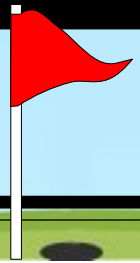


PLAYING THROUGH

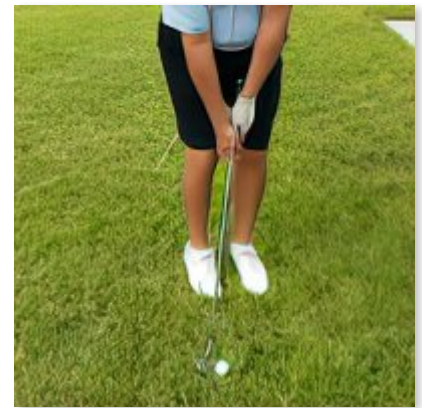


Say hello to Christian Smith, Magnolia Point Resident and Golf Member, current handicap “0”. Christian graduated from Stetson University where he played number one on the university golf team. One will often see Christian practicing and playing at Magnolia Point. In addition to local and state amateur events, Christian is in demand as a partner in our Magnolia Point events. Thank you for the tips Christian.

HAND POSITION ON THE GOLF CLUB FOR LOW VS. HIGH WEDGE SHOTS

Golf is a game of precision and control, where the slightest adjustment can have a significant impact on the outcome of a shot. Hand position on the golf club is always critical, particularly when executing wedge shots. The position of the hands can determine the trajectory, spin, and distance of the ball, making it a fundamental skill for golfers to master.

For low wedge shots, “chip shots” or “bump and runs,” the hand position is crucial in keeping the ball flight lower and promoting a more controlled roll upon landing. To achieve this, you should position the hands slightly ahead of the ball at address. This forward hand placement encourages a steeper angle of attack, resulting in a descending blow that imparts less loft on the ball. Additionally, the hands should lead the clubhead through impact, ensuring that the loft of the clubface is reduced, and the ball is struck with a more delofted face. This technique helps to minimize the ball’s backspin and launch angle, allowing for a lower trajectory that is less affected by wind and provides more predictable roll on the green.



In contrast, high “lobs” or “flop shots,” require a different hand position to achieve the desired high trajectory and soft landing. For these shots, golfers should position their hands level with or slightly behind the ball at address. This setup allows the clubhead to slide under the ball more easily, utilizing the full loft of the wedge to launch the ball higher into the air. The hands should remain passive during the swing, allowing the clubhead to release naturally and add loft to the shot. The goal is to create maximum backspin, which helps the ball stop quickly on the green, even from short distances. This technique is particularly useful when facing obstacles such as bunkers or when the pin is closely tucked behind a hazard.

Understanding the relationship between hand position and ball trajectory is essential for golfers looking to improve their short game. Again, for low wedge shots, a forward hand position promotes a lower ball flight and greater control, making it ideal for situations where the golfer needs the ball to run out on the green. On the other hand, a neutral or slightly rearward hand position is key for high wedge shots, where stopping the ball quickly with minimal roll is the priority.

In conclusion, the hand position on the golf club plays a pivotal role in executing both low and high wedge shots effectively. Golfers must practice and develop a feel for the correct hand placement for each type of shot, as it can greatly influence their ability to navigate various course conditions and scoring situations. By mastering the art of hand positioning, golfers can add versatility to their short game, ultimately leading to lower scores and a more enjoyable experience on the course.

- CHRISTIAN SMITH

