 0



best. When things go south out here, it's essential to be around someone who maintains a sense of humor.

There are certain players we'd rather not have in our group. I actually don't mind playing practice rounds with a lot of the grinders, but once the tournament starts, they become hard to watch. The routines get longer and longer. It makes me tired, even impatient. Then there are the players who'd love nothing more than to tell you all about the latest discovery they made with their swing coach, or the theory behind the grind on their new gap wedge. Please. Stop. If one of those dudes invites me to play

a practice round, I'll just text back whatever it takes to get out of it. Sorry, but don't want to play that early. Thanks, but can't play in the afternoon.

It's not that I don't love the game and its stories. Of course I do. But when you're at the golf course nearly every day, and your performance has direct bearing on your life and livelihood, it's easy to get too tangled in it. I think we've all been there. For me, I've learned that playing well for four hours in a row, let alone four days, is basically impossible if my head is spinning that hard. My rule is, I only think about golf when my glove is on, or about 45 seconds per shot. So, my total concentration in a round is never going to amount to much more than 50 or 55 minutes.

That's how I stay relaxed, fresh. And it's working. Last season I enjoyed a solid jump forward in the rankings, and I can play any tournament I want in 2017.

In pro-ams, I consider myself fairly friendly. I have no idea how I compare to other pros, of course, because we're always alone with our amateur playing partners. But I'd wager that I'm more outgoing than a lot of players. That said, I'll take stretches to walk alone. Just go down the opposite side of a hole for what seems like no reason at all. Because if my playing partners are going to be talking golf nonstop, I'm going to need a break.

My caddie, too.

-WITH MAX ADLER



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Sibling Rivalries

New, internal competition for some of golf's most beloved destinations

BY RON WHITTEN



Monterey Peninsula (Dunes)

The original course at Monterey Peninsula Country Club, just up 17 Mile Drive from Pebble Beach, has a pedigree most clubs would cherish. Originally routed by Seth Raynor in the mid-1920s, it was completed after his death by Robert Hunter and Alister MacKenzie. In the late 1990s, it was refashioned by Rees Jones, who moved the par-3 10th green (above) to a spot right above the crashing Pacific surf. Yet the Dunes lacked the sex appeal of its much-younger sister, the Shore Course, founded in 1961 and reinvented by the late Mike Strantz, who made it his artistic masterpiece in 2004. To remedy that, the club hired Tom Fazio (Strantz's former mentor), who teamed with his son, Logan, longtime associate Andy Banfield and former associates Tim Jackson and David Kahn on a plan that integrates holes into the peninsula's unique environment. Sandscape zones now frame most holes, ranging from hillsides of exposed sand to large, reconstituted ocean dunes. Once-straight fairways now zig and zag around jagged bunkers. Nearly all the greens are diagonal to lines of play, with the fourth green a dogleg wrapped around a sand hill. Drainage channels serve as prominent hazards along some holes, and trees were removed to open vistas of the sea. The Dunes Course now lives up to its name and is a worthy companion to The Shore.



Streamsong (Black)

Streamsong Resort in Central Florida already has a dynamic duo: the Tom Doak-designed Blue course and the Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw-designed Red both are in the top 25 of Golf Digest's America's 100 Greatest Public Courses. That's a tough lead-in for Streamsong's third act, the new Black course (par-3 fifth, above), one mile southeast on reclaimed land not nearly as dramatic as the massive dunes created by phosphate-mining operations. Still, architect Gil Hanse was enthused by the opportunities of the low-plateau site. "It's as good a golf ground as we've ever worked with,' he says. "It's also the largest piece of land we've ever had." The routing changes direction frequently-wide fairways twist and turn, with several playing uphill to greens perched on the horizon. The par-5 fourth encounters a meandering stream, and 18 edges a vast, attractive wetlands savannah. To further distinguish the Black, Hanse gave it a "Royal Melbourne treatment," with vertical-edged bunkers similar to those he used at the Rio Olympic Golf Course. You'll find crisp edges, abrupt slopes and a couple of the deepest bunkers on the property. The Black will have a soft opening in late spring and will accept regular tee times this fall. Says Hanse: "I hope people put the Black right alongside the Red and Blue.



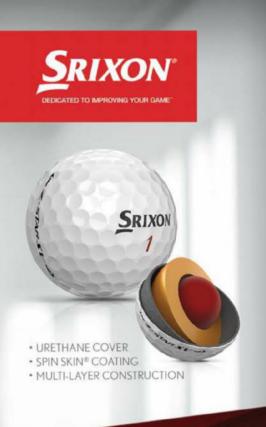
Torrey Pines (North)

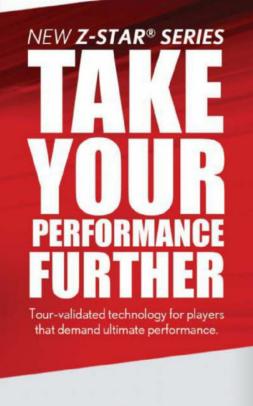
Phil Mickelson campaigned for years to have La Jolla, Calif., upgrade its North Course at Torrey Pines to complement the championship South Course. His lobbying, under state law, prevented Mickelson from bidding on the redesign. Tom Weiskopf, who won his first PGA Tour event at Torrey Pines in 1968, got the bid over a field that included Robert Trent Jones Jr. and (surprise!) LPGA player Natalie Gulbis. To provide more challenge to tour players, but not frustrate the 80,000 average golfers who flock to the North each year, Weiskopf enlarged and flattened the greens (so they can be sped up when needed), surrounded many with chipping areas, relocated and reshaped all bunkers and improved irrigation. He also reversed the nines, so golfers finish in glorious coastal scenery, and created two new closing holes, the par-5 17th, with a canyon along its left, and the long par-4 18th. The North is now perfectly balanced, with all the par 3s (15th, pictured) and par 5s facing different directions. Each nine also has 21 bunkers (down from a total of 58). Though the South is still the showcase draw-it'll host its second U.S. Open in 2021—a round at the North Course is no longer an afterthought.





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What, you don't want to tie a rope to your crotch and inflict yourself with excruciating pain on every swing? Sounds like somebody's lacking commitment.

We kid. The truth is, you shouldn't even be worrying about looking up, says Josh Zander, a Golf Digest Teaching Professional. "It's a myth that somehow has perpetuated throughout golf." People typically cry, "I looked up!" after a topped shot. The most common actual culprits: (a) Your swing angles are too shallow, or (b) your downswing is a shallow *reaction* to a swing that is too steep. "You want to figure out the real reason for your topped shot, not your buddy saying you're picking your head up," Zander says.

An important note: Zander does recommend keeping your head (and eyes) still when putting.

I went solo to a course recently and got teamed with three other guys. At the 18th hole, I saw one spit directly into his hand to clean his ball. When the final putt went in and the handshakes began, I was disgusted but not sure what to do. So I shook his hand and headed away with my right arm held high like Ernie McCracken in the movie "Kingpin." What would you have done?

CHRIS KIRK, HILLIARD, OHIO

First, bonus points for the reference to "Kingpin," the "Caddyshack" of bowling movies. As for avoiding that handshake, you could have gone with the fist bump, or, because you didn't know these guys and probably won't see them again, the simple ignore-and-walk-away. But

honestly, there is so much filth on your hands at the end of 18 holes—insecticide, fertilizer, hot-dog relish—we always use your approach: a handshake followed by speedwalking to hot water and soap. (By the way, after you've washed up, avoid the pretzels in the clubhouse bar. They're no cleaner than your hands were.)

I pulled two pennies from my pocket. I used one to mark my ball and put the other one back, then went to tend the flag. When I returned to my mark, I saw two pennies about 10 inches apart. One must have fallen from my pocket. I wasn't sure which was right, so I played the one farthest from the hole. Is there any penalty?

MARK REINTHALER, SAN RAMON, CALIF.
▶▶▶

Our two cents (sorry) is that you've got to fix that hole in your pocket. When golfers see stuff rolling out of your pant legs, they'll assume you're the kind of player who might drop a ball down the same hole while looking for an errant shot.

You, clearly, are not that kind of player. We know this because you instinctively did the right thing. First, you met your requirement to mark the position of the ball before lifting it (Rules 16-1b and 20-1). The Rules of Golf doesn't say anything about mistaken ball markers, but there is a rule (1-4) that says: "If any point in dispute is not covered by the Rules, the decision should be made in accordance with equity," by which they mean "treat it like other similar situations under the Rules." In equity, you should replace your ball at the marker that's farthest from the hole, says Kathryn Belanger, USGA manager of rules communications. Without penalty!



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atrons of the 2017 Masters, beware: There might be a bit of tension at the border. By "border" we mean Augusta National's southeast boundary,

more or less opposite the 11th and 12th greens and the 13th tee, where the two golf courses straddling Rae's

Creek form a sort of golf paradise. On one side of the water-the side you know from TV-heroes battle on a sublime green field, and dignity prevails, and uniformed security guards make damn sure it does. There's no yelling, unless someone makes an eagle or a really good





The Club Next Door

Augusta Country Club has something Augusta National wants: ACC's ninth hole

birdie, and there's no running, and no cellphones. No beer after 4 p.m. Sandwiches are famously cheap but so BY CURT SAMPSON flabby you better keep both hands on your egg salad on white or it will double up on you like a futon. The equally verdant but far-less-famous facility on the opposite bank is Augusta Country Club, and it's of a piece with the National's rolling terrain and barking dogwoods, but it ain't the same. It couldn't be. Its membership is local, and it's a country club, with all that that implies. ACC encompasses a superb Donald Ross-designed, Brian Silva-

Augusta National (left) and Augusta Country Club (right). A land sale might allow Augusta National to extend the 13th tee.





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Numerous sources say that the last number on the table was \$18 million.

remodeled golf course; tennis; a big L-shape swimming pool; a workout facility fit for an NFL team; a voluminous, luxurious clubhouse fit for wedding receptions; and, the new thing, a bocce court. The Country Club has 1,340 members; Augusta National's 300 or so are scattered all over this great country. They fly private to Daniel Field when they want to play the Alister MacKenzie masterpiece on their side of the creek.

Free of the significant burden of stag-

ing a major tournament, the Country Club lets you run if you must, it's OK if you've got to take or make a call, and if you want to shoot a picture of a pine cone or an azalea bush, go ahead. Not that they're firebrands at ACC; far from it-doctors, lawyers and business owners predominate. The food is excellent: Try the signature dish, clam chowder, and wash it down with a Velvet Hammer, if you dare. Cut off beer sales? Are you kidding? Besides, you might prefer a Manhattan or a martini to suds in a cup from a concession stand. Of course you can take your

glass outside. How else are you going to loosen up your rusted-over stroke? For on the fast and sloping practice green between ACC's first tee and its massive wedding-cake clubhouse, late-afternoon putting matches are a rich thread in the Masters Week tapestry. The party within the party sounds something like this:

"Who needs another beer?" some genial Augusta gentleman always says.

"What you doing for dinner?" asks another.

"What three players won the first Masters they ever played?"

"Putt that. Some chicken on that bone."

"Smith, Sarazen..."

"Oh, too bad! You're 3 down."

"So on 6, Bubba hits a flop shot from the front of the green to that back-right pin, and he almost holes . . . "

"Let me use your badge tomorrow afternoon. My sister's comin' in. She wants to buy some shirts."

"Tech's gonna kick Georgia's ass this year."

"Spieth?"

"Fuzzy."

"Who needs another beer?"

Kibbitzers seated in white Adirondack rockers on the patio call out "Choke!" or "Woo-hoo!" as appropriate. We putt, we miss, we make, and we yak. Mellow-yellow sunlight slants in decreasing angles through the mighty pines lining the first and 18th fairways, a light chill kisses the air, and happy hour slides into even happier hours....

Full house: This was the scene at Augusta Country Club during the 2016 Masters.



I've been witness to and a participant in this ritual for almost 20 years, since I first came to town to research a book unimaginatively titled *The Masters*, and it never gets old.

CROSSOVER MEMBERS . . . AND TENSION

Ithough the differences between the two clubs on Rae's Creek are sharp, the relationship is as intertwined as the roots on adjacent oaks, and it's complicated by the fact that every Augustabased member of the National also belongs to the Country Club. There are about 30 of them. What with its cadre of volunteers, and its willingness to lend a mower or a blower or a jar of Grey Poupon, the people at Augusta National could run the Masters without Augusta Country Club, but they couldn't do it as well.

Money mortars the bricks: Both clubs roll in it thanks to the toon-a-mint. Golf Digest estimates recent annual profits for the host club at about \$30 million, and next door, various media entities rent prime space. Surge pricing allows the Country Club to charge \$5.25 for a beer that's \$2.90 the other 51 weeks.

And when Masters magic compels patrons to attempt the game themselves? Look no further.

"We are the only course you can play in the Augusta area where you get to hit shots over Rae's Creek and hear the roars from the Masters Tournament," brags the ACC website. The tee sheet was almost full by the end of 2016. The fee is \$2,000-\$2,500 for a foursome, and don't forget to tip your forecaddie.

And don't forget to call ahead; patrons

should not just waltz in to the old (est. 1899) club on Milledge Road like it's Tbonz or Luigi's. Quoting the website again: "The club permits reciprocal privileges to other private clubs upon formal written introduction." There's another way to get into the clubhouse, of course: know a member. How to do that? Go where they go. When you see an ACC logo on the sweater of a diner at Calvert's or Sheehan's or the French Market Grille, buy dinner for his entire table. That could work. Friendships have been formed on less. At minimum, it would

increase the joy in an already joyous week.

And yet: There's that tension on the banks of Rae's Creek. At the January 2015 annual meeting at the Country Club, one of the dual members, red-faced and angry and sitting behind an empty glass, shouted, "Y'all are just a bunch of damn liars." A bigdollar business deal between the clubs was in the offing, but it was not coming off. Frustration bloomed.

The territorial ambitions of Augusta National chairman William Porter (Billy) Payne are at the heart of the hard feelings. As you probably know, during the 11-year reign of Payne, the club has snapped up contiguous real estate, pursuant to expanding parking, increasing security, and for the erection of a new media center and tournament HQ. By the simple expedient of paying a lot, the mission has been accomplished—most of it.

There are one or two stubborn little holdouts and one big one: the Country Club. The National wants to buy its hole on the border, the uphill, par-4 ninth—for what reason, it will not say. Perhaps the National would move the tee back on the par-5 13th, or scrape out a very expensive road for maintenance ve-





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NJOY THE FINEST SPIRIT RESPONSIBLY

When it comes to neighbors, things can get complicated.

hicles, or create housing of some kind. Losing the hole would inconvenience the Country Club but probably wouldn't harm it—there's ample room for a new ninth, which would be another uphill par 4, bending right, with the green a reasonable distance from the 10th tee.

But as this is written, the two old friends can't agree on a price. In October 2016, Augusta National paid \$5.35 million for the nearby .73 acres beneath Jay's Music & Sound Super Center, on a busy corner of Washington Road, which works out to about \$7.25 million an acre, and in 2017, the club paid \$6.9 million for a Pep Boys on Washington Road. They're comps, in real-estatespeak, numbers on which to base future sales in the area. But the potential purchaser disagrees. ACC's ninth hole has about six acres. Six times six, or six times seven ... that would be a lot even for Augusta National.

Numerous sources say that the last number on the table was \$18 million.

Adds a source within ACC to Augusta National: "We can't settle on a value for our hole, so let's try it on your side: How much you want for the 12th green?"

Negotiations, as you can see, have been "emotional," according to a witness.

"Emotional"? That doesn't sound good. This isn't going to put a pall on the fun at ACC, is it? Can this marriage be saved?

Of course it can, says Jerry Matheis, a wealth advisor for Wells Fargo, and a Country Club member since 1966. "Our board of directors and Billy Payne will come to an agreement at some point," Matheis says. "No, I don't think this will damage our relationship. I hope not. We'll be next door to each other as long as we exist."

THE BOBBY JONES CONNECTION

he ties go way back. Masters and National co-founder Bobby Jones enjoyed Augusta and its Country Club on numerous visits in the '20s, climaxing in early April 1930, when one of the best golfers ever played his best golf ever. Jones began his Grand Slam year with a second place in Savannah, then won the Southeastern Open in Augusta-against a very good field, most of them pros, including future Masters champs Horton Smith and Gene Sarazen—by 13 shots. The first two rounds of that victory march were at ACC. Although co-founder Cliff Roberts' official club history holds that an Augusta friend named Thomas Barrett Jr. introduced the principals to the site for Bobby's dream course, the idea persists that at some point, Jones looked across the creek while he walked up No. 9. If he turned to his right in April of '30, he would have seen the eventual 11th and 13th fairways, very few pines, and scores of flowering trees and shrubs left behind by the defunct Fruitland Nurseries. It would have looked heavenly. Jones, Roberts and friends bought the 365-acre plot for \$70,000 that fall.

The two clubs and the Masters blended over the years, up to a point. Matheis remembers the days when many invitees stayed in the homes of ACC members, and the members didn't leave, and they all had a lovely time. At the parties at the country club, musician/golfer/showoffs named Snead, Hebert and Demaret would on occasion tell a couple of the paid performers to take 10. Then someone counted off one, two, three, and three-time Masters winner Sam Snead blew through a trumpet, his cheeks puffed out as if he were Dizzy Gillespie. Lionel Hebert (four top-10s in the '50s and '60s) majored in music at LSU and could play anything. And Jimmy Demaret, another three-green-jacket man, owned a pleasant tenor he loved to use. Between songs, Jimmy selected jokes and one-liners from his vast collection. Sides were split. Someone, we assume, hit a cymbal.

A charming vestige of the Snead-Demaret era involved Byron Nelson. From 1981 until he couldn't, Nelson was one of the three creaky legends who got the tournament started on Thursday morning by swatting out a ceremonial tee ball, in the Masters equivalent of throwing out the first pitch. The kindly two-time Masters champ warmed up at ACC.

"Tuesday and Wednesday," recalls Tommy Brannen, the Country Club's head pro, "we'd take carts out to the back of the range. I'd tee the balls up for him because he had replacement hips, and it hurt him to bend over. And he and Peggy and Phil Harison [longtime Masters starter] and I would talk and talk."

Brannen has seen other Masters players play on his side of the creek during tournament week. "Let's see, Bernhard Langer, Ian Woosnam... remember, there's no pro-am in the Masters, so we're the best place to get together for social golf with sponsors or friends. And this is not a bad little golf course."

Here's another example of hands across the creek water: for 40-odd years, Spalding hosted a Tuesday-evening dinner at ACC for every Masters player who hit a Dot. "Usually about 20 or 25 of us," recalls former Spalding sales rep Wendell Couch, whose tenure with the company roughly coincided with the dinner. Couch, a legendary figure in Georgia golf, sold Spalding to both the clubs on Rae's Creek.

"Greg Norman in his heyday, Payne Stewart, Johnny Miller. And those who had a prior commitment [that is, attendees of the Champions Dinner at Augusta National] would come over for dessert," Couch says. "Bob Goalby did that, and Charlie Coody, and Craig Stadler. We'd sit in the boardroom or at two tables in the dining room. [Country Club GM] Henry Marburger did an awesome job for us. That was so much fun."

What problems exist between the parties now have a much different feel. The stalled sale of the ninth hole is a symptom of a much larger negative trend, according to certain traditionalists at the Country Club.

"They've just replaced the atmosphere, from local Augusta to corporate," says an ACC member who has been attending the Masters for over 40 years. "They bought so much land for free parking, local people can't make a few bucks by parking cars in their yards like they always have. Then they put up a bunch of nice bars and restaurants called Berckmans Place, over behind No. 5. It won't surprise me if they build their own hotel, or a lot more cabins. It's stay at their place, eat their food, spend all your money there. Do they really care about the community? I'd say the jury is out."

Maybe chairman Payne is the Great Usurper, and maybe the National has changed the lay of the land too much and too fast. Dead men like Jones and Roberts, and live ones such as the ACC member quoted above, could never have pictured the club's acquisition of so much real estate, or the creation of the fabulously expensive Berckmans Place, which is all-inclusive, by the way, like Baker's Bay in the Bahamas. It includes the Berckmans Place "putting experience," which features miniature replicas of three National greens, with full-size replica caddies in white coveralls who tell you that your putt breaks left. Will this affect the Country Club putting match?

As Jerry Matheis said regarding the ninth-hole kerfuffle, I hope not. Unless chairman Payne keeps buying holes until he's got the entire golf course, Augusta Country Club should remain a great place to reunite with old friends, to borrow a badge for an hour, to trade hot sports opinions, and to take Spieth over Day for 10. And to drink, and to putt. @

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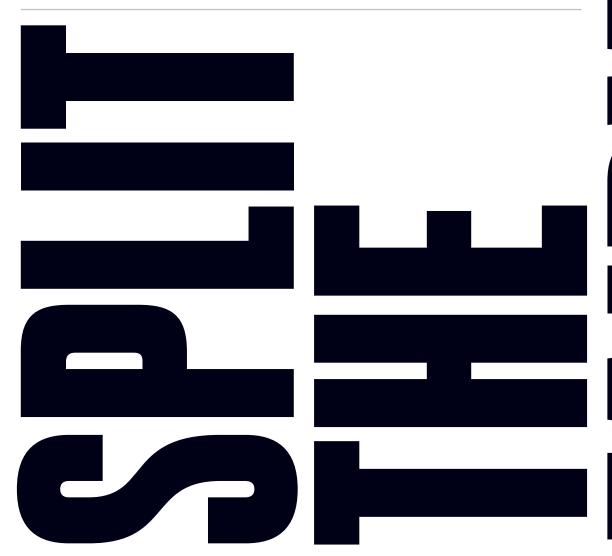
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GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR DR

DURING THE OFFSEASON I had to address some things to drive the ball better poor footwork, swing inefficiencies, relying too much on my hands to square the face at impact. I went to work with my instructor Andrew Getson to shore things up. I fixed my swing plane, my footwork is better, and I'm using a new driver properly weighted for those changes. It's taken some getting used to, but the results are encouraging. I feel great with the driver and look forward to seeing what I can do with it at the Masters and the other big tournaments coming up. Here, Andrew is going to go over some of the changes I've made and explain how they can help you get the most out of the longest club in your bag. - with ron kaspriske







TRANSITION AND **DOWNSWING**

ITH PHIL'S OLD SWING, his driving accuracy suffered because he relied on his hands too much to square the club at impact. We went to work on improving his swing plane so he wouldn't have to rely on timing as much. Now he's a little more vertical as he approaches the top of his swing (photo No. 1, right). If you looked at the same position a year ago, the club's shaft would be a lot less upright. The lesson is, a slightly steep backswing can give you a feeling of having more room to properly swing the club down from inside the target line. You can see him taking advantage of that as he swings down. Notice how the shaft gets flatter. When Phil looks at photos like this, he likes to see it dropping below the logo on his left arm (No. 2). Also, look at where his hands are late in the downswing. If they're here (No. 3), we know he's got the club slotted and his arms have caught up with his body rotation. He's going to rip it. I tell my students not to worry about making contact with the ball. Instead, let the ball get in the way of a good swing. Just like this one.

ANDREW GETSON began coaching Phil Mickelson in late 2015. The Australia native teaches at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale.





SETUP AND TAKEAWAY

NE OF THE FIRST THINGS to note about Phil's offseason work is that his address posture has really improved. His back is straighter and his chin isn't tucked as much (photo No. 1, left). This creates more space to swing the club. You can't make a good swing if you don't have good posture. When he starts the club back, another thing I really like is that his swing arc is wider (No. 2). The club is moving back straighter, less to the inside. He's got a long backswing, but it's a hair shorter than it used to be. The thing he's really been working on with his backswing is his footwork. His back leg is much more anchored than it has been in the past (No. 3), so he can swing from a more stable platform. You might also notice his head stays fairly still. It's not drifting away from the target. That's key to getting the club back to the ball for a solid strike. If you anchor your back leg and make a swing without swaying, you're going to hit it in the sweet spot a lot more often.

IS MORE VERTICAL GOING BACK AND FLATTER COMING DOWN.'









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STUP HWING

TIGHTEN YOUR GAME FROM TEE TO GREEN

BY HANK HANEY

he difference between a good round and a bad one is how well you avoid the three biggest shot-wasters in golf: (1) Penalty strokes when hitting longer clubs; (2) Needing two shortgame shots to get the ball on the green; (3) Three-putting. To avoid these mistakes, I'll first get your chipping and pitching sorted out. When you're in close, you've got to get the ball on the green-anywhere on the green—with your first attempt. That's why you need basic, reliable low and high shots. I'll teach you how to execute both. Next, you've got to keep your full-swing shots—especially tee balls—in play. You can do that with a simple drill to eliminate the dreaded slice when you get back on the course. Finally, putting is an area where almost anybody can improve with a little attention to detail. I'll give you a way to learn how to make the right-size stroke for each putt, which will leave vou near the hole if you miss your first. Think how many strokes that will save you.

—WITH MATTHEW RUDY



Things go wrong around the green when you get tentative-especially under pressure. At those times, go back to the basics and hit a safe, low chip with your pitching wedge. Open your stance slightly and play the ball back while keeping your hands centered and shoulders level. Now make a slightly descending putting stroke. Your setup promotes solid contact, and the putting stroke makes it easy to execute.



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You don't have to put your passion for golf on hold every time you leave the course. **Just tune in to all the tournament coverage on television.** This page lists golf telecasts that will help keep your head in the game. (All times listed are Eastern.)

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Augusta, GA/April 6-9 Site: Augusta National Golf Club 2016 champion: Danny Willett Prize money: \$10 million

TV Coverage

April 6: 3-7:30 p.m. (ESPN) April 7: 3-7:30 p.m. (ESPN) April 8: 3-7 p.m. (CBS) April 9: 2-7 p.m. (CBS)

Zurich Classic of New Orleans

Avondale, LA/April 27-30 Site: TPC Louisiana 2016 champion: Brian Stuard Prize money: \$7.1 million

TV Coverage

April 27: 3-6 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 28: 3-6 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 29: 1-2:30 p.m. (Golf Channel); 3-6 pm (CBS) April 30: 1-2:30 p.m. (Golf Channel); 3-6 pm (CBS)

LPGA TOUR

LOTTE Championship presented by Hershey

Kapolei, Oahu, HI/April 12-15 Site: Ko Olina Golf Club 2016 champion: Minjee Lee Prize money: \$2 million

TV Coverage

April 12: 7-11 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 13: 7-11 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 14: 7-11 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 15: 7-11 p.m. (Golf Channel)

WEB.COM TOUR

United Leasing & Finance Championship

Newburgh, IN/April 20-23 Site: Victoria National Golf Club 2016 champion: Seamus Power Prize money: \$600,000

TV Coverage

April 20: 12-2:30 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 21: 9-11 p.m. (time-delayed) (Golf Channel) April 22: 3-5 p.m. (Golf Channel) April 23: 3-5 p.m. (Golf Channel)

All broadcast times are subject to change

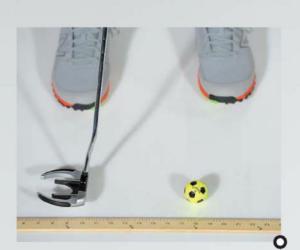




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'SET UP WITH A BALL UNDER YOUR

LEFT HEEL AND MAKE SMOOTH SWINGS.'



PERFECT LAG PUTTING

A Feel is being able to link your movements with a result, so learn what size putting stroke makes the ball go a certain distance. Using a yardstick as a guide, hit a few putts with the same length backswing and follow-through and see how far the ball rolls. Then add an inch to both sides of a stroke and see what that does to your distance. Keep experimenting like this, and you'll build a framework for speed control.

STRAIGHTEN YOUR LONG GAME

A lot of trouble is found on the right side because designers know most players fight a slice. To avoid a slice and find the fairway, swing on an in-to-out path. To practice this, set up with a ball under your left heel and make some smooth swings, trying to hit straighter shots. If your path isn't coming from the inside, you'll lose your balance and probably miss the ball.









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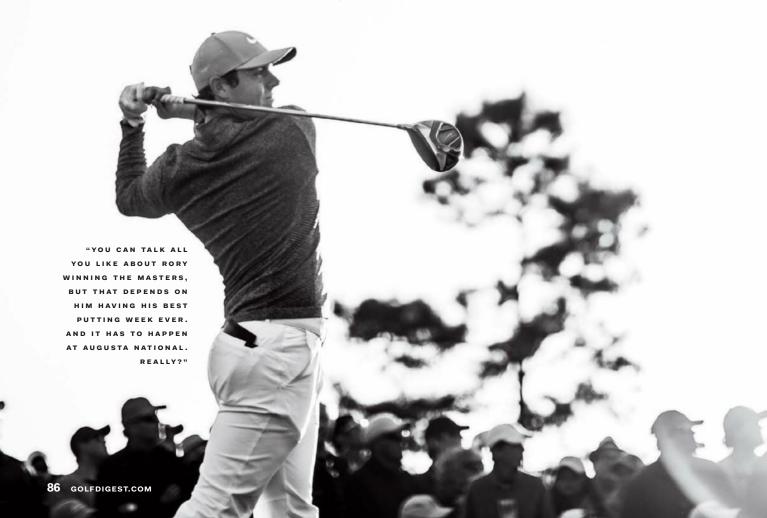


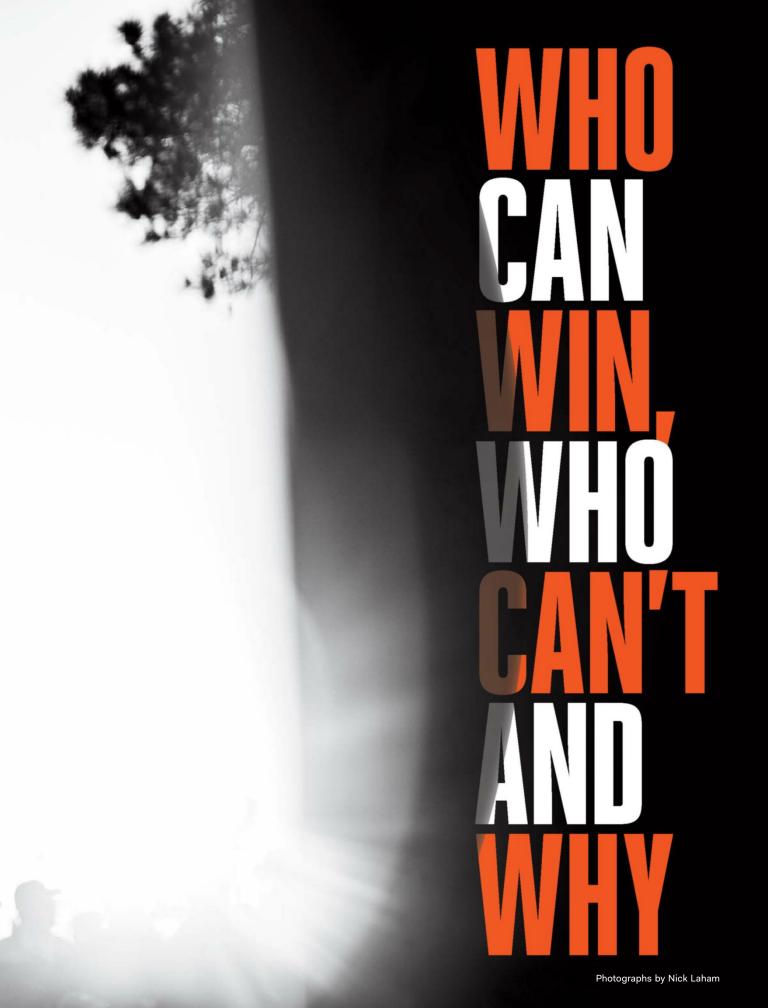
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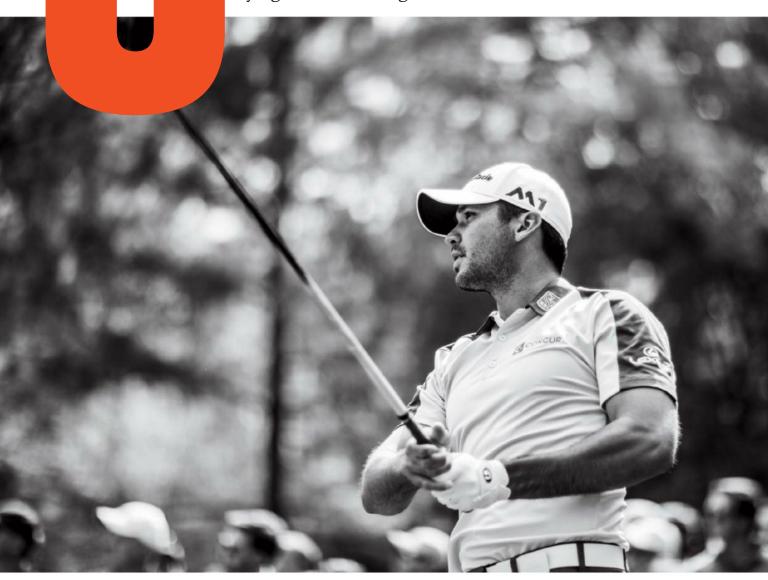
CANDID & CATTY COMMENTS ABOUT THE FIELD AT AUGUSTA

by John Huggan and Dave shedloski





ONLY 50 PLAYERS have won the previous 80 Masters tournaments. Only 32 of them are still with us. And only 19, some of them playing ceremonially, are expected to tee it up April 6-9 at Augusta National. Which means a lot of players—including Jason Day, Rory McIlroy, Dustin Johnson, Henrik Stenson, Rickie Fowler, Sergio Garcia, Justin Rose and many more—are still trying to figure out how to earn a green jacket. Then there's Tiger Woods, who is trying to figure out how to win his fifth (but his first in a dozen years). ▶ Who's got what it takes, and who doesn't? What are their strengths, and what's holding them back? To get the answers, Golf Digest interviewed dozens of players, caddies, coaches and other keen observers for candid observations on past champions and those who are still trying to break through. Our interviewees didn't hold back.



look at all the top players, and every one of them has a flaw. The question is, how big is the flaw, and how do they make it less of one for that week? Every guy is clearly talented enough to win. Are you going to tell me Jason Day or Rory McIlroy or Justin Rose aren't going to win the Masters? Rickie Fowler? Jon Rahm, eventually? Patrick Reed? Dustin Johnson could still win two or three. But they all have their issues. Or maybe it's just that they don't play to their strengths as well to make up for the weaknesses. Adam Scott won a Masters, and he's a terrible putter-well, he's below average. But his ball-striking is so good, and those weeks he's really on hitting the ball, he only has to be a below-average putter to win." . . . "People these days learn golf on the range, not on the course, and we're seeing the results of that at the top level. Everyone learns how to hit it rather than how





to play, which is not how to play Augusta. Seve learned how to play with one club, and not many played the Masters better than he did. To me, only Phil, Bubba and Sergio learned how to play golf the right way. They play golf, not swing, which is the way to play Augusta. But it goes the other way, too. Tiger was a real golfer when he came on tour, but he ended up a scientist. Padraig Harrington, the same. Justin Rose, too. And Adam is a scientist with his short game. None of which helps them at Augusta. It isn't a science course."

BOMBERS VS. SHORT HITTERS

n this day and age, the guys who don't hit it very far-Jim Furyk, for example—have no chance to win the Masters. Matt Kuchar is another. You can't win there if all you have is guile and strategy. Dufner won't win there." . . . "You have to go with guys who hit the ball a long way and high. For Jason, Dustin, Adam, Rory, Bubba, the par of the course is closer to 68."... "It's the easiest event to predict because you can break it down. Who can putt, and who can't? Who can reach the par 5s in two? And so on. Jordan Spieth's par is 70. He can reach the par 5s on the back nine. But he's also the best putter. So that brings him down to, say, 69. Rory's ball-striking starts him at 68. But his putting takes him up to 72. Any time a player wins without that formula, it has to be because weather takes away that inherent edge-say, when no one can reach some of the par 5s. Then you get Zach Johnson or Mike Weir winning." . . . "Pure yardage is way more important than creating the right angle into the flag. Hitting a 9-iron instead of a 6-iron makes up for a bad angle. You can argue that it shouldn't be that way, but it is." ... "Lee Trevino always said he didn't like Augusta because he hit the ball left to right. But the truth is that he knew he wasn't long

enough off the tee. He couldn't get to the tops of some of the hills. Well, today's shorter hitters have pretty much the same issues." ... "It's just too hard over four days to hit hybrids and long irons to holes where the long guys are hitting 7-irons. You can't compete with that." . . . "If I have, say, two more short irons than you do into those greens, that's eight more scoring opportunities in the tournament. Odds say I'm going to whip your ass." . . . "Phil, Bubba, Adam, [Charl] Schwartzel—they have proven that long and crooked can work there." . . . "Between the 5,000 trees they planted and the second cut, you don't have the luxury of a bit of leeway off the tee. I know Phil says he doesn't care where his tee shots go, that he can recover, but believe me, he cares." . . . "The way Tiger played it in 1997, bombing it all around, you can't do that anymore. You might get away with it on a hole or two, but that's not a strategy that's going to work for 72 holes. They make you play Augusta the way they want you to play Augusta."

PATIENCE, PATIENCE

en times in every round you're going to have a shot where, if you get too aggressive and miss, you're going to make a bogey at best. Sergio is impatient. So is Rory. And Bubba. And Dustin. Jason can get too aggressive because he likes to take shots on. Jordan is the most patient of the elite guys. As much as he carries on between shots, he knows his limitations. And he's the best scorer of that bunch. Phil is impatient. So is Patrick Reed. And Louis Oosthuizen-he switches off if things aren't going well." . . . "The biggest thing every player has to get his head around is the Mickey Mouse pin positions. So much of Augusta is unfair. You can hit a shot to eight feet, and you can hit another shot that lands three inches from the first ball, then finishes 60 yards down a hill. If that's f----- right, I know nothing about golf. It's dramatic, but it's not right. And that sort of stuff gets to players." . . . "Experience is everything. I know caddies who have been going there for years and have books on the place. Yet they add to those books every year. Something changes every year, even if it's just a little thing."...

'THERE ISN'T A PIN [JASON DAY] DOESN'T THINK HE CAN GET AT, BUT YOU HAVE TO HAVE THE DISCIPLINE TO NOT GO RIGHT AT SOME OF THEM.

'[JORDAN SPIETH] DOESN'T WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT

THE SHORT PUTTS. HE NEVER THINKS ABOUT THE NEXT PUTT BECAUSE HE ASSUMES THIS ONE IS GOING IN.



LEFT-HANDERS VS. RIGHT-HANDERS

fade is the shot. What does everybody do who plays golf for a living? He fights a hook. You can't play at a high level playing a hook because you end up spending so much time fighting it off. Or holding it off entirely. The ideal shot is a fade. So for a lefty hitting some kind of powerful shot you can control-a fade-on that golf course, it's definitely a weapon." . . . "Take the 12th hole. Left-handers can aim at the front bunker, and if they pull the shot, it'll make the carry. And if they push it, they can make the shorter carry on the left. A right-handed push is wet, and a pull goes too far onto the bank at the back. Other shots are easier, too. They can hit fades off the tee at 13 and 14. They can cut it off the fairway bunker on 2. They can go for it more off the 15th tee because their draw moves away from the trees on the left." . . . "You can play the course with a right-handed fade-Nicklaus proved that. But it's a massive advantage to move it right to left. Turning over a modern driver is very difficult, which is why Phil and Bubba have such an inherent advantage." . . . "The left-hander theory is total bullshit. You have to move it both ways at Augusta. I think Phil likes people to think there's more to it. That's totally Phil to gain an edge." . . . "I wish I were left-handed that week."... "Was Augusta Tiger-proofed? What they did is, they right-hand-proofed it. I think if I could play it left-handed, even I would have a chance."

"More than patience, it also takes someone who isn't afraid to lose and who has really big balls—I don't know any other way to say it. You have to be able to stomach the thought of winning, believe it or not." . . . "Each round there are probably nine holes you can make birdie and nine holes you can make par, depending on the pins, and you can't really alter that equation a whole lot."

TOUGH DECISIONS

ne of the best things Augusta does is mess with you. And the way they mess with you is they give you options. Pros don't like options, because then they have to make a decision. At the U.S. Open, when you're sitting in four inches of rough around the green, you have one option: You take out your sand wedge, open it up and hope it lands soft. But at Augusta you can bump-and-run it, you can putt it, you can loft it, you can use a hybrid or a 3-wood-that makes you uneasy because you're praying you don't pick the wrong option. It puts doubt in your mind." ... "Augusta is the greatest setup of any tournament in the world. And that's without long rough. Short grass is used as a hazard there. People think narrow fairways and a bunch of rough is hard. Driving it, yes. But around the greens, short grass is a hazard, and it's expertly used that way at the Masters." . . . "Mowing the fairways toward the tees is just one trick they use at Augusta, but it does more than just slow down the ball. You hit the fairway and think you're OK, but because of the way they mow it, the ball can nestle down a little bit. It's tough to always get a clean lie. That adds to the anxiety when you're trying to get the distance right into the green."

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CONTENDERS

JASON DAY

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-2 (2011)

"Jason is the No. 1 putter on tour, and he hits it long and high. He's perfect for Augusta." . . . "There isn't a spot on that course where he's going to be uncomfortable." . . . "What he doesn't need is a windy Masters. His ball flight is too high when the wind is swirling. Plus, he's always sick. He wants to win Augusta so bad it pretty much guaran-

tees he'll be sick that week. He's like Tiger in that respect-there's always something wrong with him." . . . "He hasn't quite learned to play the golf course correctly. You can't just play all out, and he seems to do that a bit too much. There isn't a pin he doesn't think he can get at, but you have to have the discipline to not go right at some of them because your misses are so magnified there. But he'll learn, and I think he'll eventually win." . . . "The only thing that hurts Jason is that he doesn't seem to have a half-shot. Everything is full tilt."... "He just hasn't put it all together in one week there, and the game is filled with guys who did that, be it Tom Weiskopf or Ernie



Els. Not saying Jason won't win. But the longer he waits, the harder it gets." . . . "He maybe wants it too badly." . . . "He has great patience. I just wish he would do it faster. I mean, the guy wears out everyone else's patience."

. . .

RICKIE FOWLER

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-5 (2014)

"Rickie seems to have a textbook game for the Masters. If you can win at Sawgrass, you can move the ball both ways. And he can finish well. So he's not afraid of the big situation. But his putting is the weak link, like so many of the leading players other than Jordan." . . . "The problem is his chipping. He's a little flippy at the bottom. Hitting to greens that don't give him much margin for error, that leads to a lot of bogeys if he isn't holing out from 15 feet all day. At Augusta, you have to be comfortable chipping into the grain, and I just don't think Rickie is. When you take the little bump-and-run

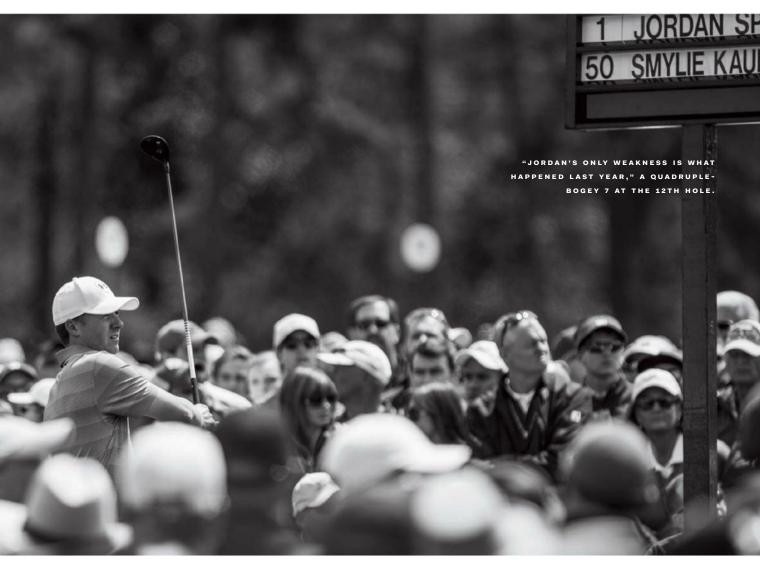
shot away from him, he looks a little lost." ... "He's starting to put double bogeys back on his card, and I thought he'd gotten over that when he went to Butch. He's overly aggressive at the wrong times. Bogeys aren't bad sometimes, but double bogeys-and then you press some more. Bad combo."

SERGIO GARCIA

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-4 (2004)

"The irony is that, ball-striking-wise, Sergio is suited to Augusta more than anyone other than Bubba. Sergio hits it both ways. He can hit the draw off the tee and the fade into the greens. He plays old-school golf. But he's talked himself out of winning there. He clearly hates the place. He's beaten before he gets to the first tee. His putting weakness is a problem, of course. As Ernie showed, you can be exposed on the first hole of the Masters. [Els six-putted the opening hole in 2016.] The same could happen to Sergio. Three-footers in the Mas-

ters are as stressful as 10-footers on other courses. If you miss, you're going to be as far away again. And to hole them properly, you have to risk having an eight-footer coming back. Sergio's worried about the next one, so he doesn't hit the first one very well." . . . "He sees it as a tricked-up course, one they would never build today. But he should like it more than he does. The most striking aspect of the course is that the shape asked off the tee is so often the opposite of the approach shot. That should suit Sergio. But he can't get his head out of his arse." . . . "His history in the majors only compounds his bad mood when he plays in the Masters. It's a shame. He has everything, all the shots. And now he's putting just fine. But his attitude is awful at Augusta. He can't escape his past there, especially when he's reminded of some of the things he has said." [After a third-round 75 at the 2012 Masters, Garcia said, "I'm not good enough . . . I don't have the thing I need to have. . . . I've come to the conclusion that I need to play for second or third place . . .





'IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT HOLDS BACK

DUSTIN JOHNSON: NOTHING. IT'S JUST HARD TO WIN MAJORS.



CHIPPING AND PITCHING

here are a lot of guys who are a bit nervous chipping off short grass. And Augusta exposes that lack of confidence. I've seen guys chipping from everywhere Monday through Wednesday, but come Thursday, they get their putters out."... "Anyone who has that steep 'swing left' action has a problem with the chipping. Graeme McDowell does that. So does Westwood. And Kaymer. That tendency to swing through impact with the hands in front of the club, it's no good for chipping. The leading edge of the club is exposed to the ground before it gets to the ball. So they're prone to stick the club in the ground. And when you do that often enough, it's in your head." . . . "Bad chippers get found out by the precision required around the greens at Augusta. You get away with nothing." . . . "Jason Day and Stricker chip with very little hinge motion. That works well from the tight lies you get at Augusta. Maybe that action isn't the best when a flop shot is called for from a really tight lie, but you can get by." . . . "You can putt from nearly everywhere. The fairways are cut so close, so you don't have to chip. Everyone plays 'Scottish golf' around the greens. All of which helps the bad chipper. Which is why Lee Westwood has had some success." ... "The grass around the greens is actually a little longer than it used to be, so the run-offs are not as long. I suspect that's to stop guys from putting from just about anywhere. They want you to chip, albeit from lies that are not quite as tight as they used to be."

in any major."] . . . "He doesn't handle adversity well, and yet he's been a pretty good U.S. Open player. I think he's just fed up with trying and coming up short." ... "I think he'll win a major, but I don't think it will be the Masters. Some people turn up and relish the prospect. Others dread it, and Sergio is one of those."

BRANDEN GRACE

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-18 (2013)

"Someone like Branden, even though he drives it so well, has little or no chance to win. He simply hits the ball too low, both off the tee and with his irons." . . . "He shapes his shots left to right. He's likely to be exposed by that. It's a massive disadvantage to be up the right side on, say, 10. It's like a half-shot penalty. The same is true at 13 and 14. Holes where a 20-yard draw gives you a big advantage, he's going to be found out. And you can't see him stopping a long-iron second to the 15th green."

DUSTIN JOHNSON

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-4 (2016)

"It looks like someone told him he doesn't have all the shots to win at Augusta, and he hasn't actually realized that he does. The only nitpick I see is, his right hand rides a little high when he's putting. Under pressure, that can lead to taking the club back closed and having to make a compensation coming through." . . . "The low cut shot doesn't work at Augusta, but the high cut can. So someone like Dustin Johnson can compete there. He hits it way high and can hold balls into the slopes if it happens to get hard and fast." . . . "His biggest problem is his caddie [brother Austin]. At Augusta, you have to really be on your toes. And he's not that experienced there. So I do wonder if they have any idea strategically on the ultimate strategic course. He has already gone for way too many flags." ... "I've seen Rory be really good at putting. I've never seen Dustin be really good at putting. Even when he won at Oakmont." ... "He misses so many of those 10-footers that inevitably you're going to have there, but maybe he overcomes that for one week. Sometimes, a 10-footer for par is the best you're going to get. Tiger lived on making 10-footers when he had to." . . . "People don't give Dustin enough credit for his putting. I think he putts it pretty decently. He misses some, but his speed is usually not too far off." . . . "It's obvious what holds back Dustin Johnson: nothing. It's just hard to win majors."

• • •

ZACH JOHNSON

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2007)

"It would take a perfect storm of circumstances for a Zach Johnson to win again. A three-to-four-club difference into those greens is too much to overcome."

SMYLIE KAUFMAN

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-29 (2016)

"He played in the final group last year when the course was a lot harder than when Jordan killed it in 2015. I like his game, but his development is a little behind the curve of the others in his age group. Nothing wrong with that. Just give him more time."

MARTIN KAYMER

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-31 (2014)

"Basically he won with putting at Pinehurst [2014 U.S. Open], and he'd have to do the same thing in the Masters because his driving isn't as good as some of the other top players." . . . "Maybe the worst chipper out there."

RUSSELL KNOX

BEST AT AUGUSTA: CUT AS ROOKIE (2016)

"He hits it only 285 yards off the tee. That isn't an advantage at Augusta, but it isn't the end of the world, either, if only because he hits it so straight. I'm not sure he putts nearly well enough to even contend at Augusta, never mind win. Because the greens there are so fast, the hole is, in effect, smaller. Look at how many times we see crazy lip-outs there. Not good for guys who putt like Russell."

'[LEE WESTWOOD] PLAYS

TO HIS STRENGTH, WHICH IS HITTING LOTS OF GREENS."



MATT KUCHAR

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-3 (2012)

"There's always someone playing better than him. There's nothing bad about his game, but nothing that makes him particularly well-suited to Augusta, either. It's hard to imagine him beating everyone on that course."

• •

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 5 (2015)

He carries the weight of a nation, a bit like Adam Scott used to do for Australia. Can he manage the expectations? That's a hard way to play." . . . "Matsuyama's putting stroke is too slow. It lacks pace. He takes it back too far and too slowly. So there's a built-in deceleration. You can't hit it well enough at Augusta to make up for bad putting."

• • •

RORY MCILROY

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 4 (2015)

"I look at this year as sort of a free pass when everyone is going to be talking about Spieth, Justin Thomas, Jon Rahm, Dustin and Jason Day. That said, I would always put Rory in the top 10 even coming off an injury." . . . "Any injury is serious when you swing a stick and hit a ball. Sometimes those rib injuries tend to linger." . . . "Rory goes at the ball so hard. I'm not sure the body is meant to be going at shots with that sort of violence." . . . "When he's not injured, he always seems to be on the edge of being injured. Part of the problem is this mania for power in the modern game." . . . "There's a link between Rory and Tiger. I'm convinced Tiger's body broke down because he overdid it in the gym. He shortened his career by 10 years-at least. I've never seen any of the heavier guys injured. I'm not sure any of the gym rats will have great longevity." ... "If he's fully healed in time, this will be a good thing for him. He won't have to over-think his preparation or how he's playing. It takes a little pressure off him with all the talk about the career Grand Slam, etc. Down deep, he knows what he's playing for, and he's probably been thinking about it the last few years. But now I think he'll be more relaxed and could come in with a different mind-set entirely." . . . "Rory can't win there because he's a below-average putter. He has been his whole career, and not too many of them win at Augusta National. He's been streaky-good at times, but he's had one good putting week in the past two years. You can talk all you like about Rory winning the Masters, but that depends on him having his best putting week ever. And it has to happen at Augusta National. Really?" . . . "You have to putt well every day to win there, and Rory hasn't done that yet. But he is getting better through his work with Phil Kenyon, who is a brilliant putting coach." . . . "Rory's speed control is sometimes dodgy. It isn't something you can easily learn, either. You can work on mechanics and produce an efficient stroke, but speed control is innate, and Augusta is the ultimate test of that." . . . "Rory just got away from what he was doing as a kid with his putting technique. He came out as this amazing young player, and he was successful and then he said, 'You know what? I'm going to start dragging the handle toward the cup with my putting stroke.' That's the Stockton thing with the forward press and drag the handle, instead of the release method he was using. Either one works, but not when you've been doing one your whole life and then you go to the other. Why did he do that?" . . . "When he gets into trouble he's tempted to try to get out of it with one swing. You can't do that in the Masters. The course can make you feel like you can be a hero, but all too often you end up with a big old black eye." . . . "Whatever happened to him in 2012 [a 77-76 finish], maybe that's just stuck in his head." . . . "Rory is an in-and-out chipper, and his clubbing is suspect at times. How often do you see him and [caddie J.P. Fitzgerald] looking at each other in shock

after his ball has finished 20 yards over the back?" . . . "If you listen to them on the course, you often hear Rory asking, 'What happened there?' More than once I've heard J.P. saying something like, 'OK, hit a soft draw with a 6-iron off that tree.' And I've immediately thought, This ball is going over the green. And sure enough, it does. So you have to wonder. I see Rory up close only occasionally, and I know he's going to hit the ball over the green when his caddie clearly doesn't. It makes no sense." . . . "Rory needs someone to tell him what he needs to hear, not what he wants to hear." . . . "Why he doesn't employ Billy Foster is a mystery. Rory would have 10 majors by now if he did. Of course, we know what Rory is like. He's as stubborn as anyone on tour. The more people tell him that J.P. is not the right caddie for him, the more he'll keep him on."



PHIL MICKELSON

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2004, 2006, 2010)

"Phil's notes for Augusta are 100 pages thick. He contends because he knows every inch of the golf course. But he also has imagination for the chipping and the putting required around there, and all the notes in the world aren't going to help you if you can't handle the tough shots around the greens that everyone has to face eventually." . . . "Billy Foster caddied for Seve, but he reckons Phil is the better chipper. That's good enough for me. And Phil is phenomenal out of bunkers." . . . "Phil is the ultimate for chipping at Augusta. He's far and away the most accomplished." . . . "Phil has some issues with his body that I'm not sure we fully appreciate-the arthritis thing is still there. On the course,

the 'hero' potential is too often too much for him to deal with. He lives for shots like the one he hit from the pine straw at the 13th [in his 2010 Masters win]. But they don't come off too often. There's always the potential for disaster with Phil. And at Augusta, that's a thin line." . . . "There isn't a shot he won't try. There also isn't a shot he hasn't seen at Augusta. He hasn't lost his nerve, either."

• • •

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 2 (2012)

"Louis should win every time he tees it up. He has the best swing out there. But it comes down to how interested he is. He knows what he wants to do when he finishes playing, and he is, in a very quiet way, trying to get there. Golf for him is not everything.

And, yet again, putting is his weakness. That, and a mind that tends to wander. Neither of which works too well at Augusta."

JON RAHM

BEST AT AUGUSTA: ROOKIE

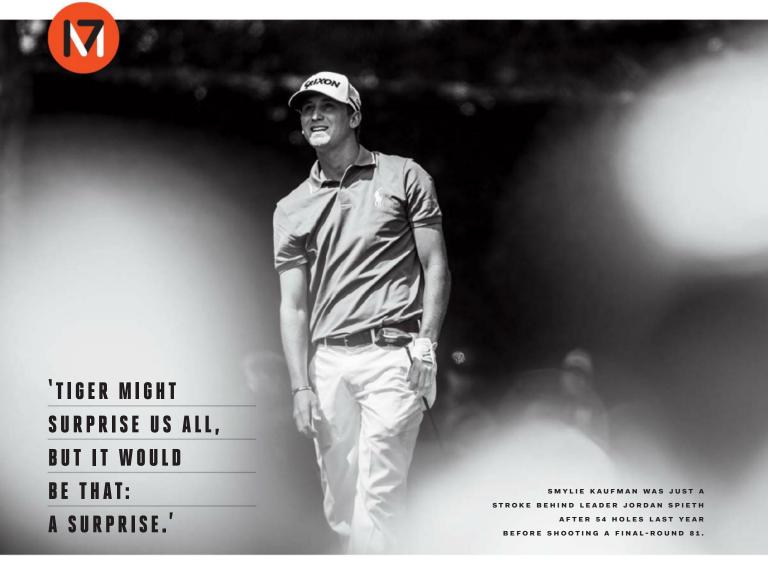
"Perfect for Augusta. High hooks-the opposite of Bubba's high slices." . . . "I haven't seen him play away from too many pins, and that sort of aggression can get you into trouble, especially on the water holes."

PATRICK REED

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-22 (2015)

"His biggest handicap is actually his familiarity with the place [Reed played at Augusta State] and his expectation level.





He knows he should play well because he's been around there so often. But I think he turns his shots too hard from right to left. He doesn't have a controlled draw. So he's never completely sure where the ball is going to finish."

JUSTIN ROSE

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-2 (2015)

"Putting is his Achilles' heel. He hits the ball like a world-beater. With putting, you have to feel it and see it and visualize it. And none of those things come out of a computer. But that's the [instructor] Sean Foley way." . . . "Justin is yet another guy who gets better the farther he is from the hole. He was the other way around as a kid. He's mentally strong. But majors are such a big deal now, and he's one who tries too hard. He puts too much importance on them, especially the Masters because of the long build-up, which is why we see some of the top guys have complete nightmares at majors now and then." . . . "When you first get into majors you treat them pretty much like any event. You pitch up on Monday, play a couple of practice rounds and go for it. But when you start contending in them and even winning, the tendency is to put too much importance on them. And nowhere is that more true than at Augusta. Guys just make it too big a deal. Justin and Rickie have certainly fallen into that trap. Their expectations are off the charts."

ADAM SCOTT

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2013)

"Adam hits the ball as well as anyone, but he doesn't spin the ball an amazing amount. Rory, Dustin, Jason and Bubba all spin the ball a lot. So Adam's not a guy who can stop a 5-iron really quickly. That can be important at Augusta, where you can sometimes have shots over 200 yards to incredibly small targets. As for Adam's putting, he was a good putter for a long time. But now he just seems worn out by having birdie putts roll over the edge so much of the time. And that happens a lot at Augusta. Plus, his short game isn't as good as Jason's or Jordan's. There isn't a hole at Augusta that he can't play well tee to green, but his putting does get exposed. When someone's weakness is putting, it's hard to pick out a hole at Augusta where they're always going to struggle. It could be anywhere."

• • •

JORDAN SPIETH

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2015)

"Jordan's only weakness is what happened last year [the final-round quadruple-bogey 7 after hitting two balls into the water at the 12th hole]. It has to be in his head. Every eye is going to be on him, and he'll be aware

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of that." . . . "That is such a hard shot. I've hit the ball in the water there once in 30 to 40 tournament rounds, and it was tough the time after I did it. It's especially hard if your miss is to the right under pressure, which is the case for many modern righthanders. There are a lot more blocks than hooks these days." . . . "Olazabal was the classic example of someone made for Augusta. Rubbish off the tee. Great iron player. Wonderful putter. That's Spieth." . . . "All he has to do is put the ball in play off the tee. From there, he can play that course as well as anyone. Perhaps his only weakness is that his bad shots are really, really bad. His misses are off the planet. But so were Tiger's early in his career, and he did OK in the Masters. Besides, Augusta is not a 'chip-out' course." . . . "Jordan gets exposed a little because of his relative lack of length. He's prone to stretches where he doesn't hit many good shots. In every four-day event, he's likely to have one off-day." . . . "Jordan isn't afraid to take on different shots. He isn't afraid to hit a bump-and-run if he has to hit that shot. Everyone else just takes out their 60 or 62 and hits a flop shot of some kind and throws it up in the air." . . . "Spieth is such a great chipper. First time there you can see guys chipping off the first green 20 times. But he never did that." . . . "Someone like Jordan can walk more freely at Augusta because he doesn't worry so much about the short putts. He never thinks about the next putt because he assumes this one is going in. The otherseven if they're holing out well-are just more anxious." . . . "Pure striking doesn't necessarily get rewarded at Augusta. Hitting the ball less than perfectly puts less spin on shots, and that works better more often than not. Guys who hit solid shots can see their balls spin back off the greens. And when that happens a few times, their confidence is shot. Spieth doesn't hit the ball nearly as well as, say, Day or Rory or Henrik." . . . "If Jordan's putting is anything other than hot, he has no chance. And he can't hoist irons high in the air like Rory can." . . . "I've never seen a better putter than Jordan. As a whole package, he's amazing. How do you explain how he



HENRIK STENSON

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-14 (2014)

"Henrik is another guy who will never putt well enough to win the Masters. He's putted well enough to win one major. So has Adam Scott. And when they win, everyone thinks they're going to win every major. But they've done it only once." . . . "Henrik is a great ball-striker, but he needs to hit more drivers to take full advantage of that. He's a 3-wood guy. He averages about 290 yards off the tee. That is such a waste. You can't look at him and say, 'He's my pick for Augusta.' I'd put him in the same category with Adam and Justin Rose. They have all putted well enough to win one major." . . . "The best ball-striker in golf, maybe, but definitely not the best short game. And you're going to have to chip it and make a bunch of four-, six-, eight-footers. Just not a guy I would pick to win." . . . "He might ball-strike the place to death and win, but since they changed it, I have yet to see anyone ball-strike Augusta into submission. They just don't allow it." ... "He tends to do better on courses where the greens are not like concrete or super burned out, so he feels free to stroke the ball rather than 'hope' the ball. But he can do it anywhere. When he won the Players [in 2009], the greens were almost dead and really fast. So if the greens get so tough that no one is making anything, his chances of success increase. Holding him back, too, is that he clearly doesn't enjoy the golf course. Like Sergio, his inherent dislike of the place is a problem."

• •

JUSTIN THOMAS

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-39 (2016)

"Well, he's only 23, but there's a big difference between winning the odd PGA Tour event and winning the Masters. Don't get me wrong, four wins, and three here pretty recently, a 59 on the board, he's obviously playing very well." ... "Justin seems to have a scoring gear he just sort of discovered. Or grew into." ... "He appears made for the Masters, but we've seen a lot of great players who were made for the Masters who didn't win it. He certainly looks like he has all the tools—length, explosion at the ball (which is incredible), he's proven he can go

TOUGH SHOTS

ver the first green might be the worst spot on the course that is not in water or trees. It's easy to go there when it's into the wind. The first 10 yards of the green are basically unusable. The ball just rolls back off the front. So you have a choice sometimes of coming up short or going over the back. That's hard to deal with mentally on the first hole: The best spot is 25 yards short of the pin? But it is." . . . "The drive on 2 is tough. So is the sixth hole when the pin is up on the right. Seven is a tough drive. So is the approach to 11. And the drive at 13. And the pitch to the 15th, from short of the water or over the green. And the drive on 17." ... "There are cardinal sins, of course. You can't be short on 5 when the pin is up in the front. It's like trying to land a 6-iron on the roof of a car to get close there." . . . "The one shot I never want to hit at Augusta is the second shot on 11. It's hard because you've seen the shot so many times that you're just petrified to hit it in the water. So you bail out, sometimes way too far-I've seen balls on the 12th tee-and that's not an easy up-and-down for par. Everyone makes it into a par 41/2. They've made that hole so long now that it's the least-exciting hole on the golf course. If guys had 7-or 8-iron in their hands more, it would tempt them to go at some pins, and it would be more exciting. Now, though, it's so long and uninviting-who's going to aim at the green? No one. That's an example of overcompensation for how far the ball goes. So now it's a boring hole because it's a superhard hole that no one plays properly. Everyone takes the risk out, so there's no drama. Crazy." . . . "The tee shot at 12 is the hardest shot there. With the wind swirling, the shallowness of the green-there's no good bailout there. The way the hole sits, it sets up for a fade, and your eye says it sets up for a fade, but you saw what happened to Jordan Spieth." . . . "The 12th can be the easiest hole on the course, but it can be a beast. And it's harder with the modern ball. The 'Pinnacles' they play with can take off through the wind and one-hop into the garbage at the back." . . . "The most dramatic hole is 12, followed by 13, and they're two of the shortest holes on the course. So what does that say?"

holes from 25 feet so often? No one else

is close. His speed control is incredible.

Virtually every putt is traveling at exactly

the right speed, which is huge at Augusta.

That's a massive weapon."



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'[DANNY WILLETT] HAS NOTHING TO PROVE NOW THAT HE'S WON THE MASTERS, BUT HE NEEDS TO HIT THE BALL HIGHER IF HE WANTS TO CONTEND IN ALL CONDITIONS.'



low, and he obviously has a good head on his shoulders. Augusta is just a different animal, though. Does he have the touch to manage the short shots? That will be important. But with his length he can make up for that with great approaches. You can set yourself up to score with ball-striking."

he can use his ability to the fullest and do something to set himself up to score." . . . "Bubba's short game is really good, but sometimes he can get a lie that he can't maneuver because he tends to be steep on chip shots, and if it's too tight he might stick it." . . . "Which player has the most/ least patience at Augusta? The answer to both is Bubba Watson. Seriously." . . . "Bubba's problem is not knowing which Bubba will show up. If he gets going early, he's fine. But if he has to grind to find something, he throws in the towel, which is odd."

BEST AT AUGUSTA: T-8 (2014)

"Jimmy Walker's obvious weakness is that when he gets a little loose, the ball goes left. But now that he's won a major, there's no reason why he can't contend at Augusta. He hits it plenty high." . . . "When I think of some ugly short games, Jimmy Walker comes to mind. He doesn't appear comfortable chipping anywhere he plays."

BUBBA WATSON

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2012, 2014)

"Bubba is such an unconventional player that he turns out being the perfect guy for Augusta National. First, of course, is that he pounds it, and he can be as long as he chooses to be. But then the way he moves it around and curves the ball, does all those little shots, it's just the best playground for his imagination." . . . "He doesn't get bored there. He loves the course-and we all know how much that means to Bubba." . . . "His preferred shot is perfect for Augusta, apart from the tee shots at the first and 18; 7, too-the holes where he has to hit a straight one off the tee." ... "He has the most magical short game in golf. He has the most touch, the most imagination. And he likes the challenge of that. Being creative is his game." . . . "There's no shot Bubba can't hit, but he has to hit the appropriate shot at the time. But he can afford to be patient, because if it's not this shot, then it's the next, when

LEE WESTWOOD

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 2 (2010), T-2 (2016)

"Lee does OK at Augusta because he accepts the chip he has to play. He never gets too fancy. He plays to his strength, which is hitting lots of greens. And if he does that, he doesn't have to chip very often, maybe three times a day. Besides, he's better than he used to be. I'd say he's just below average now."

DANNY WILLETT

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (2016)

"He has nothing to prove now that he's won the Masters, but he needs to hit the ball higher if he wants to contend in all conditions. Nothing seems to bother him, though. So you never know. He played great [winning in 2016]. And then when his whole world changed as he stood on the 16th tee, he never batted an eye. That was impressive." . . . "He seems to have been on a celebration tour since he won at Augusta."

TIGER WOODS

BEST AT AUGUSTA: 1 (1997, 2001, 2002, 2005)

"We all watched him when he played in Dubai. It was sad to see. He didn't hit one shot like he used to. And the man could hardly walk. Then he comes in and says he wasn't in any pain. It really is getting harder and harder to believe anything Tiger says about anything. You even wonder if

he ever had back spasms on the second day. There was a lot of suspicion that he took one look at the strong wind, thought, I can't break 85 in that, and opted out. Long before we even teed off for the second round, my caddie was taking bets that Tiger would pull out-because of the weather." ... "If you're shooting 77 in almost perfect conditions [in Dubai], I find it hard to believe he wasn't scared to play on the second day." ... "You can't play golf worried about your back. He's also fighting the embarrassment of being so bad right in front of his fellow players." . . . "As for the Masters, he has no chance to play well-if he plays at all. That course is too hard and too long for him in his present state." . . . "I can't say that I



like anything about Tiger's golf swing. He needs to be looser in his left foot, more old-style, letting the heel come up-that would give him more hip rotation and help him get his left knee behind the ball. He'd also have more power. With his left foot on the ground, there's too much strain on the spine. He isn't going to compete anywhere, especially not at Augusta, if he's short and crooked. It's OK if he's not as long as he used to be. A power thrower has to become a pitcher, to use a baseball analogy. But Tiger looks like he's not ready to be a pitcher. He still wants to be a thrower, and he can't be at 41 with back issues." . . . "Tiger might surprise us all, but it would be that: a surprise. We all have that expiration date, and it's different for everyone." ... "He's been so successful for so long. He's got a family now. Does he want to put the time in to be ready? And will his body hold up as he tries to get himself ready? When you've won a billion dollars, there has to be some questions. Like, I've just gone double bogey/bogey; do I really need to grind this thing out? But if he decides that he wants to do that, then I think he can be good."... "If he wins another major, it would be the Masters. He's played there so many times, it's not as demanding as, say, the U.S. Open. He knows those greens and could maybe get his putter going. And if he gets into a good form and good rhythm, he'll be able to get in the mix,

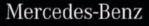
and from there, who knows?" . . . "If he knows where it's going, then he could win." . . . "At one point, it looked like he had seven different golf swings going. He has to tighten up and get back to playing golf like he knows he can. Then, if he putts well, he wins." . . . "A healthy Tiger is still a player to be reckoned with." . . . "Throw out all the great young competition and just concentrate on Tiger. What can he bring to the table now? Does he putt well? Does he have the chipping figured out? He can't dominate with length anymore, so he has to do all the other things really well, and I'm not sure he can do that to the degree it takes to win the Masters." . . . "You never say never with him." 6





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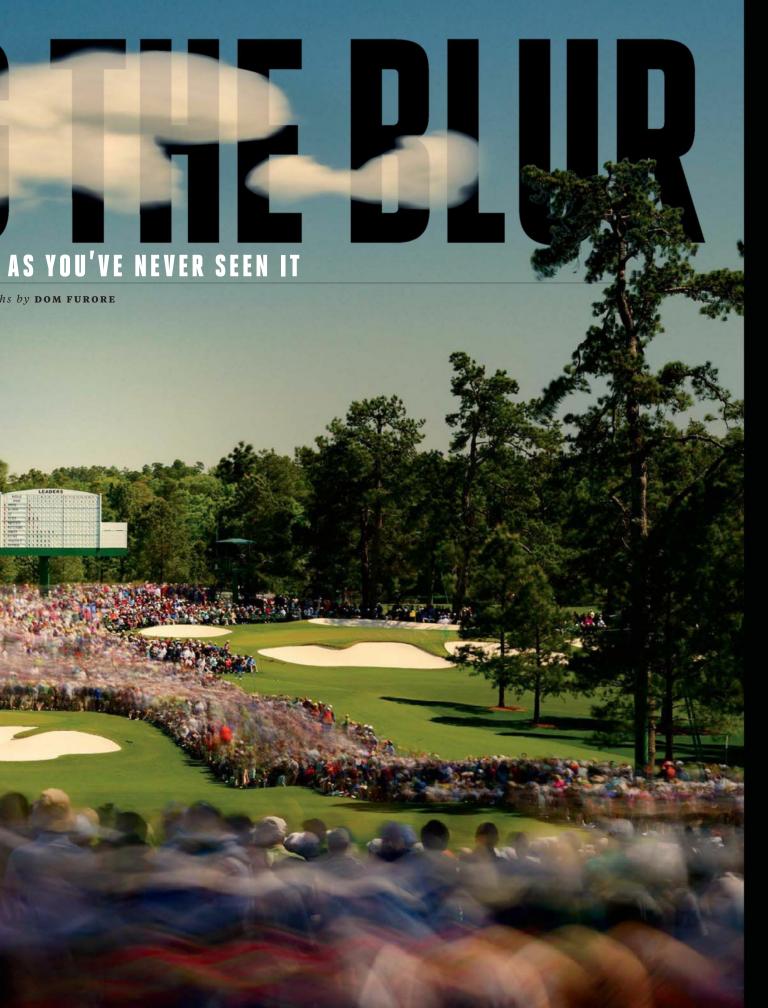


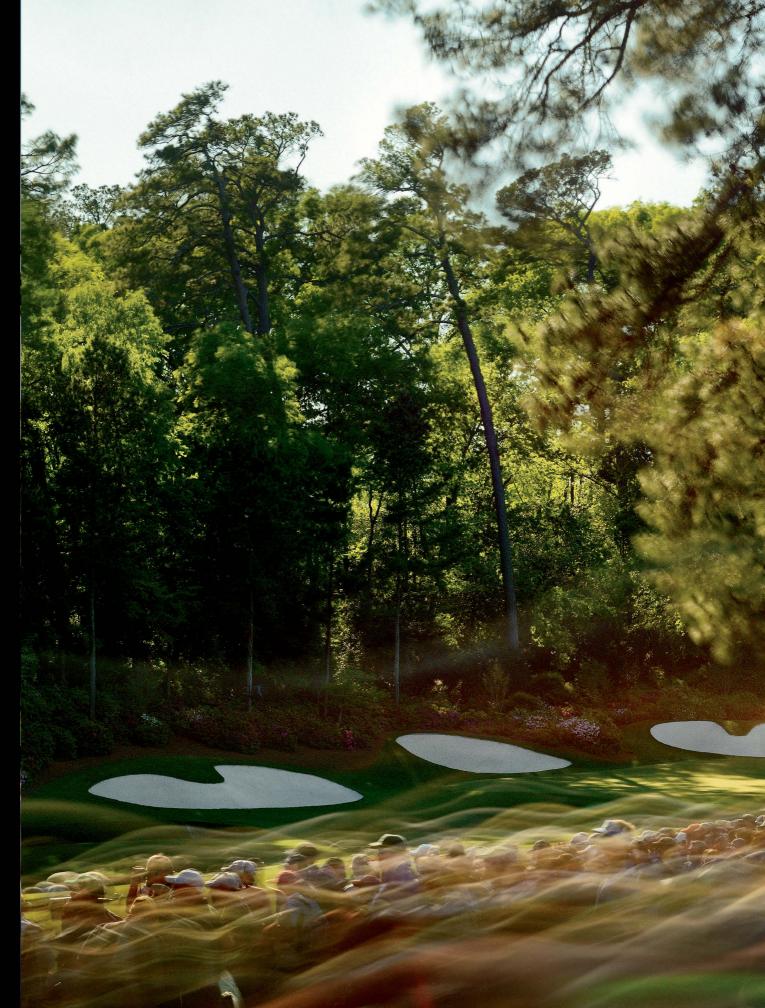
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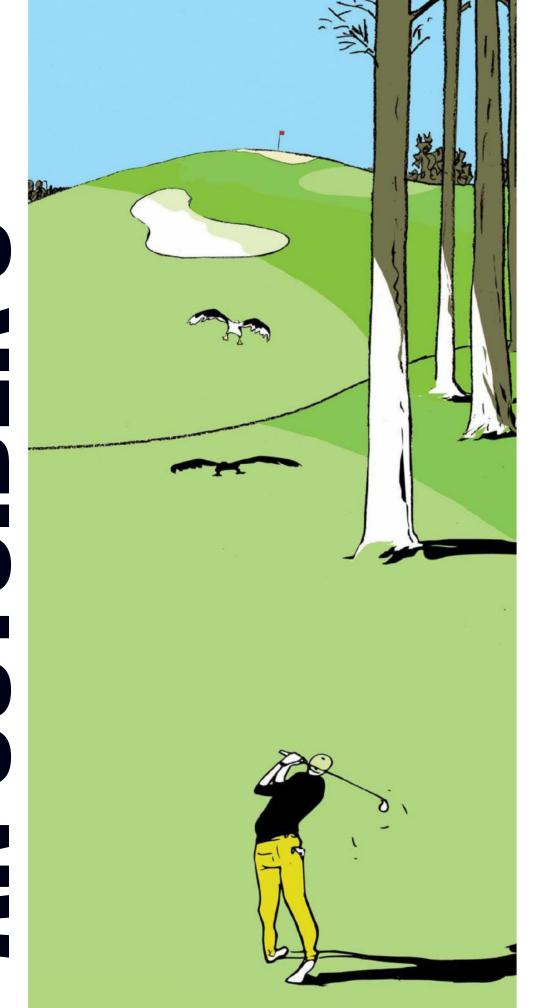








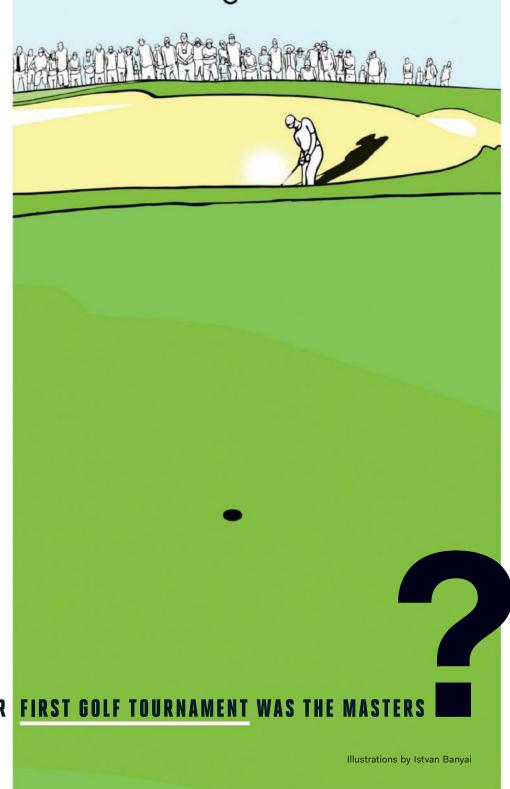




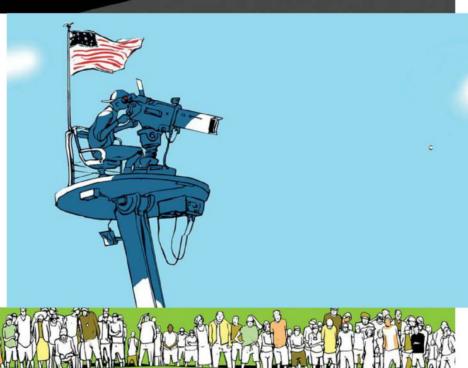
INITIAL SAID

You'd like Istvan Banyai. Born in Budapest. Lived in Paris, L.A., Manhattan and now rural Connecticut. Engaging and inquisitive, he has done magazine illustrations, record covers, movie posters, animated films and books like Zoom, honored as one of the best children's books of 1995 by The New York Times. ► Each year, Golf Digest invites someone who has never been to Augusta National to get what we call First Impressions for the next year's Masters preview. Istvan not only had never been to Augusta National, he'd never been to a golf tournament, but he threw himself into the assignment and delighted in making sense of it all back at the Golf Digest house each night. ▶ "I had absolutely no idea," he says. "The space, the distance, the hole, the spectacle . . . one guy struggling alone in the middle of all this extravaganza.... I found something absurd about it." Here, we see golf, and Augusta, in a unique way.

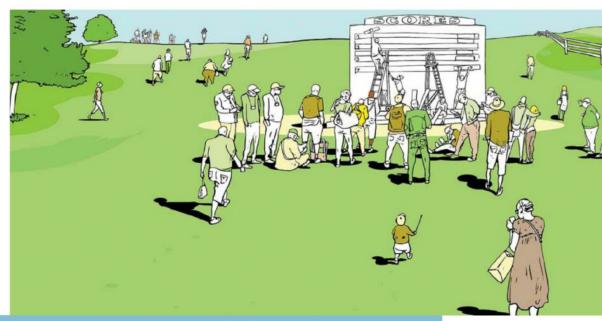
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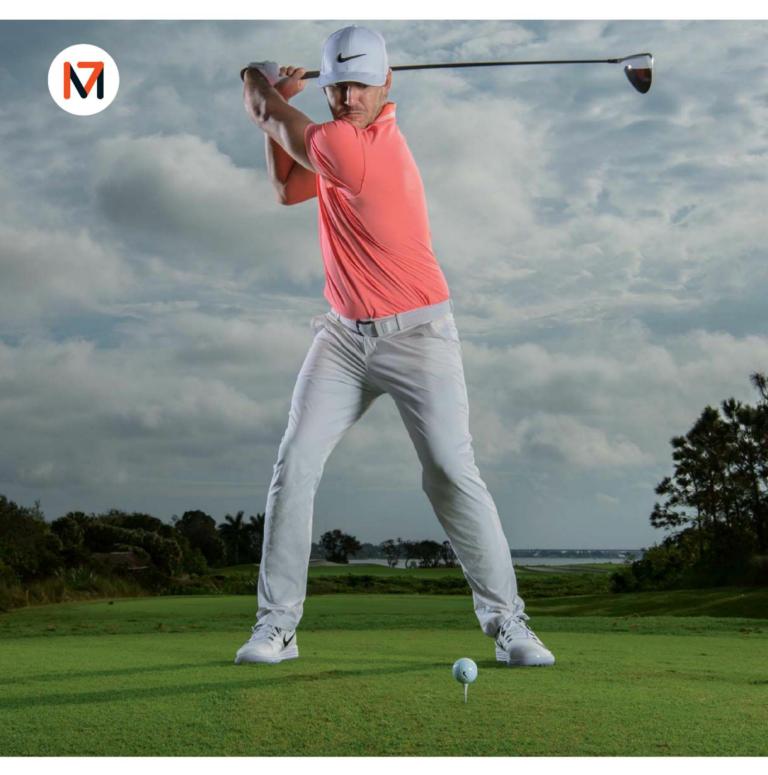






A lot of people have told me my game really suits Augusta National. I'd like to agree. The first time I played there, on the eve of my first Masters, in 2015, I loved it. It's such a special place, and the course teaches you something new each time you play it. My results so far have been fair, finishing T-33 as a rookie and T-21 last year, but I'm optimistic about this year. I'm healthy again, and I feel like I finally have all the shots you need to play Augusta well. The way I count, there are four. Here I'll show you how to hit them. ▶ Of course, knowing the right shots to practice and doing the work is only half the equation. The other half? Controlling emotions. When we arrive at Augusta National each April, it's been eight or nine months since we played in our last major, the PGA Championship. Guys are ready to go, and many put so much pressure on themselves that it's hard to play like they should. That's an important lesson for any golfer. Whatever round feels like your Masters, tamp the adrenaline. Do whatever it takes to stay cool. ▶ Once you're relaxed, these four shots will help you play great anywhere. And if you ever land the invite to ANGC, you'll be especially well prepared. —WITH MAX ADLER





BIG DRAW

A LOT OF THE TEE SHOTS

at Augusta set up best for a draw. Or for lefties like Phil and Bubba, a power fade. The par-4 10th and the par-5 13th are the most critical spots to turn it right to left. You've probably heard the basic tips on hitting a draw: Aim your feet and shoulders at the right side of the fairway, aim the clubface at

the middle of the fairway, then swing along your toe line. Solid advice, but what I've found most helpful is to start the downswing slooow. Make an emphatic pause at the top of the backswing (above), then feel zero rush to get the club down to the ball. With my weight on my right leg longer than normal, the clubface is going to close. If I can make a

nice, slower swing driven by my arms, I know I'll see the ball turn over right to left.

If you struggle to do this with a driver, use a 3-wood. The extra loft and shorter shaft make it easier to draw the ball. Besides, on most holes that demand this shot, distance isn't your priority. The last thing you want to do is hit it through the fairway.

AWKWARD Approach

WHAT'S REALLY UNIQUE about Augusta are the uneven stances in the fairway where the green complex is asking you to hit the opposite trajectory than the stance promotes. For example, on the 10th fairway the ball will be above your feet, yet the green tilts in a way that it won't hold a draw. You need to fade the approach (or at the very least, hit it straight) despite the feeling you're hitting a baseball because the ball is perched so high (right). The fact you're likely swinging a middle iron or long iron only makes it tougher. Outside Augusta, you almost can't find comparable terrain to practice these shots.

Natural athleticism goes a long way, but to be good at working the ball from odd stances you need to be in control of the bottom of your





swing. My teacher, Claude Harmon III, showed me a great drill for this. Switch your hands to take a cross-handed grip (left), then hit shots that travel 60, 70, no more than 100 yards. Go easy, making only half-swings on both sides to protect your shoulders. You'll hit the first few to the right, but stick with it. Here I have a 4-iron, but I've used every club from driver to wedge with this drill. Your only goal is solid contact. It will help you feel exactly how the club is meant to move through impact. Whatever your tendencyreleasing the club too early or too late-cross-handed swings can help you feel the opposite.

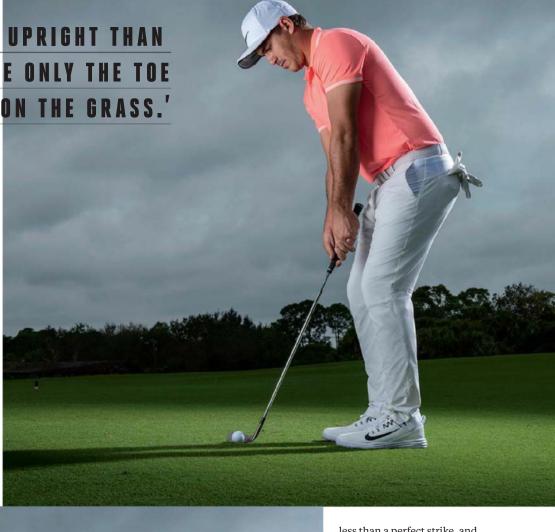
Though it's smart to go easy with this drill, I've seen Rickie pure it 280 cross-handed. We were on the range at a tour event, and he said he wondered how long it would take for someone to notice his grip. Took eight or nine balls. I'll stick to my 100-yard shots, thank you very much.



CHIP AGAINST THE GRAIN

AUGUSTA GRASS MIGHT LOOK

perfect on TV, but up close the lies are frightening. Miss a green, and chances are you'll end up in a hollow where the grain of the fairway grass is mowed against you. Anything





less than a perfect strike, and the grain will catch the wedge's leading edge or heel. Result: you stub the chip.

You might laugh because it doesn't exactly look sexy, but I've discovered an effective method to protect against the stub. I stand more upright than usual and sole only the toe of the wedge on the grass (above). With the heel off the turf, there's no way it can catch. I then close the clubface a bit so it's pointing left of my target. It looks like the shot is going to go left, but trust me, if you make a normal chipping stroke you'll be surprised at how straight the ball starts. It just pops right up (left). You can hit it high or low, and with any club you'd use for chipping.

Not sure about the grain's direction? Doesn't matter. Use this method whenever you sense a stubber coming.

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TRICKY LAG

THE GREENS AT AUGUSTA are so fast with so much swing, it's almost impossible to explain to anyone who hasn't played there how difficult they are to putt. Nowhere else do you see four-footers that break three cups. You have to hit the short ones with authority, but to

even get those, your lag putting needs to be dialed in—and these greens don't make it easy. Here's my favorite practice drill for speed control:

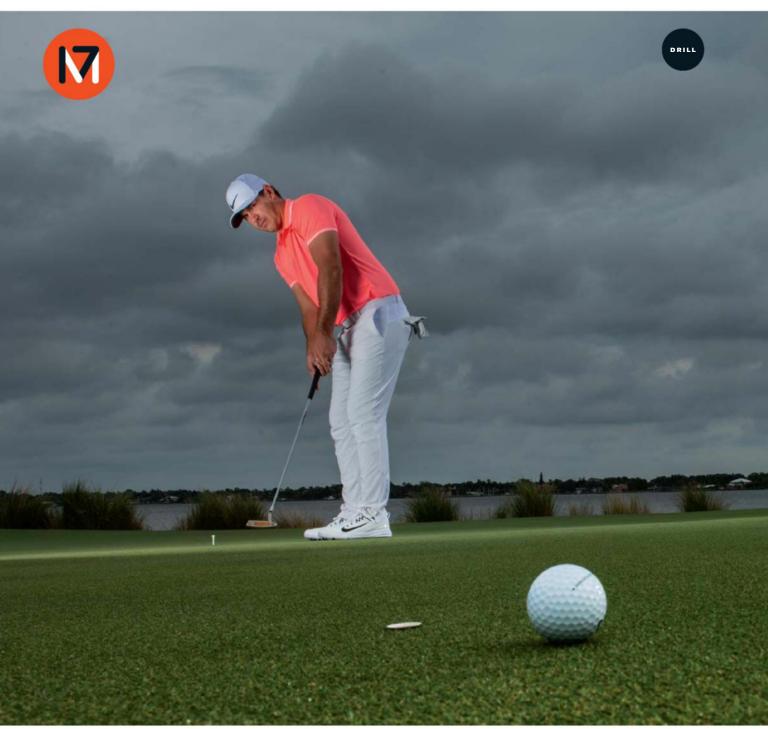
Set two coins six feet apart and hit a putt. The game is to get the ball to travel past the first coin (*below*) but not past the second. Wherever your putt finishes, that's where you move the first coin before you

putt again. Do this over and over, always shifting the first coin to where your last putt finishes. If you hit a putt short of the first coin or past the second coin, the game ends. Start over.

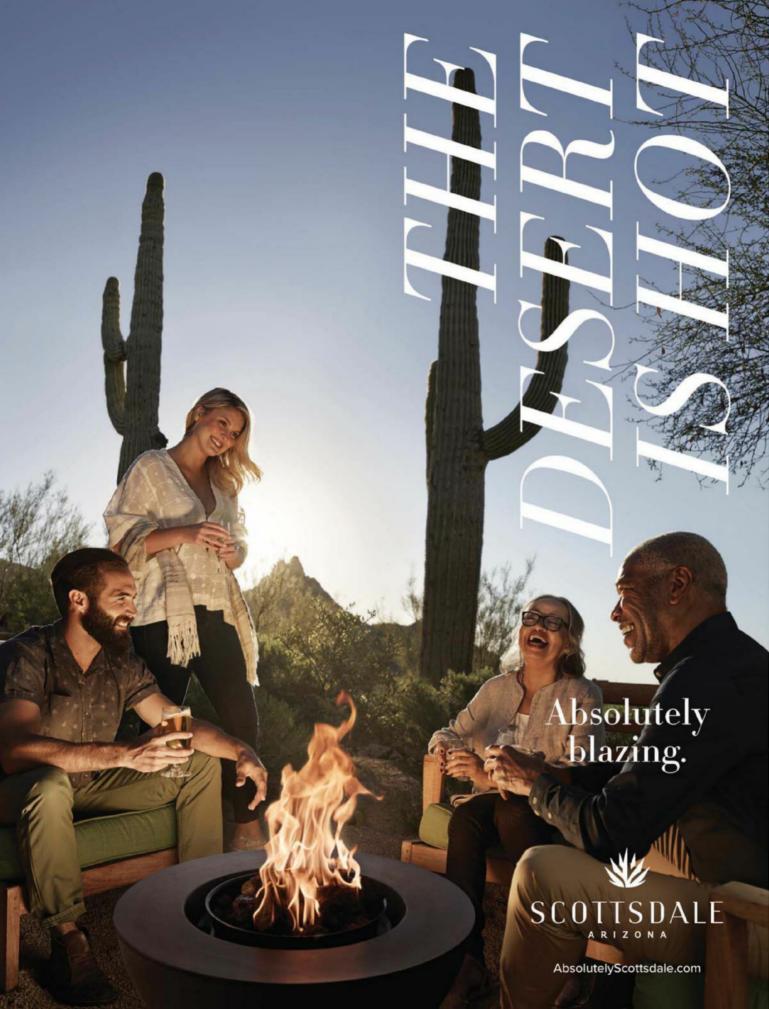
An example: If the two coins are between 15 and 21 feet away, and your first putt travels 20 feet, you only have a onefoot area left for your next putt. If you want to keep the game

going for a while, it's best to keep the distance between the two coins as wide as possible for as long as possible.

My best score is 19 consecutive putts between the coins. If you want it to get really difficult, set them on a downslope or putt from a longer distance. You'll learn never to leave a putt short. That's a skill that travels anywhere.



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THE FIRST MASTERS

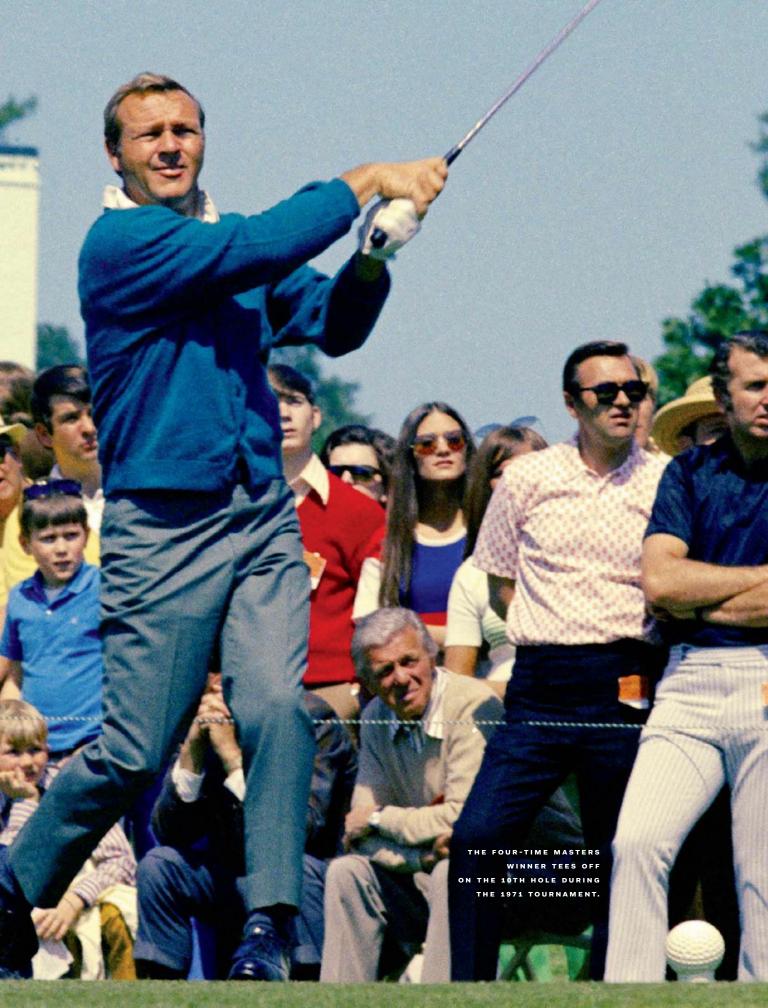
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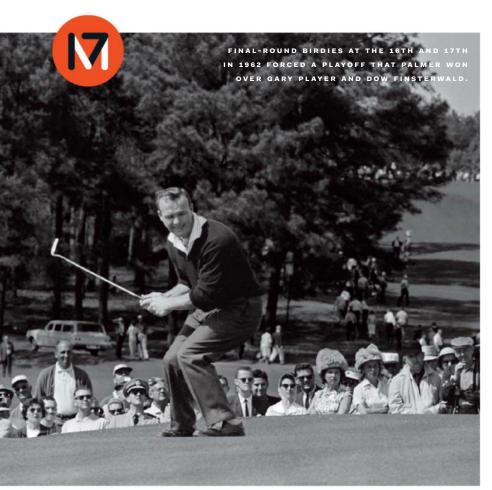
ARNOLD PALMER

by tom callahan

AUGUSTA 15 MISSING ITS KING







EDITOR'S NOTE In this excerpt from the book, *Arnie: The Life of Arnold Palmer*, key figures explain what four-time Masters champion Arnold Palmer meant to them. Copyright © 2017 by Tom Callahan. Reprinted by permission of Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

PHIL MICKELSON "As an amateur, I played my first Masters practice round with Arnold, at his invitation. I saw how he kept looking over at the spectators, smiling at everyone, giving the two thumbs-up, and really seeing them. 'Don't ever walk by them as though they're not there,' he told me. 'They're there.'

"In 1996, the tour set aside an area for autograph signing. I don't know why, but it never really took, and they dropped it after that one year. But it worked for me, helped me organize my practice day. I still do it. Practicing is more demanding than playing, you know. You're concentrating just as hard, but you're hitting three times as many shots. I found myself avoiding the people during practice, and I didn't like that feeling. So, being able to block out a set time for autographing helped me. And, at Arnold's urging, I've tried to make my signature a little more legible. 'Sometimes,' he said, 'you only have a few seconds to make the only impression you'll ever make on that individual. Take the full time. These are the people who make it possible for us to play golf for a living.

"He was always the one to emulate, wasn't he? And there was never anything phony about it."

BEN CRENSHAW "At Bay Hill once, I was hitting balls on the range next to Dave Marr, not far from Arnold. [In the warm-up, Ben had been having trouble adjusting to his driver and was hoping it could be adjusted to him.] 'Dave'-I turned to Marr-'do you think anybody here might have some lead tape?' 'Are you kidding me?' he said. 'That guy over there eats lead tape for breakfast!' Arnold pulled out his entire tool kit, full of saws and scissors, and re-weighted my club head just in time."

(Palmer told Ben, "That'll be a dollar fifty.")

NANCY LOPEZ "I guess I did have a sense of history growing up, but more Arnold than anyone. Of course, you hardly ever saw the women on TV then. But JoAnne Carner was my female idol. Whenever the women were on, my dad would always say, 'Let's watch them today,' and JoAnne stood out."

(The legend of JoAnne Gunderson Carner-"The Great Gundy"-included the fact that she outdrove Palmer once. It was at an exhibition. Both hit long drives into the fairway off the first tee. With a swagger, Arnold bypassed the shorter ball, bent down to identify the longer one, then withdrew backward with a look of chagrin. If asked, he would get up from his desk and re-enact that embarrassing moment, and love doing it. "I birdied the hole," he said, "a par 5. She eagled it.")

"I was at the Masters [in 2016]," Lopez said. "For him not to be well enough to hit the opening tee shot with Jack and Gary broke my heart. He's so proud, and I could see it was killing him to be sitting there watching. I went to hug him, and that was the first time he didn't stand up to give me a hug. So I kind of knew. . . . He got choked up talking about his fans. And thinking of that makes me cry. The reason he always gave so much of himself to them was because he loved them."

JORDAN SPIETH "In the weeks before Christmas after I won the Masters, I came back to Augusta National to play the course a couple of days with my dad. You know, you can take the green jacket home with you for a year, but then you have to bring it back. I was already feeling my time with it kind of running out. So now my father and I are walking upstairs to the Champions Locker Room, and I'm trying to soak in this feeling and make it last a lifetime. How often do you get to go and see your name in the Champions Locker Room at Augusta National for the first time? I had no idea, no one had told me, whom I'd be sharing a locker with. Arnold Palmer."

NICK PRICE "[Wife] Sue and I were applying for our green cards, and because I didn't know the president of the United States, I went to Arnold to ask if he'd do a character reference for me. Geez, I'll tell you what, he wrote the most glowing letter on my behalf. I pictured the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] officer seeing Arnold Palmer at the bottom and stamping that thing straightaway. For years, every time Arnold saw me, he reminded the people in the room, 'I got Nick into the country.'

"Last time I saw him was at Augusta. He was sitting in the cabin there and called me over. He grabbed my hand, just held on to me, and said, 'It's so good to see you, Nick.' He told me he had been surrounded by old people all day-and I'm no spring chicken myself-but I was like the youngest guy who had come to see him. 'Tell the other kids not to forget me,' he said."

TOM WATSON "When I was 15, I was asked to play with him in a benefit for multiple sclerosis in Kansas City. I was thrilled. My teacher, Stan Thirsk, was in the group, and I played pretty well for a while. I tied Arnie on the front nine with a 34. But then he shot 34 on the back, too, to my 40. He complimented me just enough, built me up in the most generous way, without being condescending. Treated me like a real player. I learned a lot that day.

"At that last Champions Dinner during

Masters week, he looked so frail. He obviously didn't like the situation his body was in. But he was standing up to it, the way you knew he would. Competing."

• • •

RORY MCILROY "It's a little different for a European. Seve was our Arnie. Everyone says that, and it's true. The way Arnie brought golf to the masses, Seve brought it to us. I didn't grow up thinking of Arnie, but once I came over to the U.S. and learned what he did for the game, and all he meant to the tour, I got it. It was nice to come to his tournament, to honor him and all that he did for our game. Would there have been a Seve without him? Sure, but not the same Seve. None of us would have been the same. Golf wouldn't have been the same."

("If you ever need anything," Palmer said to McIlroy, "here's my number. Call me." "All I need, Mr. Palmer," Rory told him, "you've already given me.")

. .

GEOFF OGILVY "When you see somebody really *loving* what they're doing, whatever that happens to be, it lifts you up for some reason. And so many golfers, because of the nature of the game, look like they're not enjoying it at all. He always seemed like a kid having fun at the golf course. He loved playing golf, and that carried over into everything else he did. Every side success was just a happy byproduct to the pleasure he got playing golf. He was a golfer.

"Tiger in the early days, when he seemed to love it, was so great to watch. But even before everything went bad, the fun had already gone out of it. He was still good, still winning, but it wasn't the same. It looked like he was hating it. I shouldn't say 'hating it,' but he wasn't doing it joyfully. He was just doing it to do it. Even after Palmer lost his game, he never lost his joy."

• • •

TIGER WOODS "I was always able to talk to him about anything, not just golf. He'd take the time to listen, talk to you honestly and then tell you exactly what he thought. He had a way of making you feel comfortable and at ease. . . . Arnold enjoyed being Arnold Palmer. No one did it better."

(Palmer said, "I think when Tiger lost his father, he lost himself. My wish for him is not to come back as a player, but to come back as a man.")

• • •

BUBBA WATSON "I was feeling a little tightness in my back, and with the Olympics and everything coming up, I thought the responsible thing to do was withdraw from Bay Hill. But I had too much respect for Arnold to do that on the telephone. I went to his office in person and brought Caleb [Watson's son, then 4] with me, figuring it might go a little better for me having Caleb there. But Arnold made it easy, as always. He didn't talk about Bay Hill, the tournament, or golf. He talked about Caleb, about life. He looked worn out. I tried to give him some energy, to encourage him as much as I could, if he even needed it from me. He was the one who picked Caleb up and put him in his lap. I didn't do it. I didn't stage it or anything. I asked him, 'Do you mind if I take a picture?' And after I left, I called back and asked if it was OK to post it on social media."

Caleb and the King.

• • •

PETER ALLISS "They say he liked all people, but I think he just didn't mind them. He was a happy man, and made even grumps like me a little happier. He drank from the cup of happiness."

• • •

James Garner (who died in 2014): "We aren't just acquaintances, we're friends. Though I'm sure everyone says that. I think Arnie likes me because I was 'Maverick' on TV. He likes TV cowboys, being a kind of TV cowboy himself. Like Clint Eastwood, 'Rawhide.' Though I think Clint would have preferred to be Arnold Palmer."

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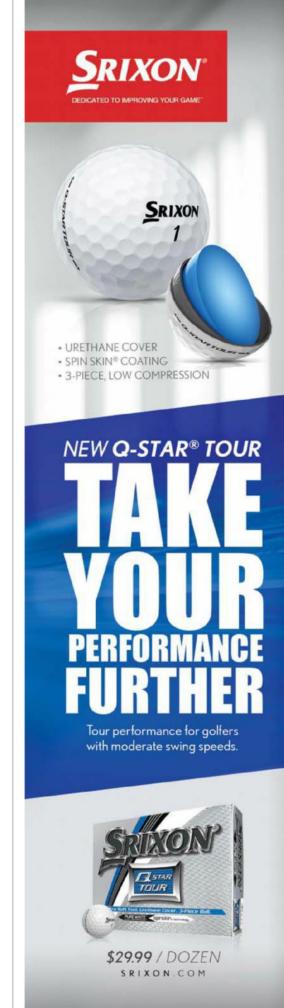
LATROBE CLERIC DOUGLAS NOWICK! "I had the opportunity to meet Pope John Paul II. The archbishop conducting the visit introduced me as the archabbot of Latrobe, Pa. Pope John Paul immediately responded, 'Ar-nold Pal-mer.'"

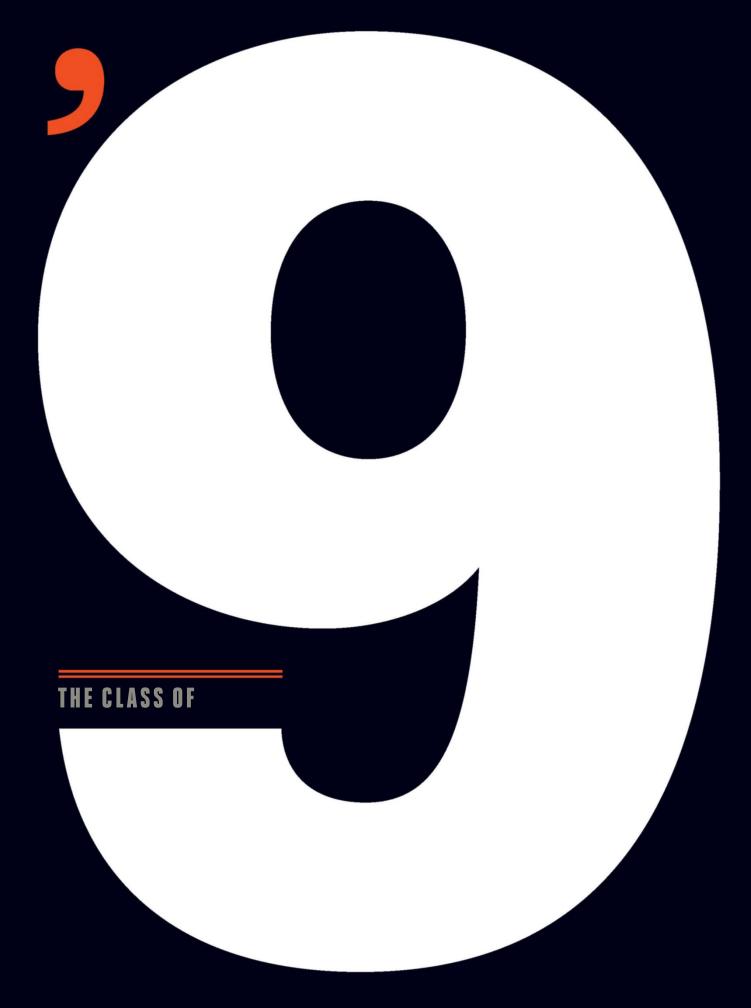
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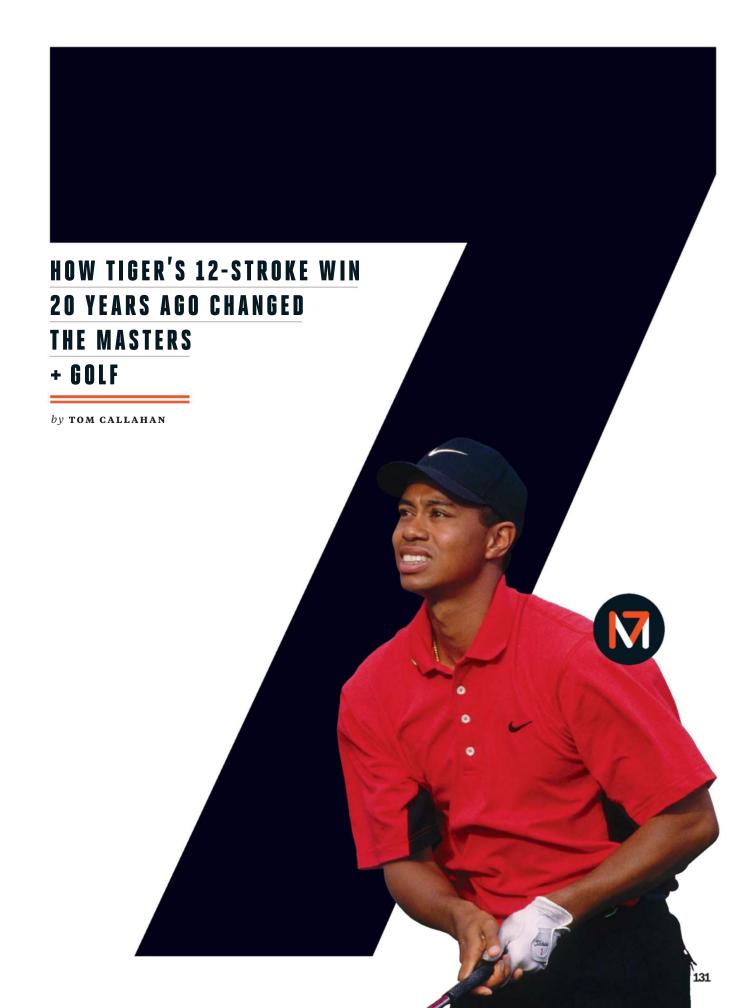
GEORGE w. визн "I gave him the Medal of Freedom for a reason. His impact on American sport, but also his impact on American character."

Palmer also received the Congressional Gold Medal, whose first recipient was George Washington in 1776.

("Contrary to what you may hear," Palmer said, "I never knew George Washington, but if I did meet him, I'd shake his hand and say, 'You were the first, and I won't be the last.'") •









VERYBODY REMEMBERS HOW IT ENDED.

but nobody can say exactly when it began.

Some start the clock the week before the 1997 Masters, when, playing a practice round with Mark O'Meara, Tiger Woods shot 59 at Isleworth while neglecting to birdie two of the par 5s. On the plane ride to Augusta from Orlando, the friends got to talking:

"Do you think it's possible to win the Grand Slam?" 21-year-old Woods asked 40-year-old O'Meara, then 0 for 54 in major championships. Mark looked at Tiger and thought, You're the first guy since Nicklaus even to ask the question, but didn't say that out loud.

"Unrealistic," O'Meara replied after a long moment. "I think it's possible," Woods said.

The tournament itself-72 holes as impactful as any ever played-commenced April 10 and climaxed April 13, 20 years ago, kicking off on a blowy Thursday when flying pine needles punctured the air and the first 30 players were immediately whooshed over par. Three victories into his pro career, but still the holder of the U.S. Amateur title, Woods was paired, per tradition, with the defending champion, Nick Faldo. Tiger went out in 40. So, the story might open with his comeback, the birdie at 10, or perhaps with something that happened the day before, Seve Ballesteros' 40th birthday, when Woods played half a practice round alongside Ballesteros and Jose Maria Olazabal. Breaking off from the Spaniards to try "a few little things" Seve had showed him, Tiger said that evening, "He's amazing around the greens. There are some things you can learn only from another player."

On the property but not in the gallery, preferring to watch on television, Earl Woods saw Tiger chip in at 12 to revive his first round. Being more sentimental than his son, Earl wondered if that wasn't one of those little strokes of genius courtesy of Seve. "C'mon, Pop," Tiger chided him later, "don't get carried away."

Recuperating from open-heart surgery, Earl was napping on the couch at the house they were renting in Augusta, and Tiger was reluctant to stir him. "Daddy," he whispered finally, which startled Earl. Tiger almost never called him that anymore. "How do you like my stroke?"



"I don't," Earl replied in that deadpan, singsong voice that sometimes made Tiger laugh, but not this time.

"What's wrong with it?"

"Your right hand is breaking down just slightly on the takeaway."

Earl went to bed and Tiger continued putting on the carpet.

They were sitting together the year before—or maybe it was the year before that—at the Golf Digest house in Augusta, balancing paper plates of barbecue and beans on their knees, eavesdropping on a discussion of Opens and Invitationals in golf.

"Invitationals," Tiger said under his breath, not bitterly, just matter-of-factly, "were the ways around the Opens."

Largely depending on how much homework he brought from Stanford, Woods made and missed his two amateur cuts at Augusta. Staying under a sun-streaked cupola in a clubhouse garret known as the Crow's Nest, Tiger was unable to sleep ("I've never been any good at sleeping," he said), getting up in the middle of the night to prowl the unfamiliar corridors and commune with the well-known ghosts. "The shadows there roll all around the walls," he said. "That attic is haunted."

Afraid to switch on any lights, Tiger stumbled into what turned out to be the Champions Locker Room. He sat in the dark in front of 1956 winner Jackie Burke's locker and reviewed the journey.

Woods was born in 1975, the year Lee Elder broke the four-decade-long color line at the Masters. In 1974, chairman Clifford Roberts greeted the press with the hope that former Augusta caddie Jim Dent would soon win a PGA Tour event and become eligible to play in the tournament, a criterion established in 1972.

Roberts and Bobby Jones might not have been any more bigoted than the average American born in 1894 or 1902, but neither was a champion of affirmative action. They weren't alone in that. The Professional Golfers' Association of America didn't scrub the hateful phrase "professional golfers of the Caucasian race" out of its Constitution until 1961, making the saddest line in a media guide this one after Charlie Sifford's name: "turned professional-1948; joined PGA Tour-1961."



Of course, Masters champions as a group could have invited Sifford or anyone else to compete in the tournament—they controlled one slot. In 1969, when 46-year-old Sifford followed up his Greater Hartford Open title of a couple of years earlier by winning the Los Angeles Open (the same day the Jets beat the Colts in the Super Bowl), '59 Masters champion Art Wall Jr. tried marshaling support for Sifford among his colleagues. Charlie received just a solitary vote: Wall's.

Elder came to the 1997 Masters on Sunday, by which time everyone knew what was about to happen, because he wanted

to be there. Sifford did not come because he didn't want to be there. He sent Tiger a fax, though: "Don't fire at all the pins. Be cautious. Be smart. Play the golf course. But when the time comes, let it go. Turn it loose. Be strong. Be yourself."

A BOOST AND A DIG FROM MARKO

oods followed the chip-in at 12 on Thursday with a birdie at the par-5 13th to get back to one over. He parred 14, and then, in a pileup of twosomes, reached the tee at the par-5 15th, where O'Meara was just ahead of him in the queue.

Tiger's tightest bond on tour was with the Florida neighbor he called "Marko," whose wife, Alicia, told her husband, "That poor kid is sitting over there in his house all alone. Let's get him over here for dinner." Mark said, "Tiger had a nice car he hadn't washed in about a year. I called him up and said, 'Bring that filthy thing over here, will you? I'm doing my cars. I'll wash it. I'll was it.' "That was the beginning of their friendship.

"Marko became a big brother to me," Woods said. "He taught me a lot of off-the-course things, or tried to. Some of those things, like how to deal with the media, didn't completely take. But I wouldn't have ever had the success I had early on without his help."

On a small wood bench at the 15th tee, Tiger took a seat to wait out the delay, and O'Meara joined him. Nothing was said for about a minute. The week before, as Mark was handing over the \$65 he lost to the 59, Tiger had ragged him, in their usual way, "Geez, Mark, what did you shoot, around 87?" Now, in what amounted to a delayed rejoinder, O'Meara said in mock exasperation, "Why don't you just pretend you're playing against me? I'm still waiting for you to play bad against me."

Tiger eagled 15 (his second shot was a mere pitching wedge to six feet). He was under par. Then he birdied 17. The 40 had been overturned by a 30 to get him within three strokes and two players of John Huston's lead. Faldo said, "Although I had played part of a practice round with Tiger in 1995, now I truly understood what all the excitement was about. He was quite something."

"Nick and I talk more than you'd think on a golf course," Woods said, "or more than he does with most people, I hear. I don't know if it's just me, but he has things to say [though not this week, 75-81, missing the cut]. You know, just briefly. Just comfortably. He's a good guy to play with."

Friday, Tiger traded Faldo for Paul Azinger, who was also operating mainly on hearsay. "I'd never seen him hit a shot in person," Azinger said, and being immersed in his own double bogey at 1, Paul still had not seen Woods make a live strike until Tiger's drive at the par-5 second.

"The sensation was kind of otherworldly," Zinger said. "I mean, he hit this bullet, taking this ridiculous line down the left between this really tall tree and a shorter one. The ball just went extra fast and kept climbing. It stayed in the air forever, until it finally disappeared down the hill to some spot where probably no one had ever been before." Azinger and his caddie just looked at each other and laughed.

Tiger shot 66 that day (to 73 for Paul). At 13, Woods made another eagle (with an 8-iron to 20 feet), and Jim Nantz, a telecaster with a sense of history, told CBS sidekick Ken Venturi, "Kenny, let the record show, a little after 5:30 on this Friday, April 11, Tiger takes the lead for the very first time in the Masters."

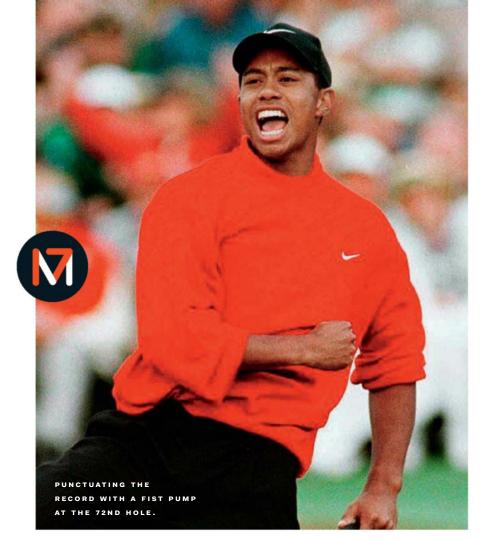
At day's end, Woods led Scotsman Colin Montgomerie by three strokes, and said goodbye to Azinger and hello to Monty.

Also known as Mrs. Doubtfire and Billy Bunter, Montgomerie managed to win eight Orders of Merit and still be the leading target for irreverence on the European Tour. Apple-cheeked and curly-haired, he was the Gerber baby all grown up. British schoolboy "Billy Bunter" is a U.K. cartoon character, obnoxious, corpulent (particularly enamored of sticky buns), obtuse, self-important, conceited and positive that he is always right.

"The pressure is mounting," Montgomerie said Friday night, "and I have a lot more experience in major championships."

"That definitely motivated me," Woods said. "He had more experience [in majors], no doubt about that. [Everyone did; this was Tiger's first as a pro.] But he hadn't won a major, and neither had I. If someone who had won major championships had said

'THERE'S NO CHANCE HUMANLY POSSIBLE THAT TIGER IS GOING TO LOSE THIS TOURNAMENT. NO WAY.'



that, then I would have let it pass. But since he hadn't won one either, I thought we were on a clean slate."

Tiger shot 65 this time, to 74 for Montgomerie, who at the back door of the interview room was offered a dispensation but insisted on testifying. It would be the most appealing appearance of his major-less career.

"All I have to say," he said with a chastened smile, "is one brief comment today. There is no chance. We're all human beings here...[but] there's no chance humanly possible that Tiger is going to lose this tournament. No way."

Probably thinking of the 11-shot swing between Greg Norman ("Dead Man Walking") and Faldo only 12 months before, someone asked, "What makes you say that?"

"Have you just come in?" Montgomerie replied with a sigh. "Have you been away? Have you been on holiday?"

Monty knew that Woods hit the ball "long and straight." He was aware that Tiger's iron shots were "very accurate." But he had no idea that anyone could putt like this. "When you add it all together," he said, "Tiger is nine shots clear [of Italian Costantino Rocca], and I'm sure that will be higher tomorrow."

After all, "Faldo is not lying second," and "Greg Norman is not Tiger Woods."

FINISHING THE RACE

uhammad Ali, on his off nights, could look a little blotchy. In the ring before the opening bell, his complexion sometimes tipped what was to come. But against George Foreman in Africa, standing alone in one corner, waiting out Zaire's interminable anthem, Ali gleamed like a copper kettle. That's what Tiger looked like Sunday morning.

Late the night before, as they shared a bowl of ice cream, Earl advised his son, "This is going to be the hardest round of golf you'll ever play, and the most rewarding."

"When I arrived," said Elder, who was 62, "Tiger had just left the practice range. I told him, 'Just do what you've been doing all week, and things will work out.' Embracing Lee, Woods whispered, "Thanks for making this possible." Then, on his way from the practice putting green to the first tee, he prodded himself: Finish the race. For the next four hours, Tiger rethought those three words over and over.

Sunday's score was a prudently commercial 69, nearly risk-free if you don't count the narrowly avoided calamity of a small boy in the gallery who reached up for Woods in the middle of a ferocious swing. And yet, the lead

TIGER'S 1997 MASTERS

Tiger broke the Masters record with his 18-under-par 270 total, including two eagles, 21 birdies, 42 pars and seven bogeys:

	Par 3s	Par 4s	Par 5s	Total
R1	E	E	-2	70
R2	E	-1	-5	66
R3	E	-4	-3	65
R4	E	E	-3	69
Total	E	-5	-13	270

swelled by three strokes. The Masters record of 271 by Nicklaus (1965) and Raymond Floyd ('76) was trimmed by a shot, and the runnerup, Tom Kite, lost by 12. Only Old Tom Morris had ever won a major by as much as 13, in the 1862 Open Championship at Prestwick, Scotland. (Young Tom won one by 12.) In his professional debut, Woods was already reaching back to shepherds and crooks.

First in driving distance (323.1 yards on average, a full 25 yards beyond the nextbest, Scott McCarron); tied for first in greens in regulation (with Kite and Fred Funk, 55 of 72); and recording zero three-putts, Tiger shook the very geometry of golf, pushing not just the envelope but the boundaries, the capacities, of the National. His normal approach clubs weren't normal:

No. 1 400-yard par 4: driver, pitching wedge.

NO. 2 555-yard par 5: driver, 8-iron.

No. 3 360-yard par 4: driver, 15-yard chip.

No. 4 205-yard par 3: 6-iron.

No. 5 435-yard par 4: driver, pitching wedge.

No. 6 180-yard par 3: 9-iron.

No. 7 360-yard par 4: 2-iron, pitching wedge.

No. 8 535-yard par 5: driver, 2-iron.

No. 9 435-yard par 4: 3-wood, pitching wedge.

No. 10 485-yard par 4: 2-iron, 8-iron.

NO. 11 455-yard par 4: driver, pitching wedge.

NO. 12 155-yard par 3: pitching wedge.

No. 13 485-yard par 5: driver, 8-iron.

NO. 14 405-yard par 4: driver, pitching wedge.

NO. 15 500-yard par 5: driver, pitching wedge.

No. 16 170-yard par 3: 9-iron.

NO. 17 400-yard par 4: 3-wood, sand wedge. NO. 18 405-yard par 4: driver, sand wedge.

Eleven wedges into 18 greens, and every par 5 reachable in two.

Rocca said, "He hit a 6-iron into the wind [at the par-3 fourth] when I hit a 1-iron, and his drive was so long at 8, he had only a 4-iron to the green. He pulled it a little left, and, again with the 4-iron, hit a low, running shot to two feet for birdie. Two 4-irons in a row. Very different." (Rocca shot 75, but his long day of hearing "Down in front!" wasn't wasted. Come September, at Valderrama in Spain, the Europeans would beat the Americans in another Ryder Cup, and Costantino would defeat Woods in the singles, 4 and 2.)

To Tiger, how he had won the '97 Masters wasn't a bit complicated. "The majority of my putts were uphill," he said, "because I was able to control my irons into the greens. Why was I able to do that? Because I had short irons into the greens. Why did I have those short iron shots? Because I drove the ball great. And putting was just a reflection of everything working, from the tee box to the green. Or from the green to the tee box, if you think about it. My dad always taught me to think every golf course backward."

Tiger climbed up the hill from the 18th green straight into Earl's arms. "My favorite shot of the day," President Clinton said on the telephone, "was that last shot with your dad."

At his home in Kingwood, Texas, Sifford said, "It put the Masters to rest for me. You know, it's 50 years [practically to the day] since Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color line. Whenever Tiger tips his cap on the golf course, I consider that to be recognition to the unrecognized. And, when he hugged his daddy at the end, I shed a few tears. Watching Tiger walk up the final hole, I felt like I was part of him. He did what I wanted to do but didn't have the chance—I was too doggone old. Starting out, I wanted four things: to play in a PGA tournament, to play in a National Open, to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, and to play in the Masters. I got three out of the four, so that ain't too bad."

More than 44 million people watched on television, the biggest TV audience ever counted for a golf tournament. Away from the golf, a major and a minor tragedy hung over the grounds. When the price of scalped badges shot up to \$7,000 apiece, local businessman Allen F. Caldwell III couldn't make good on 70 tickets he had promised some big shots. He killed himself with a 12-gauge shotgun.

Nineteen-seventy-nine Masters and 1984 U.S. Open champion Fuzzy Zoeller, trying to be funny for a television crew, warned Woods off serving fried chicken at the next Champions Dinner. "Or collard greens," Zoeller said, "or whatever the hell they serve."

("My Tiger have no idea what collard greens are," his mother, Tida, said.)

Zoeller's mortal sin was the word "they." That was something inside Fuzzy, or around him, or around all of us, that just slipped out. (It's always slipping out, isn't it?) That cost a pretty good guy a contract with Kmart and a legacy of laughter.

In the Butler Cabin (not named for the butlers), Faldo helped Tiger into the green jacket, the first of four. Woods would have bigger and better tournaments, believe it or not, but none as important. At the 2000 U.S. Open, when Tiger won by 15 strokes, Old Tom's major mark of 13 wasn't the only thing that fell. Everything tumbled that week at Pebble Beach. Willie Smith, Willie Anderson and Long Jim Barnes surrendered records to Tiger that they had held for 101, 97 and 79 years.

It was the history of the Masters, as dark as the Champions Locker Room in the middle of the night, that made 1997 more important. Also, the green jacket is a more tactile prize than the largest silver loving cup.

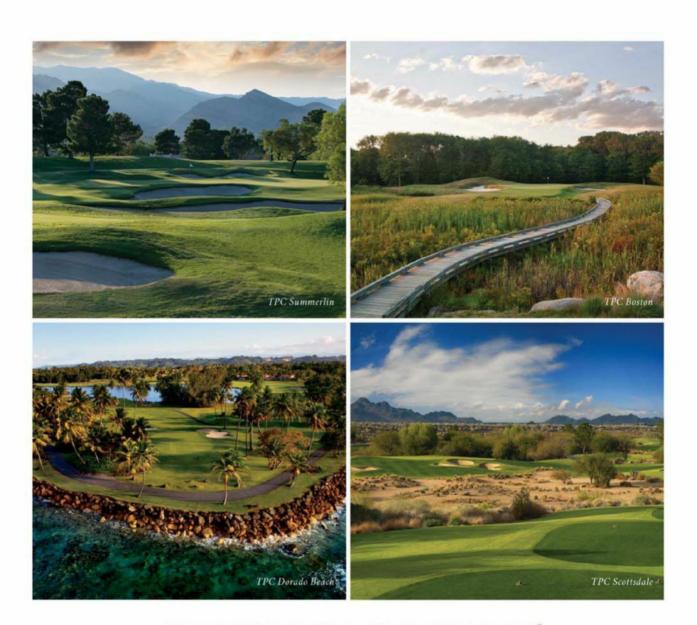
Back at the rented house, celebrating with friends and family, Earl went looking for Tiger and found him in his bedroom asleep ("I've never been any good at sleeping") fully clothed with his arms wrapped around the green jacket. "Cuddling it," as Tiger said, "like it was a little bear."

And, a year later, he put it on Mark O'Meara. @

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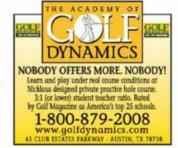
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CUFF LINKS \$130

► They change from year to year. Pictured here: 2015.

1934-STYLE HEADCOVER \$130 ► Why 1934? That was the year of

the first tournament. PERFORMANCE GOLF SHIRT \$220

A Peter Millar shirt available only to members and Berckmans Place guests.

1996 MASTERS PLATE \$500

▶ Members and players used to get two plates a year as gifts.

1947 MASTERS SCRAPBOOK \$2,400

A gift from the club to competitors.

MASTERS FLAG WITH 34 CHAMPIONS' SIGNATURES \$10,500

► Woods, Nicklaus, Palmer and Tom Watson in the center make it extra valuable.

HORTON SMITH SIGNED BALL \$12,000

Autographs were rare in the 1930s, and more so on golf balls.

1953 LOW-AMATEUR TROPHY \$16,000

Frank Stranahan won it the same year he was low am at the British Open.

1934 MASTERS BADGE, FINAL ROUND \$32,000

Paper badges (pre-1961) are the scarcest and most prized among collectors.

ARNOLD PALMER MASTERS TROPHY \$444,000

A private investor sold it at auction in December 2016.

HORTON SMITH 1936 GREEN JACKET \$682,000

The priciest piece of Masters memorabilia—so far—changed hands in 2013.

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