



## Sports the MTFF Way

Of all the outdoor sports, golf is both a relaxing and a frustrating game. Most of us don't have the talent, nor have the time to practice that allows us to enjoy the game as much as we would like. The time we do have, we want to spend playing rather than practicing. Unfortunately the lack of talent and practice, as Mark Twain stated, often results in a good walk spoiled.

It doesn't have to be. This past year, I played the best golf in my life, shaving my score down to the high 80s/low 90s. I often joke with my golfing buddies that I have bought my way to better scores. The truth is, I have been gathering golf tips from various sources, and collected them into "MTFF notes" format.

These are tips taken from the golf channel, magazines, books, watching TV, and from observing other golfers. *The KEY is to find what works for you, and not try to imitate what works for others.* Before I go out to practice, about 1 ~ 2 times a week, I review the notes, and practice based on the notes I have taken. This way, I continue to build habits that work for me.

Did you notice I didn't mention golf lessons? I never took them. You can learn how to better yourself without spending lots of money on lessons. BUT, every person learns differently, if you are the type that learns better with lessons, by all means, do so.

What follows in the Appendix is the complete collection of my notes. There are a lot of information to read through and try to remember when playing. Taking the critical points from the notes, I created a "refresher", putting the essential guides on two pages. I don't necessarily read through the entire two pages before I play or practice, what I use it for is when I start to lose my focus, I refer to it to help me regain my concentration.

Your sport may be tennis, baseball, soccer, cycling, distance running; **what ever it is that you enjoy for recreation or competition, you can use the same method.** Keeping notes of what worked for you, put them all together into a Word document, then compose a "refresher" version to take with you. You will find what you have learned what works for you are easier to remember. If you can remember the key points of your sport when you practice, it will be much more effective time used. The upshot is, you will play better, and you will enjoy it more.

This is not a new idea, its just something we don't do. Think back to the olds days when we were in school, we took notes during lectures to help us remember the lesson. We take notes in the office during meetings so we can do our job better. Use the same techniques for fun stuff too! If you have children that enjoy the same sports as you, say baseball, wouldn't it be nice to pass down what you have accumulated in your life time for them to enjoy? They may not necessarily use the same techniques you would, but, it will provide them a reference to create their own notes.

Here the Refresher sheet for your reference, FORE! ([link to PDF](#))



## Appendix – Eric's Golf Notes

### Warm Ups

#### **Arm Circles:**

Start out with your arms out to the side and move them in small circles. Then go bigger and bigger -- until you are freely swinging your arms and getting maximum blood flow to your arms and shoulders. Do this for about 30 seconds.



#### **Overhead Extensions:**

Grab a club about shoulder width apart on the shaft. Raise and lower the club above your head and to your thighs. Do this for about 30 seconds. This is another great warm-up exercise for the shoulders and upper back.



#### **Golf Rotations:**

Put club behind your neck and grab on both ends. Assume your golf posture and turn back and forth making swings with your shoulders and club with minimal leg movement. 30 seconds is sufficient.



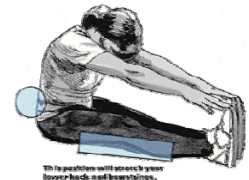
If time is short, warm up chip and pitch shots

### General Information

- Set the club on the ground, you will "see" the natural position the club should be at.
- Head behind the ball
- Hands should be AHEAD of the ball.
- If time is short, warm up w/ chipping and pitching. Use 7 iron for quick full swing practice
- Take DEAD aim at your target. Aim your shoulder and hips.

### Golf Exercises

- Stretch Your Lower Back: To condition your lower back for the twists and turns of the swing, Sit on the floor with your legs extended straight out in front of you. Reach forward as far as you can with your hands and try to grab your ankles.
- Exercise your Legs. Strong legs, provides powerful swing. Build up your big leg muscles. Walk the golf course when you can!



#### **Practice:**

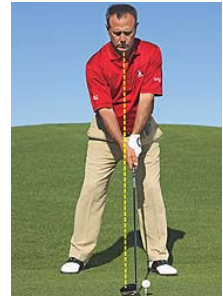
- Swing A Weighted Club: Making practice swings with a weighted club or two clubs at once builds quick strength and flexibility in the muscles of the back, shoulders, and arms. Spend 15 minutes each day, swing in super slow motion, and aim at a "pretend ball". At the top of the swing, plant your left heel, bring in your right elbow very very slowly, then start the down swing slowly, stop at 1/3 the way to the ball, hold it and fell it. (Pg.81). Repeat this exercise.
- Spend 30% of your practice time on full swings, 40% on Chipping, Pitching, Sand play, 30% on putting
- If practicing in the wind, pick a spot where the wind is either blowing at your face, or from right to left (for right hangers). Do normal, full swing, no need to hit harder.



- Tee Box - Driver

### The Start: Create a driver launch pad

- Stand behind your ball on the tee and pick out a 10- to 15-yard landing area, then picture an imaginary line from that spot back to your ball.
- Position your head an inch behind the ball.
- Distribute your weight equally between your feet
- Hang your relaxed, tension-free arms straight down from your shoulders.
- Your hand should be **BEHIND** the ball, with the shaft pointing at your zipper.
- Play the ball under your left armpit (your left heel)
- Fan out your left feet slightly to allow your hips to turn back and through with more freedom (right foot is at 90° to target line).
- Take one last look at your landing area, aim your thigh and shoulders, start your backswing, nice and slow



### The Back Swing

- Ideally, you want your hands to stop just above your right shoulder, with your left arm roughly parallel to the line of your shoulders.
- You also feel a larger turn in your hips and torso in this position.
- Deliverer the club head to the ball on a more powerful inside path.
- The right knee **must** retain flex throughout the backswing.



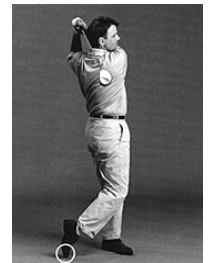
### The Down Swing:

- **MAXIMUM POWER** is the result of swinging while using the large muscles in your back and legs. On the downswing, think about swinging an axe, which demands using your whole body to create maximum force. Swing inside-to-outside path.



### The Finish:

- You want almost all your weight coiled over one leg—in this case, your left—as if it were a solid post.
- When you complete your follow-through, your right knee should touch your left, your right foot should be up on its toes, and your shoulders and hips should face the target.
- Your back should be fairly straight—no “reverse C” here.
- Hold your finish

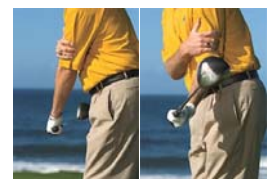


### Fixing Slices - Get in sync with your driver

- To get your swing back in sync, tee up a ball and grip down on your driver until it's the length of a 5-iron. Then swing away.
- Repeat over and over until you're consistently hitting the ball straight, and then gradually grip farther up the shaft until your hands are in their normal position.

### Fixing Slices- Increase your forearm rotation

- You must rotate the back of your left hand down (toward the ground) through impact.
- **Drill:** Grab your left triceps with your right hand and make a couple of practice swings with your left arm only. This will quiet your





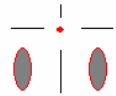
shoulders.

- Your emphasis should be on the rotation of your lower arm, below the elbow joint. Just by rotating your left forearm, wrist and hand.

## Pitching - Chipping

### *Pitch with LOFTED WEDGE*

Understand that higher lofted clubs require more powerful swings to provide distance, but hit the ball the slightest bit fat, and it will move only a few yards; if contact is at all thin, the ball will sail over the green.



**Club:** 52 or 58 degree wedge

**Stance:** Narrow stance

**Weight:** on equal on both feet

**Hands:** at the ball

**Ball Position:** In the Center of Ankles (center of stance)

**Swing:** Make a short-to-long swing: The backswing should go only about chest-high, but the through-swing reaches a full finish, the hands reaching above the shoulders.

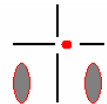
**Variation:** Vary backswing lengths and/or wedge will carry the ball different distances, but always make a full, high finish.



### *Chip with low iron for the BUMP-AND-RUN*

The ball is on the ground most of the time, it is susceptible to bad bounces

- Your arms and club should form a lower-case "y" at address.
- Rock your shoulders back and through--much like a long putting stroke.
- Be sure to set a smooth tempo from the start, maintaining the "y" as you swing the club back. You want to return to the ball with your "y" perfectly intact.
- The angles you created at address will produce a downward strike and a low runner that rolls like a putt.



**Club:** 8 or 9 Iron

**Stance:** open, Narrow stance

**Aim:** straight at target point

**Weight:** on left foot

**Hands:** Ahead of the ball

**Ball Position:** Center – Backward

**Swing:** Start at ½ back swing, sweep the club over the grass without taking a divot, finish at 1/2.

**Variation:** The key decision is club selection. You can be successful with anything from a 4-iron to a pitching wedge; take less loft for longer distances and lower trajectories.



### *Around the Green*

- Chip when – going down hill, fast green, lie is poor, wind is strong, you are playing bad



- Pitch when – going uphill, slow green, lie is good, there are obstacles in the way

## Sand Play

**Grip:** tighter than normal to ensure swing through the sand w/o opening the club face.

**Stance:** feet at shoulder width, feet, hips, and shoulders line up to LEFT of target, about 10 degrees.

**Ball Position:** Center Forward (i.e. off the left heel)

**Club Face and Aim:** Open Club Face, Aim club face at the target point

**Hand:** just ahead of the ball, with shaft pointing at your zipper

**Distance Control:** Take more sand for shorter shots, less sand for longer shots

**Weight:** a little more weight on left foot

**Swing:** normal, full back swing, and rotate to a full finish along your hips and shoulders



### *Uphill in the Sand*

**Stance:** The stance is more open to the target line - about 15 to 25 degrees open

**Club Face and Aim:** Open Club Face, Aim club face JUST RIGHT of target

**Weight:** 70% weight on right foot

**Ball Position:** The ball is positioned off the left heel for uphill shots.

**Swing:** Swing arc need to catch the ball up on upswing, following the slop of the hill. Swing with more power to carry the ball

### *Downhill in the Sand*

**Stance:** stance is more open to the target line - about 15 to 25 degrees open

**Club Face and Aim:** Open Club Face, Aim club face JUST RIGHT of target

**Weight:** 70% weight on left foot

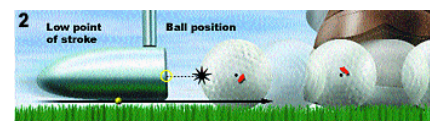
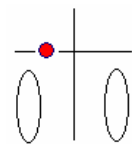
**Ball Position:** in the middle of the stance or between both heels.

**Swing:** Swing arc need to catch the ball up on upswing, following the slop of the hill. Swing with more power to carry the ball

## Putting

### **Ball Position:**

- Position the ball in your stance is approximately two inches ahead of this bottom of the swing arc.
- Striking the ball slightly on the upswing gets putts rolling on top of the grass without lofting them too high, which produces bounce, or hitting them down into the green so they squirt to the right or left.

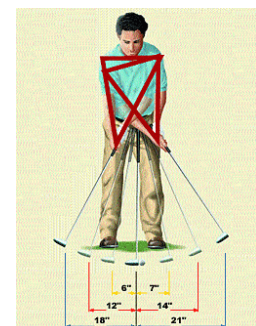


### **Stance:**

- Stand over you ball with your eyes directly on top of the ball.
- Line up your feet parallel to the target line.

### **Swing:**

- Think of your forearm and shoulder triangle swinging back and through like a pendulum to produce a dead-hands stroke.

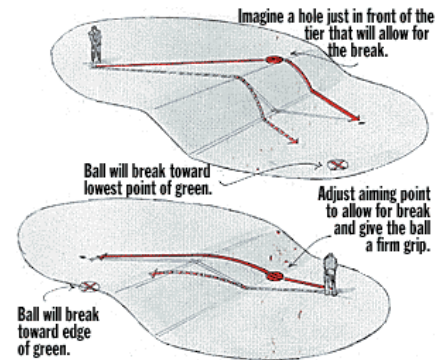




- Position your backswing so it is slightly shorter (10 to 20 %) than your follow-through, this creates an accelerating and stable putter without any hand- or wrist-muscle control.
- Keep your head and body STEADY, hold your finish and watch the putt until the ball stopped rolling to learn from each putt.

### Reading the Green

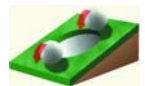
- If going against grain, need more speed
  - Grain of grass tend to run towards water
  - **All thing being equal, greens break to the WEST.**
  - Look at the hole, how does the grass grow around the cut is the direction of the grain
  - Shades of grass, shiner is with the grain, darker is against the grain
  - Read from the LOW spot of the green.
- Judge what's going on between the ball and the hole from halfway along the line on the low side. Assessing the putt from this point gives you a good feel for the overall distance and shows changes in elevation.
- Visualize the putting line
- Multi-Tier Greens
  - For each 1 inch of elevation change, add / subtract 10" for distance.
  - Coming down a tier, the ball will always break sharply toward the lowest point of the green, no matter which angle you approach it from; imagine there's a hole just in front of the tier, then try to die your putt there.
  - Coming up a tier, the ball always breaks away from you toward the edge of the green. The break will be more pronounced because you're coming uphill.



### Direction and Speed

#### Aim – General:

- On breaking putts, aim for the high side of the cup, has more chance of "falling in".
- **Speed determines the line, and the line determines the speed. If you putt hard, it will roll straight longer, if you putt soft, it will follow the contour grains of the green more.**

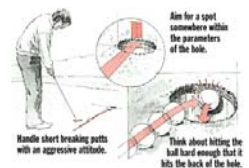


#### Aim - Long Putts:

- Aim for a spot a few feet in front of the ball, not at the hole
- Aim for the break point
- Imagine a 6' circle around the hole as the target.

#### Aim - Short Putts:

- Aligning to a spot somewhere within the parameters of the hole and make a firm enough stroke to hit the back of the hole



### Speed - Uphill

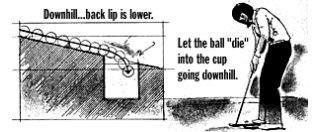




- Uphill putt will move more slowly than normal, hit it a little firmer. Even if you don't hit all of your uphill putts the right speed, be sure to get them past the hole.
- Imagine that the target is past the real hole. Practice with a "phony hole" or something else you can clearly see.
- Hit the ball firm enough so it will hit the back of the cup.

### Speed - Downhill

- When rolling the ball downhill, visualize the imaginary target well short of the real one. But be careful: It's very easy to hit a downhiller too hard.
- A downhiller will roll more, hit it softer.
- Hit the ball so it will topple in at the front lip of the cup.



### Speed - Pace Off Your Putts

- On the practice green: Pace off different lengths, 4 steps, 8 steps, 12 steps, ..etc
- Practice hitting the ball to the 6' circle around the cup.
- Making a mental note of the length and force of the stroke.
- When playing, pace off the distance, account for up/down hills, then putt
- For long putts, over 15 steps (45+ feet), practice using a chipping motion to putt (i.e. turn your body)

## Strategy

### Wind Play

The wind exaggerates a ball's spin, reduce sidespin and hit straighter shots.

Rhythm and Balance - For rhythm, hit practice shots while counting "one, two," in your head, completing your backswing on "one" and your downswing on "two." Think of a metronome swinging back and forth at a constant pace. If you're not in balance, the wind can throw off your timing and accuracy. On the range, try holding your finish for at least three seconds something you can do only if you have good balance. If you find this difficult, widen your stance slightly for more stability.


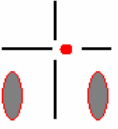
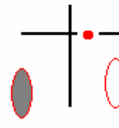
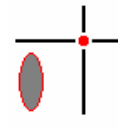
Another way to reduce spin is to swing more slowly. Before your round, practice hitting one extra club. For example, if your normal 150-yard club is a 7-iron, hit 6-irons to the 150-yard flag to get the feeling of swinging slower. Take this strategy to the course, and you'll hit more greens. THE WIND forces you to have a plan. That means thinking hard about a shot's risks and rewards, and not taking unnecessary chances. At the same time, the wind enables you to play shots you wouldn't normally attempt.

Here's a good example. Playing with a strong left-to-right wind, you face an approach shot to a green guarded by water on the left, sand on the right. Assuming the lie is good, you might aim to the far left edge of the green, even towards the edge of the hazard line (photo, right), trusting that the wind will blow the ball back to the flag. Ordinarily, aiming near a hazard is a big risk, but in this situation, it gives you the best chance of hitting the ball close.



<b>Down Hill Lies</b> <b>Aim:</b> RIGHT of Target	<b>Up Hill Lies</b> <b>Aim:</b> RIGHT of Target
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<p><b>Stance:</b> Normal  <b>Ball:</b> behind center  <b>Sole Club:</b> Square  <b>Legs:</b> Straighten your left leg, shorten your right leg, make your hip level  <b>Weight:</b> on left foot</p> 	<p><b>Stance:</b> Normal  <b>Ball:</b> behind center  <b>Sole Club:</b> Square  <b>Legs:</b> Straighten your right leg, shorten your left leg, make your hip level  <b>Weight:</b> on left foot</p> 
<p><b>Side Hill Lies - Ball Below Your Feet</b>  <b>Aim:</b> LEFT of Target line  <b>Stance:</b> Open  <b>Ball:</b> Right of Center  <b>Weight:</b> on left foot</p> 	<p><b>Side Hill Lies - Ball Above Your Feet</b>  <b>Aim:</b> RIGHT of Target line  <b>stance:</b> Closed  <b>Ball:</b> Right of Center  <b>Weight:</b> on left foot</p> 

**Green is Up / Down Hill from Tee Box**

Downhill - 1 yard down = 1 yard shorter		Uphill - 1 yard rise = 2 yards longer	
ElevationChange	Adjustment	Elevation Change	Adjustment
20'	Same Club, chock down	15' ( 5 yards)	Add 1 club
30' (10 yards)	Drop 1 Club,	30' (10 yards)	Add 2 clubs
45'	Drop 1 Club, chock down	45' (15 yards)	Add 3 clubs
60' (20 yards)	Drop 2 Clubs	60' (20 yards)	Add 4 clubs
75'	Drop 2 Clubs, chock down		
90' (30 yards)	Drop 3 clubs		