Dear Inner Circle Member,

I’ve been asked for years to do a book, or booklet on Faults & Fixes. It has taken me a long time and a lot of work to put this into print, and it is one of the most useful tools you will ever see in the golf world for assisting golfers in becoming their own coach. To my knowledge, there is no other work in print which deals with these issues in the manner, and to the degree, which this work does.

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Too many times golf professionals address faults and fixes by attempting to alter your golf swing, but that is not what this booklet is all about. This is a book relating to the things happening in your mind which cause most of your faults, and therefore the fixes require a time of quiet meditation.

A process of thinking must take place BEFORE you go to the practice range and begin the process of working out your problems with golf balls. This is all very simple. That is why I have always said, “Golf’s an easy game.” When the mind can see the problem for what it really is, then it can readily see the solution and perform it.

**The first problem is the SLICE.**

Nearly 90% of the golfers in the world slice the golf ball, and no one seems to be willing to tell the actual cause of the slice.

The SLICE is nothing more than - for a right-handed golfer - the application of right spin on the golf ball. If you will find a table tennis paddle - I’ve learned that the golfers in Australia call it a “bat” - and some ping pong (table tennis) balls, you can hit those balls around the house and learn to curve the balls any direction you wish.

Once you have learned to curve the ping pong balls to the right—by applying right curving spin on them—you are ready to go to the back yard and try applying the same spin with a golf club. Place the ping pong balls on the lawn and use your golf club to apply the same right curving spin.

If you have practiced with the ping pong balls and paddle making different types of spin, then use your golf club with the balls on the lawn and begin to apply left spin. Golf is nothing more than a flat paddle with a long handle, and a round ball. We are merely spinning the ball left or right according to our will and intention.

Once you can curve the ping pong balls left and right upon command, go to the driving range and begin to do the same with golf balls. DO NOT START WITH A TARGET. This is extremely important!! Only curve the golf balls left and right as you wish.

Then, as you get more accomplished at curving them either direction on command, begin to introduce targets, and start learning to spin them the direction you wish and toward the target.

It is not magic. It is only SIMPLE. You will not automatically start hitting your shots where
you wish. That takes practice. I have hit over ten million range balls in my lifetime. You don’t need to hit that many. I actually had fairly decent control after about ten or fifteen thousand practice balls. The rest was just fun and reinforcement.

* The TOPPED SHOT is next.

Topping the golf ball is nothing more than the blade of the club hitting the top of the golf ball. That’s simple enough, but what makes you do it? You do it because you do not fully understand, or trust, the fact that we do not have to “lift” the golf ball of the turf. We apply BACKSPIN in order to make the ball fly.

Get out the ping pong balls and the paddle again. Toss a ball a few inches upward with your hand, and make the paddle strike the ball in a fashion which would produce backspin. Backward spin creates flight. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY KNOWN TO MAN TO MAKE A BALL FLY. IT MUST HAVE BACKWARD SPIN.

Now, once again place some ping pong balls on the lawn and begin to apply backward spin. In order to do this, you will be striking the earth as you strike the ball. You will not be “scooping” the balls into the air. You will have to create backspin, and you can only do it by using your wrists to lift the club upward and sideways at a shallow angle, and then striking the ground right at the back of the ball.

All golfers struggle with this concept. They do not struggle to perform the task. They struggle with the concept. The concept we are seeking to achieve is to merely apply backward spin on the ball. Paint a stripe around the balls with a marking pen so you can see it actually spin.

Next, go to the range and hit golf balls with the sole intent of making backspin. The stronger you can spin the ball backwards, the farther it will fly. That’s because the more spin you put on the ball, the more “air lifting pressure” you put on the ball the more lift, the longer it stays in the air, the farther it flies.

After you can make good backspin, start applying combinations of spin: backward spin along with right or left curving spin. This is how we learn to control our shots.

* Hitting FAT SHOTS will be next.

The reason I like to place the “fat shots” right after the topped shots is because they are both caused by the mental misconception. You are trying to “get UNDER” the golf ball in order to “lift” it into the air. WE DO NOT GET UNDER GOLF BALLS AND LIFT THEM.

By nature, golfers NEVER stop to think about this whole process. The fact is, if you try to get UNDER the golf ball, you must get the club LOWER THAN THE BALL PRIOR TO IMPACT. I tell that to golfers from around the world, and they look at me like a deer staring into a set of headlights at midnight.

If the golf club is lower than the golf ball prior to impact, the club can ONLY be one place: IN THE GROUND. If you are attempting to get under the golf ball in order to lift it, you must be lower than the ball before you get to the ball. That is the “fat shot.”

You fix this by, once again, using the ping pong balls and learning to spin them backwards. BACKWARD SPIN CREATES FLIGHT. According to engineers and the laws of physics, that is the ONLY way possible to create flight on a ball.

In reality, there are five to six major reasons why we hit the shot fat. The purest form of fixing this is that I’ve given you already; however, most golfers seem to struggle with hitting the golf ball and then hitting the turf and making backspin. That all has to do with their mental picture, which is usually one of scooping the ball into the air.

When I get a student standing right in front of me for a lesson, explain to them that there is one basic repair for the fat shot which covers all five or six of the problem areas.

EVERYTHING we do to hit the shots fat eventually falls into one category. That is, in
each and every case, we must change our pace before we get to the golf ball with the stroke in order to hit it fat.

For example, when we are trying to “lift” the shot, we must decelerate somewhere prior to impact so we can get the club to change directions and come upward with some speed and force.

When we are driving a car, we must decelerate in order to turn a corner, or change directions. The same thing is true with the golf swing. You have never thought about it, but in order to start the club down and forward is one thing, but to swing strongly back upward from “under” the ball, we must decelerate in order to change directions.

This is the fat shot!!

Everything we ever do to hit it fat is caused by this deceleration. Therefore, when I am working with a student on this, I merely have them begin to feel how to achieve their MAXIMUM clubhead speed at a point well BEYOND the golf ball.

It’s all simple physics. Once we have the club accelerating well beyond the golf ball, we are not decelerating in order to change directions. We can’t change directions until we do decelerate. Therefore, when there is no deceleration, the fat shot disappears off into the wild, blue yonder.

You cannot fight the laws of physics!! You MUST learn how to apply those laws and use them to your advantage. I start ALL of my students with chip shots which fly no more than five to ten feet. I didn’t say “yards.” I said “feet.”

You will best learn the process with these tiny little shots. Then you can slowly increase the distance of your shots, just a bit at a time, until you are striking the golf ball with powerful blows and creating tons of backspin. This will make the ball go a very long ways in the air.

Start with small shots and learn to increase the length of your swings and the length of your shots little by little. I did it that way, so I know you can do it, too. Everybody wants to read or hear a golf tip and go right out and perform it perfectly. That will not happen for you, because it has never happened for any of us.

As you are doing all of this try to notice how the application of backward spin causes you to accelerate beyond the golf ball. It all fits hand in glove.

* SHANKING. I’ll bet every one of you has shanked the ball at some time or another. I have. I got into the shanks so badly when I was shooting in the 80s and 90s, as a youngster, that I almost gave up the game. Then I figured it all out.

Shanking is nothing more than striking the golf ball with a wide open clubface. Boy, was that ever simple? It’s dead on correct, too. I don’t care what you have ever heard about the shanked shots. It is nothing more than striking the golf ball with the clubface WIDE OPEN.

YOU CANNOT SHANK A GOLF BALL WITH A CLOSED CLUBFACE!!! Try it. You can’t do it. No one can shank a golf ball with a closed clubface.

So, how does the clubface get opened? It is done with the leading hand. The leading hand cannot PULL THE CLUB AND ARMS FORWARD, unless the “heel” of the hand is leading the swing. The human body does not pull the arms forward with the back of the hand. I always does it with the heel of the hand.

If you will take your grip on a club, and then turn the “heel” of your left hand to make it point toward the intended target, your clubface will be wide open. This is the shank. Golfers take the club back, and then they pull the left hand forward toward the target using the heel of the left hand. This makes them “feel” as though they are keeping the clubface dead square on the target line, when in reality is has done nothing but open the clubface wide open. SHANK!!!

I have my students chip and pitch shots while keeping the clubface several degrees closed through impact. They can no longer shank the golf ball. Therefore, when you are shanking your shot around the green, close the clubface in your
hands, and through the shot. Who cares if it might go a few degrees left? That’s better than shanking it dead right. Isn’t it?

* COMING OVER THE TOP.*

This is also known as the dreaded PULLED SHOT. Here is a golf shot where you are swinging outside-in to the target line. Your right shoulder has come out and up, causing you to “come over the top” with your swing. You will hear a zillion fixes for this one, and it really isn’t all that difficult of a deal.

The simple fact is that you are swinging from the outside to the inside and therefore coming across your intended line of flight. If you were playing baseball, you would be hitting the balls consistently to the shortstop.

Have you ever thought about hitting the ball toward the second baseman? That would be slightly to the right of the mound, or to the right of center. What “feels” to you like you are hitting the ball directly into center field is actually going to left field.

I’m going to ask you to do a wee bit of abstract type of thinking for this one. If you feel like you are hitting to center field and it keeps gong to left field, then all of your shots are left of where you “feel” it is going. Make sense? Then I want you to merely take your normal golf swing, and use it to “feel” like you are hitting your shots more toward RIGHT field.

If everything you hit goes left of what you sense or feel, then you merely need to start feeling as though you are honestly attempting to hit the ball toward right field. Left of there will be toward center field. Correct?

When you start swinging in a manner which makes you feel as though you are swinging to right field, you will not possibly be able to come over the top.

You will find something quite interesting when you start doing this. You will not be able to swing comfortably toward right field unless you tilt your spine just a wee bit to the right at address. This is something ALL of the touring professionals do, yet I have a terrible time getting amateurs to do. *I think there’s a subtle little message there!!!*

When we tilt a bit to the right it will put our body in a position which feels just a bit like we are trying to chop down a tree with an axe. It is actually a very natural position, and golfers fight it like it was the plague. Give it a try. YOU CANNOT COME OVER THE TOP FROM THE TILTED POSITION.

I have a young girl who is only fourteen years of age coming to me for lessons. She has only played golf for one year, and I got her for a student three or four months after she started playing. I’ve had her for eight or nine months.

She couldn’t break 110 for eighteen holes when I got her, and she was hitting her tee shots about a hundred and fifty yards. In less than a year of instruction—she comes to see me for an hour almost every week—she is now hitting her drives around two hundred and thirty yards, and with a soft draw most of the time.

She came recently and she was pulling all of tee shots. She was “coming over the top.” After a few minutes of sharing some thoughts and ideas, I could see she wasn’t on the same page with me. I picked up a golf ball and said, “Hold your arms out and make a circle. I’m going to toss the ball through the hoop—or pretend to shoot a basket.”

She held her arms out and formed them into a circle for a basketball hoop. I then took the golf ball and tossed it like one would in shooting a basket, but I intentionally tossed it at least fifteen degrees of to the left of her “hoop.”

When I did that, I asked her, “What did I do?” to which she immediately answered, “You threw it way over there.” I looked her dead in the eyes and said, “That’s what you are doing with you tee shots.” You should have seen the look in her eyes. She got it.

She said, “Let me try something.” Then she
stepped up to her golf ball and made a golf swing which felt like it was to the right of where she had been swinging. WHAM!!! The golf ball took off like a rocket, and it was right down the middle. I asked her what she “tried,” and she said, “I just hit it to the right a bit, instead of feeling like I was hitting it straight.” BINGO!! She did get it.

Your right shoulder coming up is not the reason for your pulled shots or your coming over the top. Because you are swinging to the left of your target, your right shoulder has to be up. I just get my golfers swinging the club a different direction, and the shoulder takes care of itself.

YOU CAN’T SWING THE CLUB OUT TOWARD THE RIGHT AND STILL HAVE A HIGH RIGHT SHOULDER. You also cannot swing the club to the left, across your line, with your right shoulder low. Golf professionals generally work on the shoulder. I work on the direction of the swing. It’s far simpler and it’s far easier.

* THE PUSHED OR BLOCKED SHOT IS A GOOD ONE. * If I had a nickel for every solution I have heard golf professionals offer up for this one, I would be retired and living in Australia.

The pushed and/or blocked shot is nothing more than swinging the golf club out toward the right WITHOUT any release. The thing with the ping pong balls is far too simple, and it is never brought up by other golf professionals. That amazes me!!! Because, it is the number one solution to the entire game of golf.

Golfers look at me like I am nuts when I start using a ping pong ball and paddle in order to teach the game of golf. However, if you could only get your mind to wrap itself around this thought, you would NEVER again need a golf professional for golf swing information and repairs. You would know all of the answers for yourself.

If you take a golf club or a ping pong paddle and hit a ping pong ball out to the right, you will find there are only two things which can cause this to happen—other than simple aligning to the right.

Number one is to simple swing the club or paddle out to the right. This is called “inside-out” to the ball in the game of golf. Nonetheless, you are merely swinging the club outward and to the right.

When you do this, you are also doing one other thing. You are not allowing the hands to make their natural release. If you were to strike a ping pong ball out to the right of where you would like for it to go, you MUST also then apply some left spin in order to get it to curve back toward your intended target.

Can you see that? Does is make sense to you? If your ball is traveling to the right of your target, you need some left spin on order to get it to come back toward where you would like it to go.

The same thing is true with the pulled shot. It’s not bad to pull your shots. It’s only bad to pull them and NOT CURVE THEM BACK WHERE YOU WANT THEM TO LAND. When you hit your shot to the right—the old dreaded push—all you need to do is to spin it back to the left.

This a all ball spin, and “STRAIGHT” DOES NOT EXIST IN GOLF. Any engineer in the world will tell you that, if he knows anything at all. In order to make a golf ball fly dead straight, you must be ABSOLUTELY PERFECT with your backspin, and no one has ever been born who can be PERFECT EVERY TIME.

Then, even if you were perfect every time, the wind would cause your ball to curve, anyhow. If you really stop to think about it, this is absolutely true. NO golf professional hits his or her shots perfectly straight. They ALL curve the ball to some degree. It may be very slight, but it ALWAYS curves at least a bit.
All of this was to merely say the pushed shot is nothing more than swinging the golf club out to the right without applying the accompanying left spin which would be required in order to get it to curve back to your target.

* NO WEIGHT SHIFT or a REVERSE WEIGHT SHIFT. This is one I see a lot in amateurs. They just can’t seem to get their weight to shift to their front foot through the golf swing.

If you are having this problem, there are only two possible things that are preventing you from achieving success: 1) you are swinging the golf club with your arms; or 2) you are reverse shifting to your front foot on the backswing, and then it goes to the back foot on the through swing.

These are both very common among amateurs. I have one fix which cures both of these problems. You place at least 80% of your weight on your back foot at address, and you keep it there all the way to the top of the backswing.

When you do this some very interesting things begin to take place. First of all, you will not be able to swing with your arms at all when your weight is stationed on your back foot. You will only be able to use your hands to swing the club—just as you would do with a baseball swing.

The golf swing is nothing more than a baseball swing with the ball rolling toward you on the ground. The weight will load up on the back foot so you can take your stride—or step into—the pitch. The only difference in golf is that we don’t actually take the stride; however, the weight will automatically shift to the front foot while you are using your wrists to snap the club downward into the swing.

The same thing happens when we swing the golf club with our arms and shoulders. It “feels” extremely powerful. But the feet automatically grip the ground in order to have a fixed foundation from which the shoulders and arms may work. That’s why you are not getting a weight shift.

When you stand with extra weight on the back foot at address and stay there all the way to the top of the back swing, you will find you cannot use your shoulders and arms at all to make the golf swing. You can ONLY swing the club with your wrists, just as you would in a baseball swing.

We have been taught throughout the years that “the golf swing is not the same as a baseball swing.” Everyone who ever said that—and that includes all of the guys you see teaching golf on the television—is dead wrong. Every great player throughout the history of the game has swung the club like a baseball bat, yet their coaches tell everyone else not to do it. Hmmpmmmmmmmm!!??

Why in the world would they not want you to swing the club just like their great touring professionals swing the golf club? I have not been able to figure out the answer to that one, and I’ve been looking for it for over thirty of the forty-two years I’ve been teaching the swing and the game.

To learn this, take a club and stand erect. Start swinging baseball swings, without taking a step. Your weight will be heaviest on the back foot when you start, and it will AUTOMATICALLY shift to your front foot when you swing.

Slowly lower the swing until it is at golf swing level, and you will have a great golf swing. A recent student, who by the way is a great athlete, told me when felt this, “This is so natural and so easy. Is this all I have to do to swing the golf club?”

I told him to step up to a ball and try it. He smacked the stuffing out of it, and he thought it was effortless. After that, shot after shot just
jumped off the clubface, and went almost right where he wanted to go. One more happy golfer!!!

**HITTING THIN and/or ON THE TOE OF THE CLUBFACE.** You are going to try to kick yourself in the butt when you hear the answer to this one, yet I see it almost daily out on the lesson tee.

This is so common among amateurs. I say it that way, so you will start to think about things a bit differently. If amateurs consistently do a thing a certain way, and all of the touring professionals do that thing consistently in another way, wouldn’t you like to know how they are doing it, so you can copy them? It only makes good sense to do a thing the way a touring player is doing it, rather than the way you’ve always done it in the past.

Touring professionals all use their wrists to release the club through the swing. Amateurs almost all use their arms to swing the golf club. The way God created the human body we cannot swing the arms and at the same time use the wrists. No one can do it. The human skeletal structure, along with the muscle sinew is not made to work like that.

Nonetheless, all of the amateurs are dong their best to get it to work. It’s no wonder they are struggling so much with the swing. You cannot put a square peg into a round hole. You also cannot swing your arms and use your wrists.

What does this have to do with hitting thin shots and hitting the ball on the toe of the club? Everything. You are hitting the golf ball on the toe of the club, and you are hitting a great percentage of thin shots because you are standing too far from the golf ball at address.

You are standing too far from the golf ball at address because you are trying to leave plenty of room for the arms to swing the club. When the wrists swing the club, the left arm pulls into the chest and rib cage on the down and through swing. You can’t help it. It simply does it.

Take your baseball swing again up in the air. Feel how your left arm sucks into the chest and rib cage in order for your hands to work freely and naturally. Now stretch your arms out away from your body and try to make a baseball swing. It becomes quite difficult when your arms are outstretched.

The same thing is true with the golf swing. When we make a good release, the arms pull in as the wrists feel as though they rotate through the swing. When the arms pull in, you will hit the shot either thin, or you will hit the golf ball out on the toe of the club. That’s all you can do.

Golfers, there is not a problem in the entire game of golf which we cannot fix with the simple understanding of ball spin.

I have never had a lesson in my life, and I played at tour level for twenty-five years. I learned everything by understanding how the spin will, and does, affect a golf ball in flight.

There are many ways in which one is able to approach, or attack, the golf ball with the club-head. You can chop down steeply and just nick the back of the golf ball, and your shot will fly much lower that your chosen club should dictate. You can also chop into the under and back side of the golf ball with a very shallow angle of attack, and you shot will travel higher than the club should dictate. In simple geometry, every degree we steepen our attack on the golf ball takes one degree off of the shot.

If I have a 10 degree driver, and I attack the ball at 9 degrees of downward travel in the arc, my ball will only launch at 1 degree of loft. It is a “snake raper,” or a “gopher gooser.” It is not flying very high.

If I can learn how to get my driver to come into the golf ball dead level to the ground as it strikes the ball and the tee, my ball will launch at a beautiful angle of 10 degrees. I will have a chance for a wonderful golf shot.

Every degree we open our clubface accounts
for a degree of loft added to the shot. Therefore, it I take my same driver and open the face two degrees, in order to create a slight fade, my shot will launch at 12 degrees.

Now, try to follow me here. Therefore, if I would like for my shot to face just a bit, but to still launch at my normal 10 degrees, I must find some possible way to alter my angle of attack to that of a 2 degree downward angle. $10 + 2 = 12$. $12 - 2 = my\ original\ 10\ degrees.$

This is all very simple and basic geometry. I do not know whether my club is coming into the golf ball at level, or at a 2 degree downward angle. However, I do have a very delicate feel for altering the angles. I do know whether I am going to launch it high or low. I used to be able to launch it at nearly a perfect angle every time—however, once again, none of us is perfect.

I was playing recently with a couple of good friends, who are also students on mine. On the second hole of the country club where they belong, I hit my tee shot into the trees. It was a 5 par hole, and so I needed a fairway wood (I still call them “woods” and not metals) in order to get my ball into position to be able to reach the green comfortably on my third shot.

About fifteen yards ahead of me there was a hole on the trees about the size of two touring professional’s golf bags, and it was about ten feet above the ground.

My two friends were watching quite intently to see what I was going to do with the shot. I showed them the opening in the trees, and they were a bit curious what I was going to do.

I told them I was going to hit my five-wood through that hole and draw it around the trees and into the fairway, which would leave me about one hundred yards from the green. It ended up about one hundred and twenty yards out from the green. Not too bad for an old crippled poop.

These two guys went nuts!! That was actually several months ago, and they are still telling people about it, and they are still reminding me of it.

The only reason why I tell you these stories is to try to get you to see a picture which is very important. I used my five-wood for the shot. However, when I closed the clubface enough to create a nice little draw, it became the loft of a three-wood.

Then, in order to get the ball up quickly enough to get through the opening in the trees, I moved the ball forward a bit in my stance—creating a shallower attack angle, and a higher shot.

Everything we do in golf is an adjustment, so we had better learn how the geometry of the whole thing works. It is all a matter of arcs and angles, and if we are only trying to hit everything straight, we are missing out on the real fun and excitement of the game.

Start opening your mind to what the angles of the different clubs are doing. Try to make your 5-iron into a long-handled pitching wedge by opening the clubface. Learn how far to the left you must aim in order to get this to still take the ball toward the target.

Begin to play around with all of this, and soon you will become you own golf coach. Butch Harmon and Hank Haney will have nothing on you. In fact, you will actually know more than they do, when you learn how the angles and the spin make everything work. Have some fun!!! That’s what it’s all about.

Happy golfing, and “Cheers” until next time.

Your friend,

Darrell Klassen

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