

Week 15 Long Game - Playing in the Wind.

It's something, especially in this part of the world, that all golfers must contend with. A lot of us have the tools to play good golf in bad conditions but are beaten before we go out. We can choose our mind set for any given round, but it is especially important when playing in tough conditions. We NEED to accept that we will hit wayward shots, everyone will, but it's how we react to these shots that will make or break your round. We need to stay positive, accept the bad ones and continue trying to hit the good ones.

I have 5 golden rules for playing in the wind.

Firstly, keeping the ball flight down on the majority of shots is a must. To do this we must do the following.

- Take more club than you would normally. This is where ego can get in the way. Sometimes we are reluctant to hit a 5 iron 120 yards even though the wind is so strong that is the club needed.
- Play the ball slightly further back in your stance (pic. 1) than you would normally for the club you are hitting. I don't like to see the player playing the ball too far back i.e. opposite your back foot, as this promotes a steeper angle of attack.



- Reduce the length of your backswing and follow through by restricting the height of your hands. By keeping the swing more compact, we gain control and reduce the impact of bad shots. (Pic . 2 & 3)
- Swing at 75% of your normal pace. Not hitting hard at the ball will reduce backspin thus keeping the ball flight down.
- When playing in strong crosswinds don't try to fight the wind. Pick your target line(this could be 20-30 yards away from your intended target) and commit to swinging the club towards that. In this picture the wind is blowing from left to right so I'm focused on a target to the left of the fairway, committing to swinging the club towards this target and letting the wind bring it back. (Pic. 4)



It's important to keep hitting towards areas that keep the big numbers away. On a lot of difficult holes it's ok to play for bogies in order to avoid disasters.

I hope these pointers help. Get out there and try it.

If you have any specific questions regarding this article or any other golf swing issues you can email Eddie on eddietraceypga@yahoo.com and he will endeavour to address them in future articles.

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