

Putting: Building hand and Arm action

History of Croker Golf: Putting

In putting we not only find the ultimate blend of both the scientific and artistic approach to playing the game of golf, but we also find the best entrance point into learning the Croker Golf System of hitting the golf ball.

Before I get into sharing the magic of the mechanics of our foundation to the golf swing through putting, there are some experiences that prove our technology to work well in the highest level of play on the PGA Tours of the world.

In 1996, I met up with Bob Charles, the most famous left-hand golfer (before Phil Michelson) in the world and one of the greatest putters in the history of the game. He was at that time not happy with his putting and complained of not being able to read the greens as his eyesight had deteriorated and his new glasses were giving him problems. We went to the putting green and I found that he was hitting more up on the putts as he followed through than usual. Sure enough he was not rolling the ball as well as he normally did, and on his shorter putts, the ball was leaving the putter face inconsistently – some to the left, and then to protect from that, some were missing to the right. I explained to Bob that if the putter head stayed lower through impact that was **"PUSHING"**. If it came up too quickly it would be a **"pulling action"** on the putter. I took a "hands-on" approach with him and helped him feel the difference. He putted several putt from around four feet and then tested some longer putts. He instantly regained his ability to hit the ball where he aimed and within 2 weeks was in the winner's circle with his win in a play-off against Dave Stockton at the Hyatt Regency Maui Kaanapali Classic in Hawaii. His putting lesson was very simple. His grip, stance, feel were already great, so assign more structure to impact by feeling what I did to his hands was all that Bob Charles needed. A genius is a person who does the simple things well. This was a simple lesson for Bob to think with and he did it well. Pure genius!

In 1997, I met up with Fred Funk when he came to practice at my golf school venue in Hilton Head, South Carolina. He was testing out some new drivers as I approached him. It was the Saturday of the *Masters* Tournament, and I asked why he was playing here. He told me that he had missed the cut and was in a putting slump. I asked why he wasn't practicing his putting. He said that he had just had a lesson prior to the *Masters* from David Leadbetter and David had showed him on video that he was breaking down through impact and his left wrist was bending and the putter head was coming up too quickly. I asked Fred what he was doing to cure the problem. He said that David wanted him to play the ball further back in his stance so that he would strike the ball more solidly *before* any chance of breakdown. Fred certainly hit the ball more solidly doing this but he had lost his ability to aim the putter face at his target.

I suggested we put his drivers away and we go to the putting green. I promised him he would understand how to stop "breakdown" through impact forever.



Fred Funk with Peter at the 1999 JC Penney Classic, at Innisbrook Resort, Tarpon Springs, FL.

Although the straightest driver on tour at that time for several years Fred had not been inside the top 100 in putting statistics over the previous 8 months. After this lesson during the *MCI Heritage of Golf*, Fred was 3rd on the putting statistics going into the final round. His wife was over the moon with his quick turnaround. Fred Funk went on to making more than \$1 million on the PGA Tour in 1997 and was in the winner's circle again.

It took me a couple of lessons that week at Hilton Head to give Fred the "No Breakdown" through impact that I promised, and you too can be on your own Leaderboard with this technique.

Putting

The Product of putting is to hit the ball on the correct line with the correct speed and the correct distance into the hole.

To do this the mechanics are very simple. The least amount of moving parts allows for more precision and consistency of solidly hit putts. This leads to both distance control and consistent feel.

Having said this we believe the minimum amount of body movement, the better the touch and directional control can be.

Putting is a hands and arm motion, with minimum shoulder participation and the bulk of the body remains in a stable balanced position.

The hands are the source of motion. It is in this putting stroke that you are going to be introduced to the precision and feel of "PUSH" in the golf swing.

To start, take a stance where your feet are set parallel to the target line, knees slightly flexed, bent well over from the hips, and with the right shoulder set below the left.

Looking front on, you will see that the left leg appears vertical while the right leg is on a slight incline.

This balances out for the right shoulder for being lower than the left, putting the spine on a slight tilt to the right (for right handed golfers).

With the extra bend from the hips, your eyes will be located above the target line, and slightly back of the ball.

Ball positioned slightly inside the front foot.

The arms hang relaxed from the shoulders, with the left arm nearly straight, and the right arm slightly more bent.

To start the motion you would first be best to tap the putter head on the ground lightly several times. This would put you in touch with the putter head, and connect your hands to the motion.

Next, you would start back by pushing the left hand straight back against a slightly resisting right hand. The right hand resistance helps control the length of the backstroke. It also creates a coil to recoil against as you start the forward motion through the ball. There is no rolling of the wrists or cocking of the wrists in the backswing.

You start the forward motion by firstly attempting to uncock the wrists (thumbs down), and then pushing the right hand against a slightly resisting left hand. As both wrists uncock, it is this resistance from the left hand that gives you a solid inline structure through the impact area. The club shaft moves into line with the left arm, and there is no breakdown of the left wrist. A

positive acceleration of the clubhead is produced at every thrust level. You'll guarantee an accelerating stroke by this uncocking (thumbs down) action in the forward part of the swing.

The arms extend as both hands move towards a fully uncocked condition. The shoulders remain stable and the putting stroke is predominantly a motion of the hands and arms. The key is the uncocking action of both hands causes the club shaft to move into line with the left arm giving you a precise and solid impact on the ball.

(Attached is a picture of the **Yardstick Drill** showing this **Finish Position**.)

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