



## *Technical Game, Physical Game, Mental Game*

### **No Shortcuts Here**

I must have really touched a nerve with last month's essay, *A Good Question*. I received triple the usual email responses. The average golfer's number one excuse for not getting better is the lack of time for practice. True, most folks don't have the time and/or inclination to practice technique, get in shape, or consider a specific mental approach. However, it's not just a matter of practice; it's a matter of change. Fundamentally, in order to get better, whatever time you do have should be focused on changing the habits that define how you subconsciously create action and motion.

The fact of the matter is every subconscious motor skill we use during the course of a day is embedded with habit. Tying your shoes, brushing your hair, walking, playing golf, tennis, throwing a baseball—all are physical actions executed through skills developed and repeated through habit. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Therefore, does practicing the very habits that result in inconsistent and unfulfilling golf make much sense? With this approach, changing habit won't occur simply because it can't.

As Dr. Bob Rotella famously said, "golf is not a game of perfect." But while inconsistency and mistakes are part of the game if it's chronic action rather than inconsistency that regularly affects performance, then fundamental change is essential. And if no change of habit occurs, then no change in performance should be expected.

With instruction more sophisticated than ever before, and with custom fit equipment now broadly available, improvement has never been more attainable. The wildcard here is true commitment to changing habit, to taking the information and equipment and time that you do have to replacing the tendencies that cause inconsistencies and downright miserable golf with more body-friendly, technically and physically consistent swing habits.

Changing habit is a process not an event, requiring commitment, regular and accurate feedback, and patience. Golfers who do get better understand that there is a trial-and-error aspect to change -- a process to develop familiarity and build confidence that precedes consistency and new productive habits. The golfer that thinks there are shortcuts is in denial. A "swing-of-the-day" approach will only cause confusion, frustration and to repeat mistakes that unwittingly help form more bad habits and more bad golf.

Readers of eCoaching, and hopefully my students, know that the keys to consistent and enjoyable golf, involves the three-legged-platform of productive Technical, Physical, and Mental habits. First, get beyond denial and make a commitment to change the habit(s) that are holding you back. Second, identify one specific habit to change at a time. Third, develop a plan to self-regulate your process and track your progress.

To become an accomplished golfer, you need to work hard and work smart, which means you have to know what habits make you better and which ones hold you back. Some of us won't make that kind of effort, and that gives the ones that do a big advantage. But even if you're simply looking to improve just enough to have a bit more fun, you have to seek out someone to help you identify that one habit that will be a difference maker and get to work. While there are any number of books, articles, and tips from the pro's to fix your golf game, I'm here to tell you - there's no shortcut to fixing a bad habit.

RG



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### **Visit Randy at The Dye Preserve**

Planning a trip to Florida? Plan to visit Randy at The Dye Preserve. The Dye Preserve is named for the designer of the club's immaculate golf course, the legendary Pete Dye.

Our golf course showcases a different side of Pete, a golf course contrasting challenge with opportunity offering enjoyment to players of all skill levels. The Dye Preserve is not "typical Florida golf" the property and design culminate in a beautiful, easy feel with quiet surrounds where every hole is framed by nature.

The clubhouse, which opened in the spring of 2005, has been well received by our membership, and we are justifiably proud. It feels more like a home than a club, elegant but comfortable, classically understated, evoking an era of simplicity and good taste. It was selected as one of the five best new clubhouses in America.