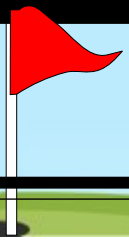


PLAYING THROUGH



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 Magnolia Point events.

“Chili Dips Are For Parties”

There isn't much more debilitating to a round of golf, or our morale, than chunking a chip or pitch where the ball



moves about an inch and stares back at you, the dreaded **‘chili dip’**. We also can't forget chili dips or its diabolical best-friend the **‘skull’** where you hit the ball right in the mouth and it goes sailing across the green and scaring your playing partners and the Canadian geese on the other side of the green.

There are three main causes for this and I have a few tips to help.

Incorrect Body Lean: Most people have been told to have their weight on their front foot (or leaning forward). Most times, people do this by pushing their hips towards the target. This almost has the opposite effect because it puts your shoulders and torso in a backwards lean while the hips stick out. This causes the player to have to scoop the ball which usually results in chili-dip or skullly. You want to feel like the ‘leaning tower of Piza’, with a forward lean of the upper body and shoulders towards the target (it will feel like your front shoulder is actually a bit lower than your rear shoulder) which will allow you to strike the ball with a descending blow.

Continued





Too much 'shaft lean'



Just right

Too Much Shaft Lean: the other thing is I see are folks setting their hands WAY in front of the ball in the attempt to hit down on it. While this does help with the descending blow, it also makes the angle of attack at the ball very steep. In most cases, you want your hands slightly in front of the ball so the shaft is leaning minimally forward (with your correct lean addressed above). This will allow you to still hit down on the ball, but with a more shallow approach which is easier to control.



Too far (and 'flat')



Just right

Standing Too Far From the Ball: In chipping, and most pitches you want to be more 'on top' of the ball with the shaft almost dissecting your forearms. Standing closer to the ball, feet closer together, and gripping down on the club allows you to do this. It also stands the clubface up so that the toe (farthest outside point on the clubface) is grounded and the heel of the clubface (most inner part) is almost slightly off the ground.

This is extremely important on tight lies and into the grain shots because it doesn't allow the heel of the clubhead to dig. Note there are cases where you want the hands lower and to use the heel, but those are more for shots out of deep or fluffy rough and in bunker shots.

Give these tips a try and I assure you that those 'Uh-Oh!' shots will start to go away.

