

The "GOLF COACH" Newsletter

BRINGING COLLEGE, HS AND JUNIOR COACHES TOGETHER

April 2017



The Characteristics of Great Putters & Great Putting

By Dr. Bob Winters

The single question I'm asked the most is this: What makes a putter great? I have spent the past 40 years doing research on this topic and I have recorded great putters' thoughts, ideas and philosophies along with golfers that were not-so-great putters. I have provided a list of six qualities that separate the great putters from the poor putters. These six essential characteristics are all common to great putters and great putting. I believe that if you can emulate and promote what the great putters do as successful role models, you will find that your team's putting will improve as well. The six characteristics of great putters are:

1. Great putters keep putting simple
2. Great putters enjoy putting
3. Great putters trust
4. Great putters know it's OK to miss!
5. Great putters have patience
6. Great putters have confidence

Let's discuss these characteristics and see if we can identify the key elements of great putting and implement the various ideas and philosophies into our own.

First, **great putters keep putting simple**. They don't get lost in dealing with their mechanics, even if their mechanics are poor on a certain day, because they realize that the most important thing at the present moment is to get the ball into the hole as swiftly and efficiently as possible. Great putters use their minds to keep the task of putting simple, clear and specific. Their basic mental focus is this: "Where do I want the ball to go and how hard do I hit the ball to get it there?"

From a psychological viewpoint, I think this is where the idea of keeping it simple becomes crucial. Great putters realize that the stroke is minimal in a motor-function movement process, but the

focus of execution has to be one of specific intent and direction. This is why your eyes and mind have to provide you with a specific direction and muscle awareness of where you want the ball to go and having a simple idea and feeling of how hard to hit the ball. Nothing fancy, just simple and specific. I think that as golfers we have to face a basic fact, golf doesn't have to be made hard or difficult in order to be effective. The simpler you keep things on the green, the easier putting will become.

The second characteristic is that **great putters enjoy putting**. I often hear tour players talk on the practice putting green about how much time they spend working on their putting. They make the entire process of putting practice work instead of a challenging or enjoyable activity! In my putting research, I've often asked some of the best putters on tour about their putting and they have told me that they either enjoy putting or that they learned to enjoy it, or at least appreciate it and enjoy the challenge it represents. If you really stop and think about it, you'll soon realize that there really isn't any other logical choice for great putting. You must accept the reality that putting is what separates the winners from the losers, and that the people who are doing the most winning, have made a choice to dedicate themselves to putting improvement and enjoy the entire putting process.

The third vital characteristic of **great putters is that they trust**. Great putters trust their mechanics, their stroke, their read of the green, their touch and feel, and most importantly they trust their putting talent. When discussing trust and putting, most poor to average putters say, "well, I'll start to trust my putting when my stroke feels good, or when I make some putts or when I know that my mechanics, my aim, and my set-up are totally perfect. Is this any way to trust your putting skill? No. This is not trust. What players are saying when they talk about their attempts to trust, is that they fail to realize that trust is categorical in nature. Either you totally trust in yourself and your putting talent, or you don't trust. Trust is black and white. There is no gray area in the land of putting trust. Either you totally trust that you have made a good decision about the line, speed, and weight of force that you want to stroke the ball, or you don't trust at all. Great putters have learned that by allowing themselves to trust also allows them to putt their best.

The fourth characteristic of **great putters is they know it's OK to miss!** Let's face it, putting, as a physical task is not that difficult. What is difficult is the emotional and psychological fallout from MISSING. Missing putts and failing is what is hard. It's hard on your ego, your psyche' and on your patience level. This is why it becomes crucial to get this following sentence in your head***You will start to make more putts by knowing that it's OK to miss putts!*** I think we need to remember that the greatest putters of all time have missed easy putts, short putts and a variety of putts in their careers. But did that stop them from being successful or being a terrific putter? NO! Missing for a great putter is OK because they know that if they just keep putting, they are going to make a lot of putts.

The fifth characteristic of **great putters is patience**. Patience on the putting green means that you can accept a miss as a putt that had a chance to go in, but stayed out. Patience can be viewed as a form of confidence that says "If I keep on doing the same good things with my putting today, sooner or later they will start to drop." Patience is the characteristic that suggests that good things will happen if a player stays on task, doesn't allow himself or herself to become distracted, frustrated or angry, and that by staying in the process of focusing on making putts, will ultimately lead to success.

The sixth and final characteristic of all **great putters is confidence**. Great putters know that confidence is vital and they do everything they can to develop, sustain, and enhance their belief system. The development of putting confidence starts with you making a conscious decision that you will stay committed on each and every stroke on the putting green. This disciplined mindset provides you with an action plan that focuses your mind and body into action so that every ball you roll will have the best chance of falling into the hole. That is the challenge in putting, to be able to stand over each and every

putt with the knowledge that your mind and spirit is totally and purposefully into making every putt, regardless if the outcome is successful or not. Confident putters do not allow negative outcomes to affect their confidence because they know that they are giving their best effort into each and every roll and that it is only a matter of time until success arrives.

A Final Word

All of the great putters that I know, worked with, or have interviewed, hold a simple philosophy about getting the ball into the hole as quickly as possible, versus trying to make a perfect stroke on every putt. They also love the challenge that putting presents, or they learned to love it. In the game of golf, to be your best on the greens, you must do one or the other, and not view putting as a necessary evil. By dedicating yourself and your players to these six characteristics of great putting will show up in the number of putts you'll make on the green! May all your putts find the bottom of the cup! If you like this article or would like for me to speak to your high school or college team, please contact me at drbob@drbobwinters and we can discuss custom tailoring a session or dinner speaking engagement.

Chipping Median *by Trent Wearner*

While much has been rightly made of the importance of distance off the tee, you still can't get through a round of golf without hitting a number of short shots with your chipping clubs. It's inevitable that you're going to be put to test with your short game when you play. This is a great game to test yourself ... give it a go and see how low you can make your Chipping Median. Don't forget to take a look at our 230-page book and our practice website. You can receive a discount on the book at [this link](#). The practice website is www.GolfScrimmages.com and you can use the following promo code to take 20% off a yearly Individual or Team Membership: **GSB202015**

Rules: The closer you hit your chips to the hole, the greater your odds become of making the putt. That said, this game called Chipping Median will help you do a quick measure of your median average distance you hit your chips from the hole. From within five yards off the green hit fifteen shots to three different holes in the following manner: one ball to the closest hole, one ball to the hole in the middle, and one ball to the hole farthest away. Repeating this series a total of five times will give you 15 chip shots. Once you have hit all fifteen shots, walk up to the green and, taking all three holes into consideration, remove the seven closest shots you have hit to your targets. Find the next closest shot (which would have been the eighth), step off how far away it is from the hole rounded to the nearest foot and record that number into our interactive practice website www.golfscrimmages.com. By finding the eighth closest shot that means there are 7 shots that are closer and 7 shots that are farther away. That eighth ball is your median. Improve your median and you improve the likelihood of making more putts.

Benefits: Here's what this game helps you with.

- Even the top players in the world don't hit every green in regulation so getting your chips as close to the hole as possible will obviously make for an easy up-and-down. This quick and easy way to measure them helps create a competitive environment in which you want to improve upon.
- But take note of your bad shots too. If you have a fairly low number as your chipping median, say 4 feet, but you have several stray shots that roll 20 feet away from the hole, those will end up costing you when you're on the course.
- Concentrate on every shot so that all 15 results end up close!

Practice well to play well!

Trent Wearner is ranked as the #1 Teacher in Colorado as rated by his peers and published by Golf Digest. He is a two-time Colorado PGA Teacher of the Year, the latest Colorado PGA Player Development Award winner, and a Top 25 Elite Junior Coach in the U.S. by FCG Tour.



PRACTICE LIKE A CHAMPION by Grant Balcke, Director of Training at the Gary Gilchrist Golf Academy (www.ggga.com)

Quality practice is the biggest key to player improvement. The approach and process a player utilizes in the practice session is one of the most important factors to improving their development as a golfer. There have been numerous studies completed on most effective way to practice, ranging from the 10,000 hour rule to 'Deep Practice'. Regardless of the method, they all have one thing in common - QUALITY - it is the key to making effective and long term improvements.



3 KEYS TO QUALITY PRACTICE:

1 – Always Set a Goal

- A player must first set a goal when going to the range, putting green, chipping green or even working on fitness
- By setting a goal this ensures a player fully understands the WHAT (What they are working on) and the WHY (Why are they working on it).
- “A goal without a plan is just false hope”- by Gary Gilchrist

2 – Have a Detailed Practice Plan

- Include generic drills which focus on improving body motion and swing shape away from the ball
- Include motion drills which improve the swing
- Include personal drills which are specific to each player that serve to correct flaws in one's swing
- Improve body motion and flexibility by using fitness drills
- Slow Motion Swings with eyes closed (Working on feelings and feedback)

3 – Test your skills

- Skill testing is key to understanding the improvements that have been made from a practice sessions
- Always leaving the practice area with a sense of achievement. The key to building confidence on the course is transition from practice to course with a positive outlook
- Set small goals in each area of a student's game and make sure they are realistic goals based on the skill level. For example, chip 7 out of 10 balls in a 3 foot circle or hole 4 of 10 putts from 12 feet

The GGGA System of training builds a player's confidence and skills so they quickly see improvement on the course. Following these simple steps to achieve quality practice will ensure a player has a detailed training plan and the student will understand the “why” of the training plan. The impact and confidence that is built in every area of a student's game is easily observable. The player will have a great sense of achievement which is fundamental to building success, reducing frustration and creating a good relationship with golf.

See below for chart:

PRACTICE ROUTINE EXAMPLE

AREA	PUTTING	SHORT GAME	FULL SWING
TECHNICAL (30 mins)	Putting Mirror Putting Mirror (Square eye line) String Line (Face alignment)	PITCHING Right Arm Only Right foot back -Split Grip CHIPPING Right Arm Only Split Grip BUNKERS	Pivots Right foot back Left wrist flat on top Right foot back (Step 1.5, Turn and Hit) Step and go
PRE COMP (30 mins)	9 Holes Speed/Distance control (Tee at 1.5 feet pass the hole, putt from 20,30,40 feet)	PITCHING CHIPPING BUNKERS	Through the Bag, full routine, two shots with every club

Division-III Financial Awareness (Academic Aid vs. Need-Based aid)

A common question that arises when prospective student-athletes are interested in Division-III schools is whether or not they are able to receive athletic scholarships. The answer is no. It is against NCAA regulations for a D-III athletic program to offer athletics scholarships of any kind. So you may ask, what sort of scholarships does D-III offer? Simply put, they offer academic aid, which is based on academic merit (standardized testing, course selections, and your overall transcript from high school) as well as need-based aid, which is based on each family's ability to contribute financially. Every school has a different way of allocating their academic and need-based aid, so make sure to ask appropriate questions and try your best to fully understand what each school offers.

Statically speaking, a very minuscule percentage of high school athletes play D-I and D-II sports. D-III is all about balance, of school and life. Time spent is far less than D-I and D-II on athletics and more time is spent on academics, yet D-III athletes remain highly competitive on the playing field. It mainly comes down to your academic priorities.

Mary Lawrence
 Head Men's and Women's Coach
 St. Lawrence University
 Canton, NY

Practice with a Tournament Purpose

We have all seen as coaches, players on the practice range with great set-ups and even better swings but often the score they post doesn't equate with what you just witnessed.

One of the reasons, in my opinion, is that they don't challenge themselves when practicing and preparing for tournament competition.

On the range, they're in their comfort zone loose as a goose. Once the bell sounds and are faced with a shot from a buried lie in the bunker or behind a tree in the woods, they immediately go into "**Storm Mode**" allowing their emotions to go from a little rain shower to a category 3 hurricane.

One example would be playing a tree lined course where there is a great probability that they will hit more than one shot off the tee into the woods. This is where your player needs to practice hitting low punch shots knowing exactly how high the ball will rise and the distance it will run out from 20, 30 or 50 yards.

How many times have we seen where the player will punch out and the ball runs through the fairway and into a pond? The dark clouds and winds are a coming!

Then you have the courses that have greens surrounded by bunkers. The tournament player will make sure he/she practices from several different lies and challenges oneself to gain confidence. The recreational player, not so much.

There are numerous other examples but I think you get the picture.

It basically comes down to this...

Tournament players deal in PROBABILITY while recreational players deal in POSSIBILITY. Another way of looking at it is that your top players calculate each shot to get the percentages working in their favor. The not so accomplished basically rely on luck and hope that the shot comes off as planned.

Practicing with a defined purpose in mind such as hitting shots you anticipate facing when competing, will only increase your probability of a favorable outcome.

All the best do it. Leave the guess work to others.

Scott Moyer
Director of Golf/Men's Coach
McDaniel College Golf Club

Junior Golf Camps & Tours

Nike Golf Camp

Rochester, NY June 25-29th

Stay at Rochester Institute of Technology in their air conditioned dorms. Play 3 different courses during the week. Hosting for the 6th consecutive year and instruction provided by top NCAA coaches and current collegiate players. Dan Wesley, University of Rochester Coach at:

dwesley@sports.rochester.edu



Mid-Florida Junior Golf Tour

North Central Florida area tour seeking junior players both boy's and girl's to compete and have fun playing tournament golf.

Annual membership only \$50

Chris Wilson at 352.208.7415 midfloridajuniorgolftour.com



The Junior Players Golf Academy (JPGA) located on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina is the #1 Golf Academy in the south. The mission is to help prepare junior golfers to compete in National level tournament play and receive a college scholarship. The core competency of the JPGA is to recognize and respect each student's individuality. The JPGA approach is to get the student to commit to long-term athletic development, incorporating all aspects of training into a successful path to becoming the best athlete possible. This is all possible through the talented and personable staff and most importantly the limited student to teacher ratio that we take very seriously.

The JPGA offers a variety of programs ranging from full time (an academic school year) to daily sessions. In December we opened our new indoor training facility that includes a 3000 sq. foot gym, an About Golf Simulator (the same one they use on the Golf Channel), putting room, 3 bay full swing area, and game room. Combined with the three golf facilities we use for training and 99 holes of golf for on course work, the JPGA is the ultimate Academy for taking your game to the next level.

High school teams interested in training any time of year are encouraged to contact us so we may develop a program specifically designed for them. We will help with all arrangements.

Please visit our website for more information: www.jrpga.com

With lessons and tournaments held every spring and summer since 1984, the TCJGA introduces and fosters a passion for the game of golf in young people ages 5 to 22. The TCJGA has also introduced the sport in surrounding elementary schools during the winter months. Because of these comprehensive programs the TCJGA has been saluted by the golf industry and also has become a model for other junior golf programs in the United States.



The TCJGA has helped hundreds of kids take lessons and hit the links even if their families have not had the funds to participate. Over the years the TCJGA has given over \$280,000 in college scholarships to members attending numerous colleges and universities across the state and country, including: Northwestern Michigan College, Ferris State, Kalamazoo College, Spring Arbor, Saginaw Valley, Grand Valley, Western Michigan, Central Michigan, University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

Hundreds of TCJGA players have gone on to play on collegiate golf teams and many have pursued careers within the golf industry. Thousands have entered the working world and utilized golf's "Life Skills" such as honesty, integrity, confidence and respect on a daily basis. All have gained mentors and lifelong friends thanks to the game of golf.

For more information please visit: www.tcjga.com

Gary Gilchrist Golf Academy Spring Camps

Central Florida



GGGA provides an interactive learning environment for golfers to learn how to improve their fundamentals. Seasonal camps are one week long with an average of 30 hours of range and on-course training plus mental performance and golf-specific fitness training. Training is on a private range with 36 holes of championship golf at Mission Inn Resort. GGGA provides a \$135/week referral bonus to our coach

ambassadors. Boarding and non-boarding options are available.

Contact: info@ggga.com or call (352) 484-0787 and ask for Shannon Tarrant to refer a student and become a coach ambassador.

Collegiate Men's Tournaments Seeking Teams

- * DePauw's Dan Quayle Collegiate Classic
Sept. 23-24, 36 holes @ Deer Creek GC
Contact Vince Lazar: vlazar@depauw.edu
- * Sizzler Amateur
June 10-13 at Troon North Scottsdale, AZ
Entry Fee \$435 covers (4) rounds
Roy.Edwards@colorado.edu
- * Allegheny College Kuhn Memorial
Meadville, PA Sept. 10-11
\$350 per team & PR \$20 per/player
Contact Jeff Groff: jgroff@allegheny.edu
- * Irish Hills Intercollegiate
Adrian College, Jackson, MI
Sept. 15-16 \$450 per team
Contact: rwilliams2@adrian.edu
- * St. John Fisher Collegiate Invitational
Syracuse, NY, Sept 9th – 10th, 54 Holes
D-2 and D-3 only, \$600 per team, Contact
Coach Bob Simms at: rsimms@sjfc.edu

Collegiate Women's Tournaments Seeking Teams

- * DePauw's Dan Quayle Collegiate Classic
Sept. 23-24, 36 holes at Twin Bridges GC
Contact Vince Lazar: vlazar@depauw.edu
- * Allegheny College Women's Invitational
Country Club of Meadville
Sept. 24-25 \$350 per team
Jeff Groff: jgroff@allegheny.edu

High School Tournaments Seeking Teams

* Antigua National HS Golf Invitational

Chandler, AZ Sept 1st – 2nd

36 Holes, Boy's and Girl's

\$600 per 5 Player Team

Steve Kanner at:

kanner.steve@cusd80.com

* 11th Annual Grant County Invitational

Crittenden, KY August 1st Girl's Only

18 holes with 8:30am Shotgun

Entry Fee \$275 per Team

Marcus Camacho @ Cell # 859.816.5991

High School Coaches Clinic

McDaniel College Golf and Teaching Center located in Westminster, Md. (between Baltimore Md. and Gettysburg, Pa.) will be hosting a FREE Coaches Clinic.

The clinic is for high school coaches from the seasoned veteran to the first year coach. The date has been set for Saturday, July 29th.

Topics include: scholarships and recruiting, drills and skills, properly playing a practice round, course management vs mind management, how to practice the right way, result expectations, how to prepare for tournaments, plus much more...

Details and registration information can be found under the COACH'S CORNER tab on the MGM website.

LIMITED TO THE FIRST 25 COACHES TO REGISTER

Recently Posted Collegiate Job Openings

**The following positions will have application deadlines soon approaching or are open until filled.
Please contact the school's HR or Athletic Department directly.*

Head Golf Coach	Univ. of Texas @ Permian Basin	Odessa, TX
Head Golf Coach	Wofford College	Spartanburg, SC
Head Men's Coach	Univ. of San Francisco	San Francisco, CA
Head Men's Coach	Whitworth University	Spokane, WA
Head Golf Coach	Midland College	Midland, TX
Head Women's Golf Coach	Saint Francis University	Loretto, PA
Head Women's Golf Coach	Univ. of Hawaii	Honolulu, HI
Head Women's Golf Coach	University of San Francisco	San Francisco, CA
Assistant Men's Coach	Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond, VA
Assistant M&W Coach	UNC Charlotte	Charlotte, NC
Assistant Golf Coach	Husson University	Bangor, ME
Assistant Women's Coach	Cal State University	Long Beach, CA
Assistant Women's Coach	James Madison University	Harrisonburg, VA

DO YOU KNOW THE RULE?

Player A is competing and representing his high school team in a stroke play tournament.

On the 5th hole, he hits his approach shot into the left green side bunker.

Upon arriving, he notices that a ball is buried in the sand. Player A remembers that his coach told him that there is a penalty for hitting a wrong ball out of a hazard and that he has the right under the rules to identify that in fact the ball is his.

Player A proceeds to mark and lift the ball and sees that it is his and proceeds to play the ball out of the bunker scoring a 5 on the hole.

Has Player A proceeded correctly under the rules?

NO...under USGA Rule 12-2, a player MUST announce his intention to his marker or fellow competitor that he intends to mark and lift the ball to properly identify it as his. He MUST allow his marker or fellow competitor the opportunity to observe the lifting and replacement.

Failure to do so, he incurs a penalty of ONE stroke.

They said it...

“This is a game of misses. The guy who misses the best is going to win”

-Ben Hogan

“When your shot has to carry over a water hazard, you can either hit one more club or two more balls”

-Henry Beard

“Missing a short putt doesn't mean you have to hit your next drive out of bounds”

-Henry Cotton

“Concentrate on hitting the green. The cup will come to you.”

-Cary Middlecoff

“I look into their eyes, shake their hand, pat their back, and wish them well, but I'm thinking...I'm going to bury you!”

-Seve Ballesteros

“Golf is the only sport that has more teachers than players”

-Anonymous

“Run by Coaches for Coaches”