

Tip of the Month August 2017

Don't practice those 3 foot putts

There is certainly a trend towards practicing the dreaded 3 foot putts and I am not so sure that is a good thing as I intend to explain in this article.

There are 2 things that you have to refine about your putting to be successful, the line of the putt and the pace of it. Of the 2, most people would agree that the pace is the most important part of this as if you get the pace right and the line wrong you will never be more than 9 or 10 feet out, but if you get the pace wrong and the line right you could well be a long way away. So it is with this in mind that I would suggest learning the feel of the pace of the green far outweighs any other point in putting.

So what do we learn by practicing the 3 foot putt? Well nothing about the pace of the green as you are extremely unlikely to leave a 3 foot putt short or whack it 5 feet past. But if you spent the time practicing putts of at least 30 foot long, then that will sharpen up your ability to judge distances a treat.

The other aspect of practicing those nasty little tickly 3 foot putts is that if you hole it, the reaction is "well, whatever" as you would expect to hole them. However if, as is bound to occur occasionally, you miss one, then the feeling afterwards is one of desolation and anger, not a great state of mind in which to spend the limited amount of time you have spare to practice your golf.

So I would recommend spend your time on the practice putting green trying to hole the longest putts you can. That way you will more quickly develop the feel of the pace of the green which will mean far less 3 putts and thus a reduction to your score, but also from the mental well being point of view, if you miss a 40 foot putt while practicing, well you sort of expected to so that is not too disheartening. But if you manage to hole that huge putt, what a boost to your confidence that will be and suddenly practicing becomes a lot more fun.