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TO MY FRIEND

W. E. STRATTON

WHO MADE ME WRITE

THIS BOOK
NOTWITHSTANDING the large number of books that have been written on golf, there yet remains much to be said, particularly as regards the science of the game and the mechanics of it.

It is my purpose to produce a book from which a person who has never handled a club can get such an idea of the game and the underlying principles that govern the flight and run of the ball that he may soon become a confident and good player.

It is pitiful to watch many of the men who have taken to golf rather late in life, and who have been taught on entirely wrong principles, contorting themselves on the tee preparatory to churning the turf, then examining carefully the face of the innocent driver, and breathing upon it soft nothings that ought to char it.
liberally illustrated volumes, that readers grasp the points of the player's attitude better from good photographs accompanied by suitable letterpress than they do if they have to refer back to the letterpress or forward to the plate. It is often said that nobody can learn to play golf by reading a book. That, of course, is true. One must practise. But it is an inestimable advantage to the would-be golfer to know what he wants to do. The mechanics of golf are simple, and can be learned from a book, and once learned they are not readily forgotten. They tell the learner better than anything else can do what he must try for.

Golf requires a far greater degree of mechanical accuracy than any other field game. This accuracy can only be obtained in the highest degree by those who know exactly what it is that they are trying to do. One who is ignorant of the mechanics of golf cannot properly develop his game. There is also this
advantage in having the knowledge of the finer points of the game: they sink into one, and one ceases to look upon them as knowledge; they become second nature. When one knows the proper way to cut it is as natural to do it with a club as with a knife. It then remains only to perfect one’s physical action. In other words, although the mechanical side of golf is all-important, it cannot possibly become an obsession with an intelligent player, as do so many of the notions that obtain with regard to the proper way of playing strokes.

I have chosen George Duncan, the famous young professional, who is now attached to the Hanger Hill Golf Club, to illustrate the strokes I describe, because there is nobody that I prefer to him. In my opinion he is the most interesting personality in the golf world. The few who may claim to rank above Duncan are ascertained quantities. Notwithstanding his brilliant achievements, Duncan still practically has all his golf in front of
CONTENTS

CHAP.                    PAGE

Preface . . . . . . . . . vii

I. The Structure of Clubs . . . . . 1

II. The Proper Way to Learn Golf . . 19

III. Soling the Club . . . . . 27

IV. Putting . . . . . . 34

V. The Mashie . . . 72

VI. The Iron . . . . 97

VII. The Cleek . . . . . 103

VIII. The Drive . . . . . 109

IX. The Niblick . . . . 141

X. The Slice . . . . 146

XI. The Pull . . . . 171

XII. The Wind-cheater . . . . 180

XIII. The Master-hand . . . 186

XIV. Transference of Weight . . . 191

XV. Olla Podrida . . . 199

XVI. The Golf Ball . . . . . 203

Rules of Golf . . . . . 213

Index . . . . . . 253
ILLUSTRATIONS

George Duncan
The Vardon Grip (1–3)
Putting (4–17)
The New Stymie Stroke (18–22)
The Mashie (23–35)
The Iron (36–39)
The Cleek (40–47)
The Niblick (48–51)
Driving (52–100)

Frontispiece
Beginning at page 212

Also 56 diagrams in the text
52. DRIVING. TAKING THE LINE

The drive is a most important stroke. Some people think it the most important in golf. It is generally shown in three photographs—stance, top of swing, and finish. All easy to photograph, but, as I explain elsewhere, all positions in which nothing is taking place. I shall show practically every position. Duncan is taking the line to the hole.
He then addresses the ball as shown above. The weight is equally distributed between the legs.
54. DRIVING. THE WAGGLE
From the address his club comes up approximately as shown by the dotted line A B to the point C. From there it goes back to the position shown in the next Plate and marked above, D. Note the large amount of wrist action in the swing back of the club to D by comparing this Plate with the following one.
DRIVING. THE WAGGLE.

From there it goes forward again as shown by the dotted line until it rests for the briefest fraction of a second as shown in the next Plate.
56. DRIVING. THE WAGGLE

Instantly it has arrived here it sinks quickly and accurately into the position shown in the next Plate.
That is George Duncan's waggle. It is probably the first and only waggle to be illustrated, but make no error about this, it is a matter of great importance in the stroke. No more is necessary. Less would probably be a mistake. So many people, however, think that waggling is the most important thing in the drive—and they occupy too much time in doing it. They are obstructionists.
This is the next position in Duncan's drive. Observe the shaft of his driver and his hands in the previous Plate. There his shaft is behind the line and parallel with it. Here his hands have gone forward, pressing the club lightly on to the ground. Duncan thinks this improves the rhythm of the swing. I believe it does, and it also prevents the hands getting away before the head of the club, which is of the utmost importance.
59. DRIVING. CLUB LEAVING LINE OF FLIGHT

The club has left the ball. Note how it is clinging to the line before it begins to sweep away towards the player. Although one cannot see it on account of the shadow, Duncan's left heel has already started to lift.
60. DRIVING. FOREARMS TURNING

We are here taken a stage further. The left knee is bending inwards and the weight is following the club in the slightest degree on to the right leg. The forearms are turning. Duncan appears to be looking away from the ball. This is noticeable also in Plate 58, but his eye is never off it.
The club is well on its way to the top of the swing now. Pivoting on the left toe is clearly seen, also the rigid right leg, and the right foot firmly and flatly planted. The wrists have come in under the club. The weight is evenly distributed.
We have now come to the top of the swing. The position of the arms and wrists is well and clearly shown. The weight is evenly distributed, if anything more on the left than the right. Many players mistake the torsional strain on the right leg, when at the top of their swing, for weight.
This gives us a rear view of Duncan at the top of his swing. It is a fine natural position, but I think shows unmistakably that the weight is on the left. The fact that in this position the left toe is pivoted makes its grip look lighter than it really is. The most I shall allow the right leg is to share the weight equally.
We are now half through the downward swing. The forearms are turning over so as to bring the face of the club into position. The left foot is now firmly and flatly planted, and the right is pivoting on the ball of the toe. The weight is still fairly equally divided, with a tendency towards the left.
65. DRIVING. IMPACT

This Plate shows the all-important moment of impact. Observe the shaft parallel with the stance line. The face of the club is getting the ball truly. Notice the position of the hands, and of the right foot. The weight is now shifting forward.
The ball has gone. The weight has shifted forward. The club-head is following squarely down the line of flight, and already Duncan has stopped looking at the place where the ball was. It is worse than useless to continue gazing at the turf after the ball has been hit. A rigid head and neck prevent a free follow-through and interfere with the drive at a most critical point.
67. DRIVING. CLUB LEAVING LINE OF FLIGHT

Front view, showing follow-through down the line of flight. The club, having done all it can in the straight line, is now coming in to make a natural finish.
68. DRIVING. FINISH

A fine free finish, the weight now being all on the left foot, for the body has followed the club as far as it could. Notice how the weight of the body goes down the left foot and not across it; also observe the right foot. Every inch has been got out of this finish, and probably every ounce.
DRIVING. FRONT VIEW OF FINISH

This is a front view of a similar finish to that shown in the previous Plate. Note position of arms and hands. This series of Plates should give my readers some idea of the sequence of movements involved in the golf drive, which is usually considered sufficiently illustrated by three Plates taken in periods of inaction.
Next in order of precedence comes the pull, a beautiful and useful shot, but probably the most difficult to play accurately. Stance and address are shown in this Plate. The ball is played nearly off the right heel.
Immediately the club leaves the ball it begins to curve away as shown by the dotted line. Observe the stance. Note how much farther the right foot is off the line of flight than the left.
76. DRIVING. UPWARD SWING IN THE PULL

The swing has continued in the curve shown in last Plate. Note how flat it is as compared with the ordinary drive.
The top of the swing for the pull is here shown. Note stance and how the club comes round the head. It will return in nearly the same plane as the shaft is now in.
This Plate shows the impact of the driver on the ball in the pull. The dotted line shows the manner in which the club cuts across the line of flight.
The driver here has swung out over the line, but is now coming in again. Note that the face of the club is not yet turned over. It does not turn over at the time of impact, as persistently stated. The wrists start to turn over soon after impact, and at about the same place as in the slice they start to turn backwards.
This Plate shows the club-head over the line, but it is not really so. The angle at which it was photographed is responsible for that appearance. Here, and often a little sooner, the wrists begin to turn over.
The finish of the swing always shows what plane or circle the force has been working in. Note the position of the right arm and hand.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight—continued</th>
<th>Weight—continued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>evidence of photographs of</td>
<td>evidence of photographs of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braid and Vardon, 192</td>
<td>Braid and Vardon, 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiment to decide adjust-</td>
<td>experiment to decide adjust-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ment of, 194</td>
<td>ment of, 194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distribution at top of swing,</td>
<td>distribution at top of swing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after impact, 195</td>
<td>after impact, 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind-cheater, 180</td>
<td>Wind-cheater, 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explanation, 181</td>
<td>explanation, 181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flight, 182</td>
<td>flight, 182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run of, 182</td>
<td>run of, 182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as staple drive, 183</td>
<td>as staple drive, 183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high tee for, 185</td>
<td>high tee for, 185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Vaile ball, 211                 | Waggle, the, 133, and plates    |
| Vardon on clubs, 9              | Weight, transference of, 191    |
| on slice, 146, 149, 156, 158,   | leading writers in error, 191,  |
| 162                             | 192                             |
| on pull, 173                    | James Braid on, 192             |
| on master-hand, 186 et seq.     |                                 |
| on swaying, 193                 |                                 |