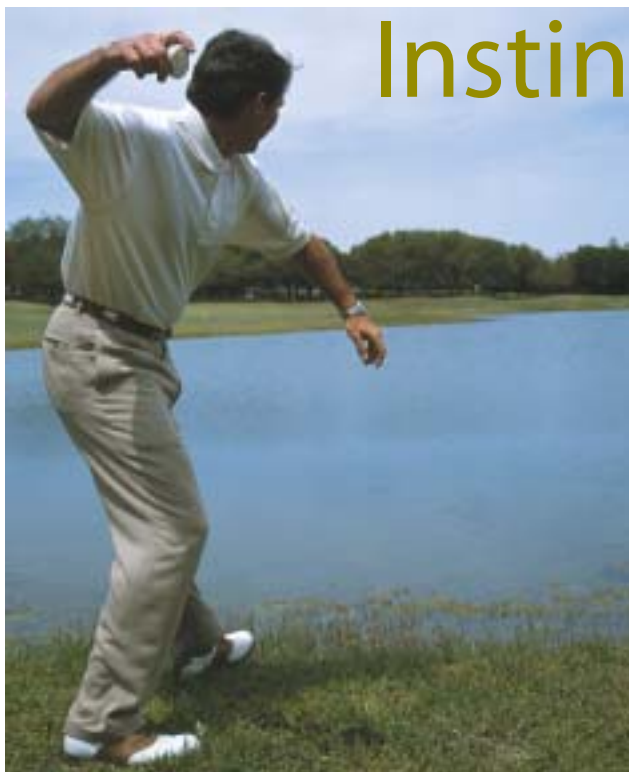


Instinctive Knowledge



By Buck Mayers

If you can skip a rock on a lake, lop dandelions with a slingblade, swing a bat, throw a ball or swing a racket, you can swing a golf club well enough to play golf. The problem with much of the learning process is that most of us have a tendency to overthink, overdo and overemphasize the mechanics of the golf swing. If you're trying to consciously put the club in all those "perfect" positions, you *will* experience the dreaded "paralysis by analysis."

Most of us want only to hit it solidly, up in the air and relatively close to the target. A very small percentage of golfers can hit the ball a certain height and distance and curve it at will consistently.

Imagine skipping a rock. Did you think about shifting your weight back, turning your shoulders, cocking your wrist, folding your elbow, stepping toward the lake, unwinding your hips, dropping your arm, snapping your wrist and turning your body toward the target all in a balanced finish? If you did, the rock either hit someone nearby or sunk to the bottom. With this thought process, your golf ball could do the same .

Most of us instinctively know how to propel an object in the most efficient way possible. When filming my students throwing *a club* at the target, they invariably make a fundamentally correct motion. But

once I film them hitting a golf ball, disaster strikes. All of a sudden, the ball becomes the target...instead of the flag. While looking at and comparing the two vastly different movements on film, there is one glaring divergence. When throwing the club, the eyes look toward the target much sooner. When hitting the ball, the focus was on the ball. As the video typically shows, the mind, body and club respond to the target.

So how do you get there? Practice more by removing the ball and disregarding the results of a shot until you can repeat from a "new" point of view. Instinct and trust can change the body's movements naturally. There is no question that clubface squareness, swing path, approach angle, clubhead speed and solid contact are all important. But the complex process of piecing it all together wastes time and rarely produces satisfactory results.

Give yourself a break. Find your best swing with instinctive knowledge.

-buck

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