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“The Golf Expert”

More myths that can paralyse your game (3)

Drop the hands on the inside to start the down swing! About 35 years ago, I had the inclination to check if the hands should drop down on the inside of the line they had taken in the backswing, as at that time I taught all of my pupils that they should. Boy! Was I wrong!



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First Published in Great Britain in 2009 by Jurassic Coast Publishing Ltd

This edition published in Great Britain in 2014 by Jurassic Coast Publishing Ltd

www.jurassiccoast.com

Drop the Hands on the Inside to Start the Downswing

ABOUT 35 years ago, I had the inclination to check if the hands should drop down on the inside of the line they had taken in the backswing, as at that time I taught all of my pupils that they should.

Dropping the hands on the inside was taught by everyone as a vitally important part of a golf swing. I just had to know if it was correct as my pupils' progress was very important to me and obviously to them.

To be able to plot the line of the hands in the backswing and the downswing, I attached some tracing paper to the screen of a television. I then played the swing of Tom Watson through a video player onto the television screen placing blue dots on Tom Watson's hands at the address point. I then played his swing through frame by frame, placing further blue dots on his hands all of the way to the top of the backswing.

I then joined the dots together to create a curved line, with the line moving away from the target line and moving upwards, so that his hands were above his right ankle.

This is a great way to check your hands are in plane at the top by the way, ie the hands should be directly above your right ankle bone. The particular swing I was using was from during the Open at Troon, the year Tom became Open champion by one shot from Jack Nicklaus, Tom was to win five Open Championships and become one of golfing's greatest golfers.

I was then very keen to trace his hand down and I really wanted them to move down on the inside, to the left of the blue line I had created for his backswing, so that what I was asking my pupils to do was correct..

I placed dots, with a red pen this time on his hands as I played the downswing frame-by-frame down to impact, I then joined the dots together.

They formed virtually a straight line from the top of the backswing to impact. I was very surprised indeed to find that his hands moved down outside the line he had taken going back and at impact his hands were a full six inches nearer to the target line than they were at address.

This was an amazing revelation to me, so I conducted the same experiment on Ben Hogan's swing, as he said in his book 'The Modern Fundamentals of Golf' that the hands move down on the inside of the backswing line, and he demonstrated this with an illustration.

My tracing of his actual swing showed that his hands moved down above, to the right, of the line they had taken in the backswing, This was very strange and the opposite of the illustration in his book. So I just had to check the lines of the world's most accomplished golfer, Jack Nicklaus, to see what he did .. and low and behold he did the same! His hands moved down outside the line they had taken in the backswing.

I still have those actual tracings in my studio if you would like to see them.

“It's time to change the way I teach” I thought to myself but first I would have to find out why it was happening.

I studied hundreds of good golf swings to find out why the hands moved outside in the downswing, and suddenly I realised why! What had stopped me working it out was my erroneous belief that the swing was a circle and that the downswing was a mirror image of the backswing.

This is not so and it cannot be, as the weight shifts to the left in the downswing as the hips and shoulders move to the left and turn. With the hips and shoulders turning the hands are moved outwards but not across the target line.

I had up to this point been completely wrong in the way I had been teaching the downswing, but I was now using cameras to assist me in teaching, and my pupils could see what really happened in the downswing.

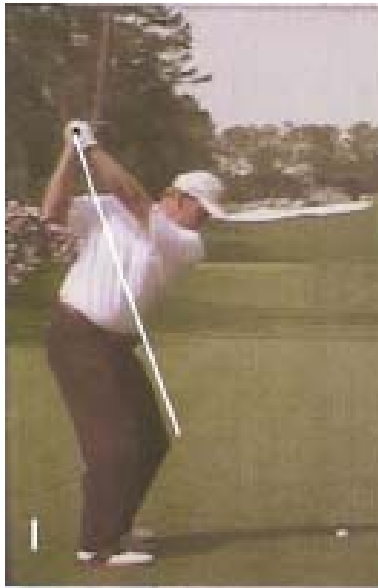
To me and my pupils this was revolutionary and everyone I taught from this point improved as my lessons had become more practical and less theoretical.

This all happened 35 years ago but the practicalities of a good golf swing are actually timeless.

In 2004, I went to Augusta National for 5 days to watch the Masters. I was the guest of Gary Wolstenholme who had won the 2003 Amateur Championship. I had coached Gary for more than ten years and he believed the hands came down inside the backswing line. I proved to him this was not correct and his handicap was reduced from +1 to an amazing +5.

Whilst at the Masters I filmed the elegant golf swing of everyone's favourite golfer, Ernie Els.

Picture 1 shows Ernie at the top of his backswing, on the 18th tee, using a driver. There is a line taken from his hands at address to his hands at the top of his backswing.



Picture 2 shows Ernie at impact, and a line has been drawn from where his hands were at the top of his backswing down to impact. The line of the hands coming down is clearly outside the line the hands took in the backswing the same as Tom Watson, Ben Hogan and Jack Nicklaus. Any attempt to drop the hands down inside in the downswing is doomed to fail.

Picture 3 shows one of my pupils, who became a scratch golfer in 2010, with lines on his arms, shoulders and legs at address.



Picture 4 shows the same golfer at impact with the lines again drawn on his arms, shoulders and legs. Clearly the entire body has moved to the left and is rotating at the same time. It is the combination of the movement to the left and the body rotating that moves the hands down outside (to the right) of the line the hands took in the backswing.

Golf is a mechanical game and the movements of the downswing dictate that the line down cannot be the same as the line going back and that the hands really do move down outside.

Picture 5 shows my address position and **Picture 6** my impact position with the lines showing the same movements as in pictures 3 and 4.



My hands have also therefore moved down on the outside of the line they went back on.

I do hope that this Ebook proves to you that the hands actually move down outside the line they took in the backswing as it will allow you to hit the ball at the target.

Had you realised that if you dropped your hands inside, the ball would go to the right of your target?

CONCLUSION

Every good golfer moves their hands down outside of the line they took in the backswing and this has been proved beyond doubt. If **you** are advised to drop your hands down on the inside ask to be shown proof of this actually happening. I doubt you will be shown it.