

GRIP TIPS FOR THE YIPS ... & Other Putting Woes

Written By: John Carpineta



Our title sounds like a real tongue twister, or a play on words. Actually, my fellow golfers, it may be welcome advice (because of its simplicity), to help golfers of all levels improve their putting, by experimenting with the the way one places his/her hands on the putter, along with different changes during the installation of the grips themselves. These "grip changes" are being used by PGA, LPGA, and web.com players who know a good thing when they feel it. Simply put, these tactics will quiet the mind and hands.

Putting problems, like swing problems, are ever-present surrounding all golfers. These demons lie in wait for the golfers' putting-immune system to weaken, then they attack, causing uncertainty, "3-putts", and even worse-- the YIPS. Let's "Counter Attack" and keep people playing, that's another facet of our Golf 2.0 pledge!

HOW DOES A PLAYER'S PUTTING-IMMUNE SYSTEM WEAKEN?

1. Stop right now. Put your right hand over one ear, and read this aloud. If you are allowed 2 putts per hole, that's 36 during a round. That's a huge portion of your score. A high percentage? Yes? This info must not go in one ear and out the other, as it has for over a century.
2. Failure to dedicate proper amounts of time practicing (notice I did not say "working on"), their putting! Make it fun, so you can reward those iron shots that you "stonied" in there!
3. "Pass the buck". My superintendent top-dressed the greens (yeah-- 5 weeks ago!) or they syringed at noon today (yea, it was 97 degrees and necessary--so you'll have a green tomorrow!). Sound familiar?
4. (and finally..) maybe the best cause: For 17 holes your opponent says "that's good, pick it up" and you do. Then, with the match even on 18, and you're over a "3-footer", you anxiously await the usual "pick it up", but all you hear are the crickets. As you turn, you see your opponent gazing skyward, awaiting for Jupiter to align with Mars, tongue-tied & lockjaw all rolled into one! Yea, you missed it, having never made this putt all day. And isn't it ironic that, after you blew it 4 feet past, you reached over with one hand, and back-handed the ball into the hole.

So when you hear “that is good!”--it’s not good. In fact, it’s bad. Those gimmies that started out “grip-length” are now as long as a belly putter or longer. From now on, putt them out!

Do you fit into any of these four scenarios??? If so, change as soon as possible, and your putting will improve. You will also give new definition to the word YIPS. The YIPS will now stand for Your Intuitive Putting Stroke. What is your intuitive putting stroke? It is the stroke you used as a kid, fearless, before you overanalyzed putting, ending up with paralysis by analysis, trying to duplicate this guy or that gal’s putting style. Now you are always pondering the consequence of missing. Example: Thoughts of breaking 90 or 80 if I make this one, etc, etc. Followed by another miss.

WE'VE READ ENOUGH, NOW LET'S GET TO WORK. HERE ARE THE STEPS AND SEQUENCES NEEDED TO IMPROVE.

Choose a putter that looks good to you. Very important. Have your PGA pro make sure this “good looker” fits length, lie, etc. Check the attached photos of grips and hand-placement options. I am sure you will find one you like. NOTE: The first option will be to install the same grip on your putter as you have on the other 13 clubs. BENEFIT = will give the same feel. This is so simple a fix, no photo is needed. Revamp your practice sessions. Some suggestions below. Know NOW the importance that putting plays in your overall score. Put the time in! Work on speed. Hit putts back and forth to your “pards” (have a little contest). Jim Booros is still doing it this way. Hit part shots and try to get them up and down from where they fall. Thanks “Carnac and T. Perla”. Before teeing off, use only one ball on the practice green. “You only have one shot out there,” states tough senior player, my friend, Henry McQuiston.

If you must read, pick up Fred Shoemaker’s “Extraordinary Putting”. If you need a mechanical fix, simply free up your “sticky” right elbow –left elbow for lefties. This technique will provide enough backswing, and enable the blade to stay square. The right hand is sealed square to the face alignment, ala the Golden Bear. The forearm is attached to the elbow. Try it; you’ll be amazed.



Super Stroke Grip. - Four Sizes, 1 - 2 - 3 - Jumbo #5 (shown)



"Claw" Regular [prevents flapping of wrists].



Claw Close up

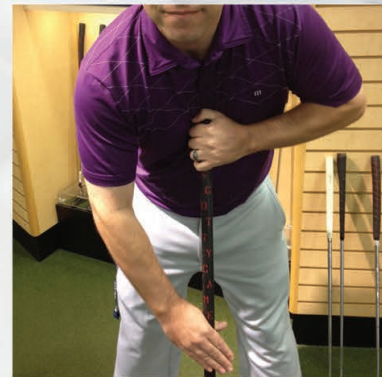
YOU WILL NOW FIND YOUR "INTUITIVE" PUTTING STROKE. I GUARANTEE IT!



Bob Ross Special



Dan Vasil with Long Putter
(pencil style with rt hand)



Dan Vasil with Long Putter
(Claw Grip)



Regular putter grip installed
normal with flat side in front.



Regular putter grip installed
with flat side facing left.



Regular putter grip installed
with flat side facing right.

In closing, I wish to thank my head pro, Jim Bogan, for his support; also, the help of the Philadelphia Section Office crew, along with the gang at Golf Galaxy, especially Ryan Carfara, Dan Vasil, Jason Krier and Mike Lane. Special thanks to Tom and Frank Craig from Titleist. Tips from Scotty Cameron and the use of the new Futura putter, it's great!

This article is dedicated to the memory of my comrade, Garrett F. Lee, lost in Vietnam 48 years ago this November. Gary's unit, C Company, 2nd Bn., 7th Cav, has 20 new soldiers, all PGA pros working now with the Philadelphia Veterans' Administration Medical Center Team, Wounded Warriors and Amputees. "GARY OWENS SIR!!!" Also, Congratulations to Lou Guzzi "PGA Teacher of the Year" Good Goin' Uncle Lou! We also salute Vietnam vet Mr Lou Namm on his 2013 Awards and fine teaching contributions. "Hats Off" to Dave Quinn and Stu Ingraham, "top guns" again this season "Great Playin". I would like to also thank Bob Pfister my Bunker Club "Buddy" for grip tips.