1. FIVE FUNDAMENTALS

My golf success has been founded on seeking perfection in what I term the five fundamentals of the game:

THE GRIP
THE STANCE
THE BACKSWING
THE DOWNSWING TO IMPACT
THE FULL FOLLOW-THROUGH

I state categorically that it is impossible to be a good golfer unless you get it fixed in your mind that these are the essentials and concentrate on getting each one right in that sequence. I feel my method is one of the simplest to follow, though I do not suggest for one moment that golf is an easy game. It is my intention here to explain how I play golf—and once again let me stress those five fundamentals, in the sequence I have given.

I am not a theorist. I have never filled my head with a string of confusing injunctions: head down, left arm straight, left heel off the ground, and all that sort of thing. Too many people approach a golf shot with their heads buzzing with a variety of tips and hints—'Do this', 'Don't forget that', 'Remember not to do the other'.

Wrong, absolutely wrong! Make sure that you have those five fundamentals correct, that at all times you are relaxed, and from then on it is a matter of practice, practice and more practice. And remember you must avoid tension, which is the ruin of good, consistent golf.

How to make sure that you are doing the right things? Well, if you read on, study carefully the illustrations I have given, and faithfully copy my methods, you will be right.

I have always aimed at achieving a perfect swing. In the course of this book I shall include some 'don'ts', but I want the reader always to remember that it is the perfect swing we are seeking and that the perfect swing depends on those five fundamentals.
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FOREWORD by Bernard Darwin

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PREFACE
14. HOW TO PLAY A DRAW SHOT

The way I play, I have a tendency to put slight draw on most of my shots, and this is an asset since it adds distance without extra effort. It is more than an asset on a windy day, because a shot with draw will hold its line of flight and, as it were, penetrate the wind, while a ball that has been hit straight or with fade is liable to go yards off the course and lose a lot of distance. Developing this slight draw with my shots has also helped me to become an easy swinger, and that conserves energy, a most important factor when playing tournament golf. Let me, however, explain how I set about playing the draw.

Illustration 1 Again I have placed a club on the ground aiming at the target. The stance has been changed over. This time it is the right foot that is four inches behind the line of flight. This means that in a sense I am aiming down the right-hand side of the fairway. I position the ball two inches inside the left heel and make certain that the body weight is evenly distributed on both feet. I do not alter my grip, and I am very careful not to close the face of the club, but to let it have its natural lie.

Illustration 2 This illustration, taken from behind, gives a clear view of the position of my right foot. The first essential of the draw shot is to get your feet lined up correctly and to make certain that the ball is two inches inside a line from the left heel. I stand with the feet about two feet apart.

Illustration 3 Now I have started the backswing. This time the most important part is to take the club back well inside the line of flight. This time I must make certain of swinging from inside to out. In other respects the swing remains the same, with the club, hand, arm and shoulder moving back in one piece to the right-hip-high position to get the necessary width of arc.
Illustration 4 This is the top of the backswing. Once again my left shoulder is fully turned to point to the ball, thus ensuring that I am in the correct hitting position. The only slight difference is in the position of the hands. These are kept slightly lower, which will have the effect of producing a rather flatter backswing than in the fade shot. I suggest that readers should compare carefully the relative positions of the hands at the top of the backswing as I have demonstrated in the fade and draw shots.

Illustration 5 I have just completed the impact, and notice that there has been a slight roll of the wrists. I advocate this roll only when playing a deliberate draw shot, and I must emphasize that this roll must be very gradual. If I roll too much, the draw will develop into a quick hook and that must be avoided.

Remember, going back for a moment to the top of the backswing, that I started the club down once again with a drag of the left hand, and to be absolutely certain to bring the club down to the ball on the same arc as it went back in the backswing. And very much inside to out. My divot is pointing down to the right side of the fairway, and I should add that one does not begin to take the divot until after the ball has been struck. The left wrist is kept firm through impact.

Now about that wrist roll. It is applied by adding a little extra pressure with the right hand at impact. Be very careful here, for, as I have said, that roll, if overdone, can be disastrous. It is something that needs great practice and much concentration.

Illustration 6 The draw shot has now been completed with a full smooth follow-through, and the weight is completely on the left foot. The head has now come up, enabling the body to pivot and maintain full relaxation.

Let me say that I do not advise any golfer to make a regular practice of using this shot. It is skilled golf, and the unskilled player is better advised to stick to straight shots.
ordinary speed and slow motion. The film, in colour, developed perfectly, and I and my friends who have seen it have derived great pleasure from it. That meeting with the great man was a very pleasurable interlude.

To return to the actual tournament, I had one practice game and then in the first round was paired with Ed Dudley, the home professional. It was my first experience of the larger American ball, and, as I have said, everything was utterly different, but I managed to score a 74. I did another 74 in the second round with Bobby Jones, and in the third round I was paired with the favourite, Byron Nelson. He too was very kind and sympathetic, and in spite of the huge gallery, the largest I had ever seen, I soon settled down. A twenty-five-foot putt for a birdie three at the 9th gave me an outward score of 34 against Nelson’s 38. I finished in 70 against Nelson’s 72, and it was during this round that I realized that if I played against bogey and did not allow myself to be over-awed by the reputation of my opponent, I could hold, and perhaps beat, the ‘unbeatable’ Americans. Nelson congratulated me very warmly on my score. I shall always think of him with affection, and I regret that he was another man who had to retire early because of ‘nerves’. Nelson got to such a state that before big games he could neither eat nor sleep.

People often say to me, ‘It must be a great strain playing the sort of golf you do’. This is almost an understatement, and I think only those who have known it have any appreciation of what it does to you. The competition is utterly ruthless. You are either at the top or ‘out’.

In the final round of the Masters my partner was Jimmy Demaret. I clung to my tactics of playing against par, and finished in 71. Demaret had a 72, but with his earlier scores he had a total of 281 to win. My total was 289, and I finished joint tenth.

After the Masters I then went to North Carolina to my friend Dugan Aycock, whom I had met in Italy during the War. He was president of the Carolinas section of the P.G.A., of which he made me an honorary member, and invited me to play in their Open, a seventy-two hole event. The big names competing included Johnny Palmer, Skip Alexander, Clayton Heafner and Johnny Bulla. This event was played on the Mid Pines Golf Club at Pinehurst, and I won the tournament with a score of 274. This began to rouse the interest of the American pros. Clayton Heafner, who played the final two rounds with me, said, ‘Boy, you are the best driver I have seen. I’ll make money betting on you against the boys’.

The following week was the Houston Open at Houston, Texas. All the big guns were there—Hogan, Snead, Mangrum, Barron, and many others. There was quite a lot of conversation in the locker-room about my win of the previous week, and Heafner insisted that I had a big chance. The big names laughed, and Mangrum and Heafner had a side bet, in which Mangrum said he would finish ahead of me. Anyhow, my form stayed with me, my favourite rusty putter held its magic, and I won the tournament with a score of 277 for the four rounds over the long Memorial Park course.
This victory really shook the boys who had said that my swing was unreliable. The next tournament was at Fort Worth, Texas, and I finished third.

I was now ankle-deep in the American golf circuit, with a big tournament every week starting on Thursdays. The distances to be travelled were colossal. For instance, the jump from Fort Worth to Philadelphia for the next tournament was 1,500 miles. The first day’s play of the Philadelphia Inquirer tournament was washed out by heavy rain, so the final two rounds had to be played on the Sunday. Hogan led at the halfway stage, with 65 and 69 for 134; I was next at 139, five strokes behind; then came Mangrum and the rest. I was paired with Hogan and Dick Metz for the final two rounds. This was to be a landmark in my career. The Cedar Brook Country Club is a long narrow course with thick rough and superb greens, and it is an exacting test of golf. We set out on the final day, Hogan starting 4 to my 5, and then I gradually started picking up strokes, drawing level with Hogan by holing a thirty-five-foot putt for a birdie three on the 15th. Hogan by this time was shaken and he finished 4, 5, 5, to my three fours, to give me a two-shot lead with one round to play. A round of 70 in the afternoon against Hogan’s 73 gave me a four-stroke victory. American golf was rocked from coast to coast. Everyone was amazed that Hogan could be overtaken by a foreigner and beaten. My winning score was 279.

The following week was the Goodall Round Robin in Boston. This is an

*The Goodall Round Robin is one of the toughest golf tests in the world. In 1947 I won this invitation tournament by three points over Vic Ghezzi with a total of 37 points.*