

HOW REAL IS YOUR FEEL?



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I can't begin to tell you how often I hear a good golfer complain about his swing or game. I offer my help, only to hear, "No, I'm a feel player, I don't do video."

Guess what. All good players are feel players. Players and coaches don't use video all the time, and some say good teachers don't need video. The teacher may not need it, but it's not for the teacher. It's for the player.

Tiger, Ernie, Annika, Phil, Vijay, and Retief are all feel players, and they all use video. Why? Because they want to make sure their feel is real.

I think many good players fear seeing themselves on video for different reasons. Are you one of them?

*Have you:
...had a bad experience with a poor instructor?
...had a friend or heard of someone else having a bad experience with a poor instructor?
...been afraid of what you may hear or see?
...not been secure enough with your own philosophy to know that one or two small changes could help?
...thought that too much information will screw up your intuitive instincts?*

First of all, a good instructor will not give you too much information.

Golfers are better than ever...just ask Jack Nicklaus. "There are more great players today than ever. More players have technically sound swings and short game versatility. Instruction has grown to new heights. Technology is off the charts. Fitness and nutrition are becoming synonymous with golf. Mental toughness has changed player's lives."

I respect the players of previous eras immensely. Snead, Hogan, Nelson, Palmer. But I bet they'd agree that golf is a much better game today. Nicklaus' winning percentage was 8%. Tiger's is over 20%, with tougher courses and many more great players. There are over 100 players who are capable of winning any given week.

In the past month, I've filmed a PGA tour winner, a college winner, a city champion

and a Junior All-American. One of them had never been videotaped, and another hadn't in over three years. Those two fit into their own "feel" category. I asked them to give me their perception of their swing. Sensations, ball flight and what they were working on. In both cases, what they thought they were doing and what was actually happening were very different. Were they smart enough to know what to leave alone and what to tweak? Yes. Did it help to see it? Without question! They started hitting the ball better immediately.

Okay, so you're a feel player. But do your sensations and reality agree?

We all trust what we see more than what we hear. Visualization and feel are both critical to the success of every great golfer. If you have both, you can master it, change it and repeat it. If you don't know if your feel is real, it may be wise to find an instructor with a trained eye. One who won't tinker with all your wonderful instincts and the things you do well.

See it to confirm it. See it to validate the work you've put in. And see it to trust it.

The next time you pull the trigger, you should know that your feel is real.

- bm / agm



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