

Meet Team TG...

WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK: SWING, BRAIN OR BODY?
FIND OUT WITH OUR GANG...

THE COACH

Adrian Fryer

● Telephone: 01925 234800 or adrian@drivetimeuk.com

Adrian's swing know-how is based on 23 years' teaching. His approach is flexible; forget trying to hone a swing with geometric precision, just base your technique on attainable essentials. Adrian teaches everyone from starter to pro, and coaches for the Cheshire County Ladies' Golf Association.



THE SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST

Dr Karl Morris

● Telephone: 01942 729836 or see www.golf-brain.com

Karl will show you how to think your way to better golf. He is a trained sports psychologist who works with the ELGA at national level, and is also a consultant and workshop-presenter with the PGA of GB and Europe. His practical tips demystify golf psychology.

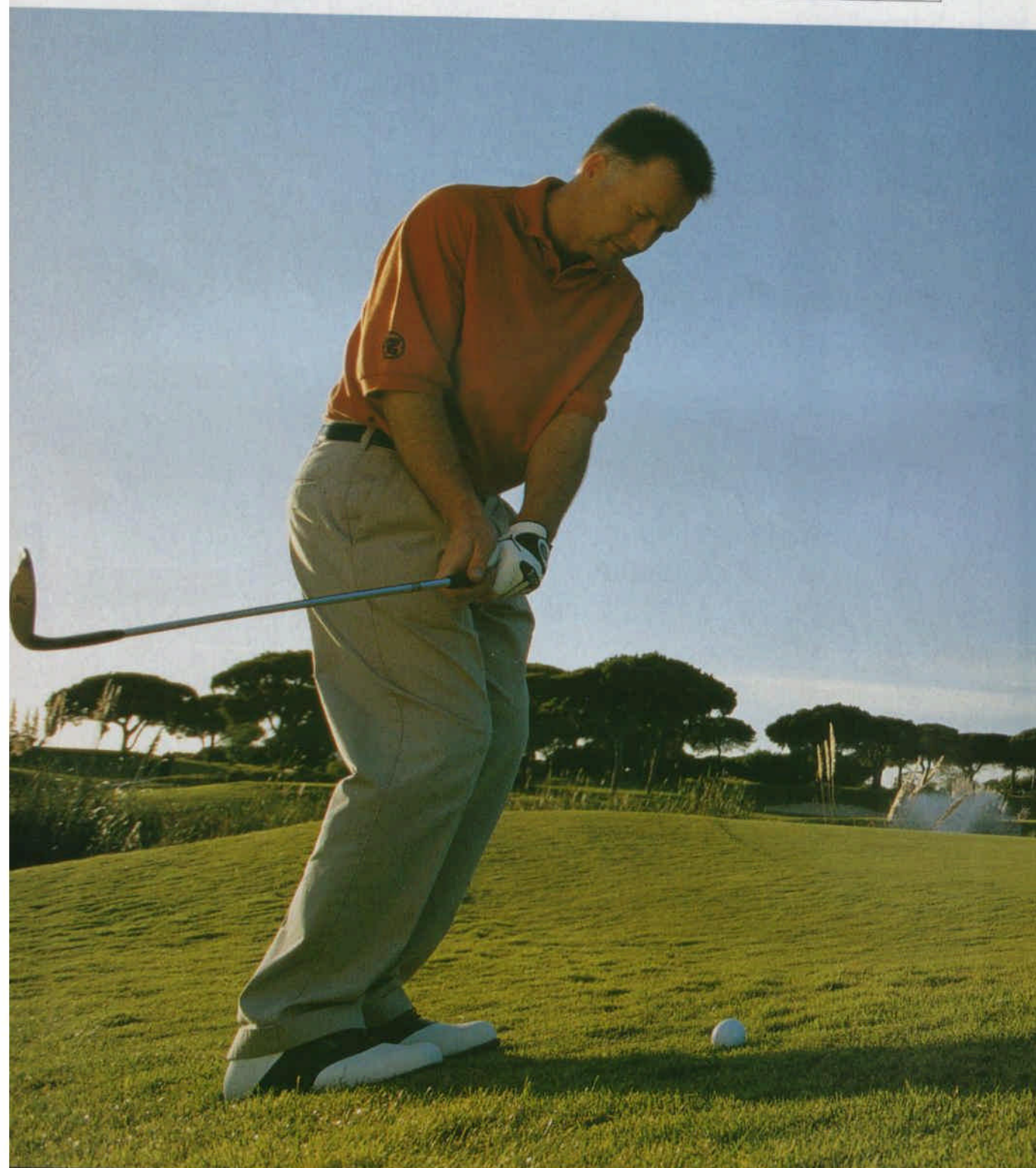


THE GOLF FITNESS TRAINER

Tristan Huckle

● Telephone: 07973 155027 or tristan.huckle@btopenworld.com

Tristan will show you how you can improve your golf by training your body. Europe's only qualified golf biomechanic, Tristan has worked on fitness with all standards, from hackers to Colin Montgomerie. And don't think you'll need to fork out for a load of fancy gym gear – you can do all Tristan's drills at the club.



This month:
YOU'VE GOT A CHOICE!

One minute you're told to chip with firm wrists, the next you're told to hinge them. Which is right? Well, they both are. Golf offers you a series of choices, so stop chasing the perfect technique and use Team TG's flexible approach to customising your game. ▶



THE COACH
Adrian Fryer

You've got a choice!

“Golf teaching traditionally puts out a frightening message – there's only one true way to swing the club, and you're doomed to failure if you don't find it. Happily, it's not the case. In fact, the golf swing is flexible enough to offer you a series of options. You would do well to think of your golf technique as a series of preferences rather than as an endless search for a model swing. The world's top players bear this out; each player has his own style, built from a series of personal choices and fused together through practice. We're going to look at four areas where you can customise your golf swing – chipping, the start of the downswing, bunker shots and the grip. Once you understand how to make your choice, you'll be well-placed to create your own best technique.”

Chipping

Wrists or no wrists?

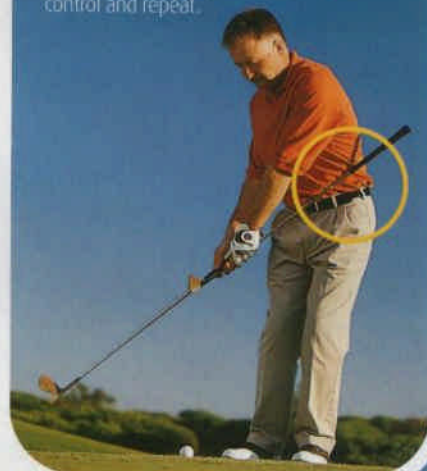
You can chip perfectly well with dead wrists or by hinging them on the backswing. Try both, but in general poor chippers should keep their wrists quiet.

Experiment with these two chipping styles by gripping two clubs together, like this. At set-up, make sure the shaft of the higher club touches your left side, just above your belt.



No wrists

Swing the clubhead back with passive hands, but be sure to feel the upper shaft against your left side during the backswing, just as it was at address. If it moves away, it can only be because you have hinged your wrists. Struggling players will find this system better because it makes the chipping stroke simpler and easier to control and repeat.



Using your wrists

This time, as you work your wrists into the stroke, you will see the upper shaft work away from your left side. It's harder to control, but a more experienced player will find this method better because it allows more feel and finesse.



Both techniques end in the same position. The upper shaft is still against your left side. Using two clubs like this stops you flicking at the ball through impact.



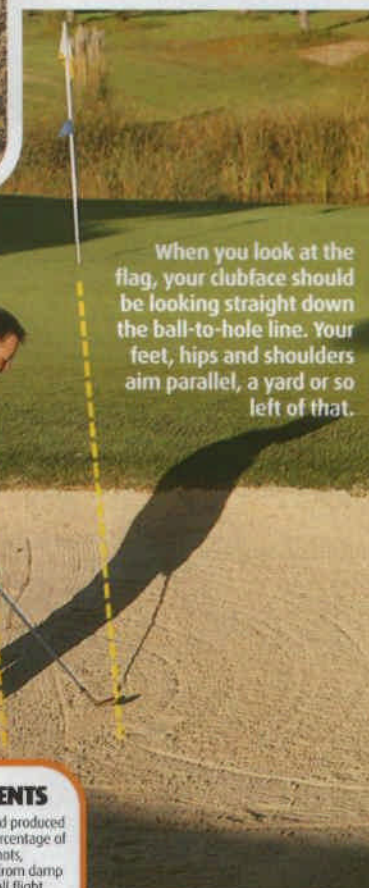
Bunker shots

Traditional bunker coaching advises you to aim your clubface right of the flag to add loft and bounce to your sand wedge, and to aim your body left to compensate. Sure, you can play shots like this, but you can also square everything up for sand success.

Happy to get out? Go square



SET-UP Square up the clubface so it aims flush at the pin. Position your feet so they line up parallel to the clubface aim.



When you look at the flag, your clubface should be looking straight down the ball-to-hole line. Your feet, hips and shoulders aim parallel, a yard or so left of that.

PANEL COMMENTS

Tony Hirst
"This method produced a greater percentage of successful shots, particularly from damp sand. The ball flight was lower in my case."

Mick Davis
"Because the set-up is similar to that of a normal shot, it helps to make the job easier for higher handicappers."

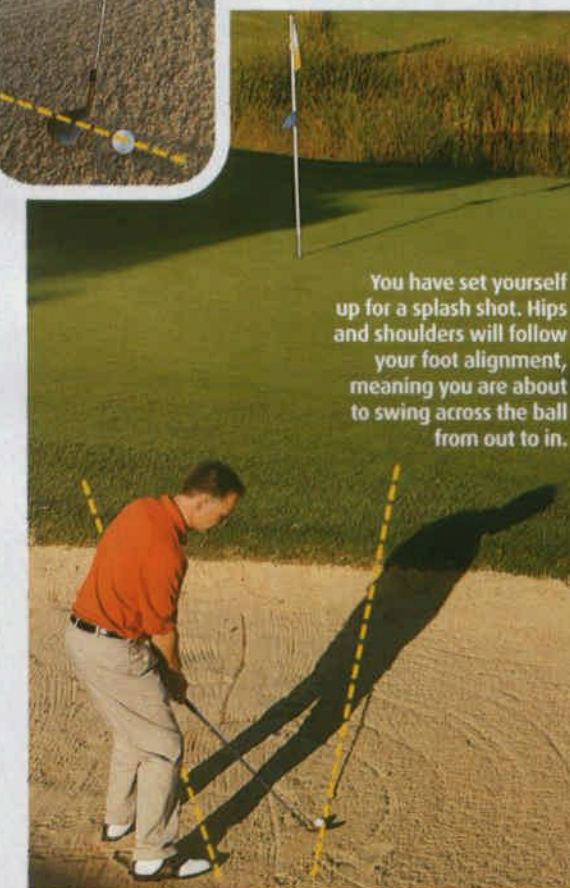
SWING Your alignment will let you swing straight down the target line to the hole. Take your normal amount of sand. Modern sand wedges have enough of a bulge on their sole to bounce quite well, even when their faces are square.



Looking to get close? Go open



SET-UP This is the traditional splash shot set-up. Aim the clubface right of the target and your feet an equal amount left.



You have set yourself up for a splash shot. Hips and shoulders will follow your foot alignment, meaning you are about to swing across the ball from out to in.

SWING Your alignment sees you swing the club across to the left of the ball-to-hole line. The open face applies soft cutspin, taking the ball back towards the flag. The theory is sound, and better trap players can become more consistent with the cut-across method. But it does take practice to get to grips with the lining-up.



Starting the downswing

Rock or rotate?

I have heard hundreds of different theories of how to start the downswing. No doubt you have too. I prefer to simplify things by advising that there are ultimately two preferences for two types of golfer. One is best for a slicer, one for a hooker. Examine your shot pattern and take your pick.

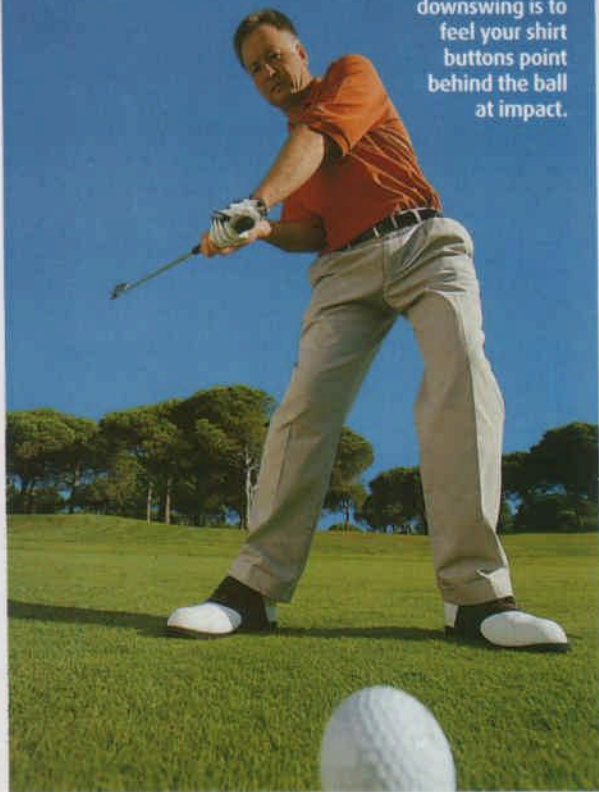
SLICER?

Right shoulder down

Left-to-righters should think of the first move down as a rocking motion, where the left shoulder rises and the right one drops. This drops your right elbow into your side, allowing you to attack the ball from an inside path.



A key for this downswing is to feel your shirt buttons point behind the ball at impact.



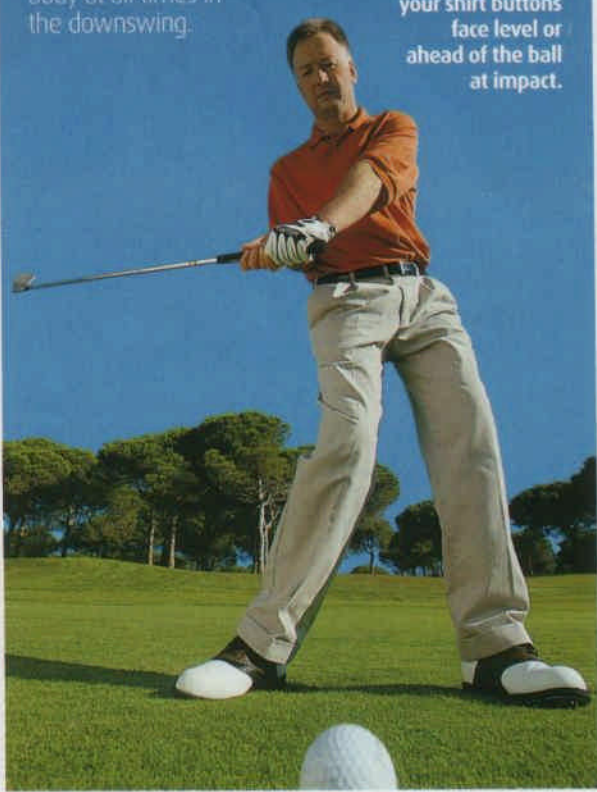
HOOKER?

Rotating, level move

If you attack the ball too much from the inside you should think of the first downswing movement as a level shoulder turn, the right shoulder moving around and not under. As you turn your shoulders, aim to develop the feeling of bringing your arms with you. You need to feel your arms are out in front of your turning body at all times in the downswing.



This time, feel your shirt buttons face level or ahead of the ball at impact.



Hold

Strong or weak?

Text books say there is only one way to grip the club. But that doesn't explain how Hogan and Olazabal won Majors with a 'weak' grip, or how Duval or Langer won Majors with a 'strong' grip. You can have a 'wrong' grip as long as your swing works with it. Two wrongs *can* make a right.

STRONG GRIP



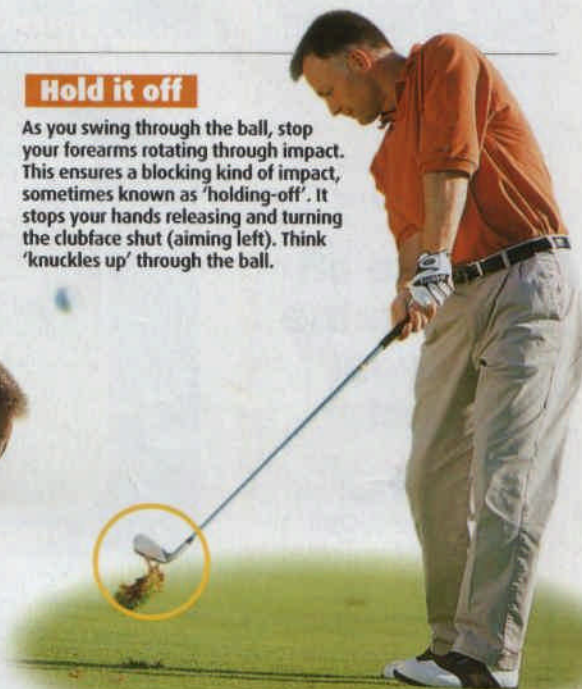
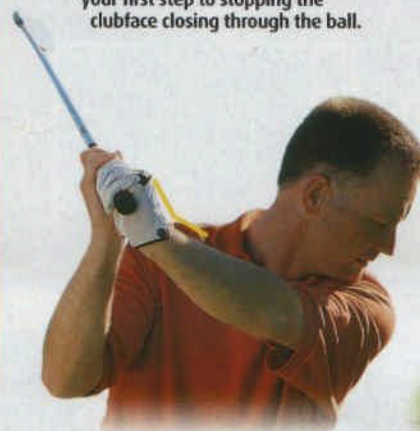
In a strong grip, your left hand sits more over the top of the grip and your right hand more underneath. Technically it leads to a closed face at impact and a hook, but you can hit the ball consistently straight with these adjustments.

'Cup' your left wrist

As you swing the club back, create an angle in the back of your left wrist. By the time you get to the top, you should have produced this cupping action. This effectively opens the clubface, and is your first step to stopping the clubface closing through the ball.

Hold it off

As you swing through the ball, stop your forearms rotating through impact. This ensures a blocking kind of impact, sometimes known as 'holding-off'. It stops your hands releasing and turning the clubface shut (aiming left). Think 'knuckles up' through the ball.



WEAK GRIP



In a weak grip, your left hand sits more on the side of the grip and your right hand more on top. Text books say it will lead to an open face (aiming right) at impact, which will make the ball slice. But again, a couple of simple adjustments can see you play well with this hold.

'Arch' the left wrist

As you swing back, feel you are flattening the back of your left wrist to the point where it becomes almost arched. This closes the clubface, helping you compensate for any opening the grip may cause.

Release

This time, work hard to rotate your forearms. This feeling will help you square the clubface up and avoid the slice the grip might otherwise cause.

