

The Contemporary Golf Fundamentals



Zar Point Address

Zar Petkov

*To my daughter Marina and our
Golf Adventures in South Africa.*

Changing Golf FUNDAMENTALS was long overdue ; some 7 centuries overdue.

© 2008

Foreword

“The golf swing is in a constant state of evolution. Top players today swing differently than we did 30 years ago, just as guys of my generation bore little resemblance to players from the 1930s.”

Johnny Miller

Golf has been played for more than seven centuries already; the host of the 2007 British Open, the Carnoustie Golf Club, has been hosting competitions since the 1500s. In fact, in the 1400s golf first became known outside of Scotland, its country of origin, because the king of Scotland issued a decree that forbade his army to play golf, because his archers had often been playing golf all day long and were, as a result, failing to improve their marksmanship.

Currently an estimated 100 million people practice the game of golf; many playing at least one 18-hole round each week, with many more playing occasionally at a community or vacation golf course or at a driving range. Of these 100 million golfers, 30 million are in the USA alone (half of these are what the USGA calls “core golfers”). The average golfer’s score for 18 holes is 97, or 25 over par - a far cry from the results of the professionals we watch on TV. The worse statistic in golf, though, is that every year 1 million people quit the game due to frustration and despair after an average of 3 years of fruitless attempts to start playing at a somewhat decent level.

For all these centuries, these hundreds of millions have played the game attempting to use the same fundamentals: the same position at address, the same grip at address, the same static grounding of their feet for “stability”, the same angle between arms and shaft at address, etc.

I hope that after reading this book you will not be able to resist the temptation to scream:

”How on Earth is that possible?”

This book will show you the myriad reasons - more than 75 in all - why you should abandon the accepted “fundamentals” - the “normal Setup Point Address” which you have always known and taken for granted. Those so called fundamentals are anything but normal, leading only to back injuries and left-leg traumas instead of enabling you to feel the JOY of golf away from the hospital ! There is a reason the

drug companies for back and joint pain relief advertise on the Golf Channel: that's where their customers are!

You are on your way to learning the new Contemporary Golf Fundamentals of *Zar Point Address* - the Point of Ignition in golf.

Since the average drive for the average golfer is 175 yards, your main task while reading this book is to choose between:

175-yards-drives with back and leg injuries

or

275-yards-drives with joy and ease.

It is certainly assumed that any golfer in his right mind would prefer a method of driving the golf ball that enables him to propel the ball 275 yards with joy and ease, over a method that restricts him to 175 yards and increases the risk of back injury and frustration we know so well. Nevertheless, read each of the 75 reasons why the 275-yards-drive with joy and ease is better than the 175-yards-drive with back injury. It is within the explanations of these reasons that the lessons of this book are presented. This will keep your motivation high, while allowing you to see how to actually achieve your improvements immediately and virtually automatically.

Please note that none of these 75 reasons actually refers to the very attainable yet apparently astonishing distance gains. I know that if it didn't increase the distance you wouldn't even bother to open the book. The gains in consistency and comfort alone should be enough to convince anyone that the *Zar Point Address* is the way to go.

These 75 reasons show you why the *Zar Point Address*, when practiced correctly, will enable you to make this wonderful, seemingly impossible, transition in your golf game. Each of these reasons has been researched painstakingly. For a glimpse into the author's mindset, you are referred to the mother of this undertaking, the *Zar Points Theory of Bridge Bidding*, which has been proven to be the best Bridge Hand Evaluation and Bidding Technique today (<http://www.ZarPoints.com>). It illustrates in a different context the kind of thoroughness that has gone into the development of the *Zar Point Address*. The goal of Zar Points in Bridge is to convert an intermediate bridge player into an expert virtually overnight. Similarly, as ambitious as it sounds, the new

contemporary golf fundamentals of the *Zar Point Address* are designed to boost your golf swing virtually overnight.

Here are a few notes about the conventions used throughout the book:

- In this book, for the sake of clarity, the golfer is assumed to be right handed. Left-handed golfers should of course replace all lateral and rotational direction-specific references with their opposites.
- *Zar Point Address* has no inherent variations in either the execution or the effectiveness with respect to gender. All such choices in the text are completely arbitrary.
- We use CAPITAL letters to stress a WORD in a sentence if needed.
- We use **Bold-faced Text** to stress a CONCEPT or introduce important information in a sentence.

Whenever a particular sculpting of words is known to belong to somebody, it was marked on the spot. A similar effort was made even for the graphics, images, and pictures. Nevertheless, if you still happen to spot any omission in that regard, please do not hesitate to let me know. It will be diligently reflected in the next reprint. As a general reference, most of the pictures are taken from the free pool of thumbnail photos of Getty Images, as well as from You Tube, Golf Digest, and Golf Magazine, as referenced throughout the book.

The video files of *Zar Point Address* executions performed by top professionals (you can play them on the website <http://www.ZarGolf.COM>) were prepared by me as an illustration of how the execution would look in the hands of these golfers. These videos are a very useful tool that you can view any time you need to check how the *Zar Point Address* would look like in execution.

Enjoy.

0. The Essence

0.1 A Good Walk, Ruined

Mark Twain once summarized the average -golfer's view of the game as "A good walk, ruined."

We all know it is... and we all feel that it shouldn't be. Now we will see that it is easier than you think to "un-ruin" and enjoy it. The goal of this book is to show you how.

We number the current introductory section as "0" since the basic things we discuss here are not among what we consider "reasons to switch."

You have often heard the phrase that "Everyone has a different swing, but they all have the same fundamentals - grip, address, posture, stance, head position, etc." This kind of thinking automatically slams the door on considering and challenging the fundamentals: "Who are you to challenge the unchallengeable!"

Every teacher all the way up to Tiger Woods's current teacher Hank Haney, tells you that everything you do in your swing is geared toward only one goal: reaching the perfect impact position, the so called "moment of truth."

The first major problem in the "classic fundamentals set-up" that the average Joe faces when trying to build his swing, is that he has to ARRIVE at a proper point-of-impact position where he has NEVER BEEN BEFORE. The vast majority of golfers don't even know what that impact position feels like. They have heard nice fairy-tales about that position and they have seen it on TV countless times, yet they themselves have never been there.

Alice: "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

Cheshire Cat: "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to."

Alice: "I don't much care where"

Cheshire Cat: "Then it doesn't matter which way you go,"

Alice: "So long as I get somewhere," Alice added as an explanation.

Cheshire Cat: "Oh, you're sure to do that, if you only walk long enough."

What is even worse is that "Joe" has to arrive there on his own, without even having any a-priori criteria by which to judge what he has achieved - good, bad, or so-so. He may "sense" that "it is something like that" but the entire

experience is no more than a brief flash on the way to the finish position, so he cannot even realize what's going on. Surely he can observe the after -effects such as the ball flight produced, but he remains ignorant of what the actual "moment of truth" might be.

This brings us to the second major problem the average golfer faces: the overwhelming and often contradictory information he gets from

Books	Private Lessons
DVDs	Group Lessons
TV shows	Internet, etc.

You have been told by all these resources that you have to

Align	Hinge	Rotate
Accelerate	Hit	Slide
Balance	Hold	Snap
Bend	Keep	Squeeze
Bow	Kick	Stay
Coil	Let	Straighten
Concentrate	Lift	Synchronize
Create	Look	Sweep
Draw	Maintain	Swing
Ease	Match	Throw
Establish	Measure	Tilt
Fade	Point	Turn
Feel	Pull	Twist
Follow	Raise	Unwind
Extend	Relax	Visualize
Face	Release	Waggle
Flex	Roll	Wind
Focus	Rotate	Wrap

... just to arrive somewhere where you have never been before... in a position covered by a dense fog of uncertainty... The net result is that this waterfall of "active verbs" just puts you in total disarray and despair.. .

If the goal is to properly reach "the moment of truth", why not **START** from there, and then come **BACK** to this moment! The *Zar Point Address* puts you at

the point of perfect impact so you can easily RETURN there where you have just been. Now you know what it looks like and how it feels.

It is much easier to get back to where you have started just a second ago, than to "work your way out" from the static and remote-from-target "set-up" position which we refer to as *Setup Point Address*. This "traditional" position simply sets you up for a painful "journey toward the unknown."

The idea of the *Zar Point Address* is to change this "traditional" thing that is considered "rock-solid" - the so called "fundamentals" or the Setup Point Address with your stance, posture, grip, position, etc.

And the reason for doing that is simple - we will change it because these so called fundamentals are ...

0.2 Fundamentally Wrong

The old fundamentals that we all know, prevent everyone from playing to his potential - you and me, Tiger and Phil. No exception.

They are the main reason why the #1 injury in golf is the back injury, followed by left-leg traumas, with all the consequences.

Potentially, they "steal" some 100 yards from the high Handi capper. Not 5 yards, which he can get back " by buying a new river with "the latest and greatest technology"; not 10 or 20 yards that a teacher might give him by his corrections; but a whopping 100 yards!

They are the root cause for your inconsistencies - one time in the water, next time on the roof of the Club House, then OB ... and yes, some times on the fairway (the wrong fairway that is). You have seen Tiger himself "execute" all these shots on TV - forget about how often we've been there!

They are the reason that you are stiff and that you hit at the ball, instead of smoothly swinging through it...

They are the reason why your shots spray all over the place in no particular direction and make you wonder where the ball is going to end up this time ...

They are the cause for your constant fear and tension.

They are the cause for your chronic emotional failures (well, on the golf course, anyway).

They are designed for torture.

They are designed for failure.

And indeed, you must stop all that.

0.3 A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

Do you see how BEAUTIFUL the pro looks at the point of impact, yet how RIDICULOUS that same guy looks with “the stick between his legs” at address! If you look at him from some 50 yards behind, you might think that he’s relieving himself on the tee ...

Those are two FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT pictures, aren’t they - the Setup Point of Address and the Point of Impact.

Speaking about pictures... I went to Getty Images and searched for pictures of golfers at the point of impact. Naturally, I started with Tiger - there are almost 3,000 different professional pictures of Tiger there, in all kinds of positions. I selected some out of the hundreds and hundreds of pictures where Tiger is at the point of impact.

Then I looked for Tiger addressing the ball...

This was a very hard search - I managed to find only one - and he is not actually addressing the ball, but rather in a pre-shot routine, looking down the target line where the camera is.

I was very impressed by the results of this exercise - hundreds and hundreds of pictures at the point of impact and virtually no picture of him addressing the ball ... does that reveal something? It should. Let me tell you, just between you and me - if Tiger doesn’t look good enough for a professional picture at the Setup Point Address, then you and I look flat-out ugly, my friend!

But trust me - our look is not among the 75 Reasons to quit the old fashioned fundamentals, and as mentioned above, even distance gain isn't - that is why the sequential number associated with this discussion is #0.

0.4 “Thirty-One Flavors ... and Then Some!”

If you are reading these pages, you are already familiar with the so called “Setup Point Address” or the old fundamentals.

Now let's take a deep breath and think about how many different kinds of

- ‘compensations’ and
- ‘corrections’ and
- ‘adjustments’ and
- ‘tuning’ and
- ‘cures’ and
- ‘secrets’ and
- ‘tricks’ and
- ‘tips’ , etc.

that you need to learn, practice and think of, just because the Setup Point Address and the “untouchable fundamentals” have put all kinds of burden on you. The *Zar Point Address* discards the “normal” Setup Point Address and uses the point of impact as the point of address.

You start from the position you want to RETURN to, rather than from a position that forces you to make so many “corrections” and to push your body to ARRIVE at the point of impact.

After introducing all the aspects of the *Zar Point Address*, we will see how Bellman's Principle of Optimality (a logistics concept) provides an explanation of why the *Zar Point Address* is the only thing that is worth your consideration .

No prior golf experience is actually needed - just relax and read.

0.5 The A-B-Cs of Zar Point Address

So what is it actually this *Zar Point Address*?

Simply put, we MERGE the point of IMPACT and the point of ADDRESS into the new *Zar Point Address*, thus automatically solving all the 75 problems that are discussed in this book “just like that” - in a snap.

The essence of it all is that we don't need any of these

- ‘compensations’
- ‘corrections’
- ‘adjustments’
- ‘tuning’
- ‘cures’
- ‘secrets’
- ‘tricks’
- ‘tips’

... for a problem that we can simply ELIMINATE! If we eliminate the problem, then there is no need for us to

- read about
- take lessons for
- understand
- practice
- remember
- think about
- execute

... all these things, that in effect cause us to become

- nervous
- uneasy
- stiff
- irritated
- worried
- angry
- tense
- disappointed.

Now we realize that we have invested so much time and money only to suffer, instead of to enjoy!

The last thing that one would expect from fundamentals is that they should cause a host of un-wanted results - and that is exactly what the old Setup Point Address does. The long and short of it is that we are first pushed into a problem that we shouldn't have in the first place, and then must learn the slew of 'lessons' mentioned above, so we can NEVER get out of the woods because we have to think of 53 things simultaneously, and within the tight time-window of one second while we are swinging the club!

The entire swing ends-up being a bunch of patchwork "fixes" that makes it look like a busy old road, with freshly-filled potholes all over the place.

If, instead, everything happened automatically, we would just enjoy the moment - the way it should be. We would never have even wasted the time

- reading,
- understanding,
- learning,
- remembering,
- practicing,
- thinking intently,
- etc.

in an effort to execute numerous "fixes" to equally numerous specific aspects of a problem that has been "forcefully" imposed on us to begin with.

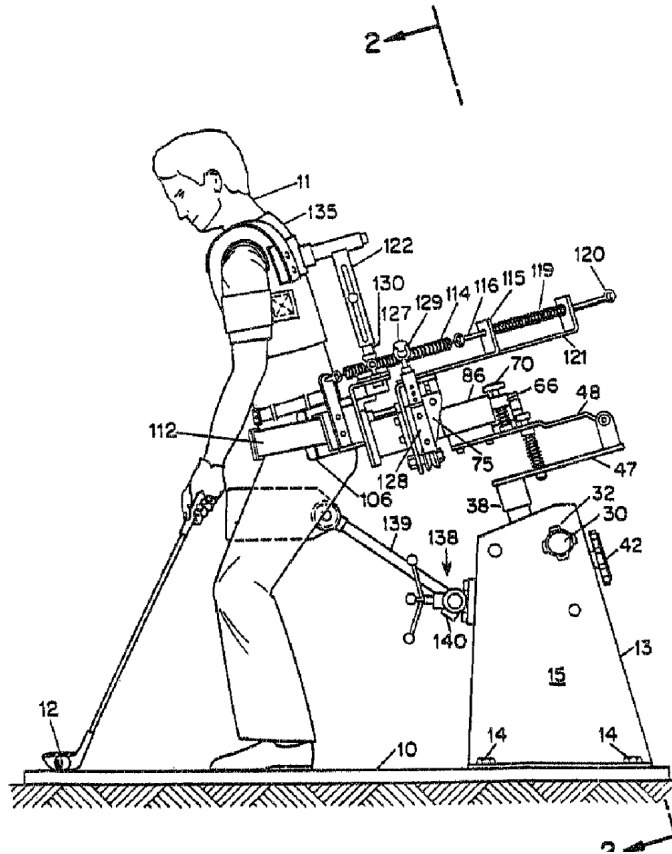
Not only that, but we have been BLINDED by virtue of the 'respectful' name "fundamentals", so we never dare to even question those and get to the root of the problem ...

To give you an idea about how complex things are when one begins the swing with the old-fashioned address and fundamentals, let's have a look at an officially-patented invention, intended to serve as a training aid.

Here is this patented apparatus (with all due respect of course) for a Golf Swing Training Machine - referenced directly through the Canadian Patents Database.

The design is certainly based on the premise that a golfer starts from the old-fashioned Setup Point Address:

(54) Titre : APPAREIL D'ENTRAINEMENT POUR LE SWING DE GOLF
(54) Title: GOLF SWING TRAINING APPARATUS



What we see is obviously quite a sophisticated machine. And it would have to be sophisticated if it is supposed to “take care” of all the possible mistakes and wrong movements that are caused by the same untouchable “fundamentals” we suffer with and are afraid to question.

How much science will we be willing to pile up on top of these so called “fundamentals” before we dare to question them? How many lessons will we be willing to take in order to learn all the “fixes” and “secrets”? And are we indeed capable of thinking of them all simultaneously, anyway?

Have another look at the patented machine above before answering ...

Tommy Armour, perhaps the #1 Golf Teacher of all times, used to say:

"Possibly you have been made a victim of the great delusion in golf, that of believing that the answer lies in tricks."

Most people actually ARE victims of that great delusion and the amounts of “drills” and “tricks” that:

- “encourage” getting back “in one piece”,
- “encourage” getting on plane,
- “encourage” good tempo, etc.

Zar point Address doesn’t “encourage” any of these - it delivers them automatically, as we will see throughout the book, and you don’t even have to think about it, really. It all boils down to proper setting, start and motion rather than “tricks”, as Mr. Armour put it in the middle of the last century. No tricks, secrets, adjustments, tuning, or compensations. Simplicity is the key - here is Greg Norman on that subject:

“Golf should be kept as simple as possible”

While we are still in section numbered #0, let’s make one thing clear - this question that begs to be asked “Are all the professional teachers like Butch Harmon, Ben Crenshaw (my favorite teacher), etc., teaching us the RIGHT things?” For example, is Butch right when he’s telling you “drop your right hand at address and see if it is still against its place on the grip” or when he says “you should see 2 knuckles of your left hand at address”, etc.?

ABSOLUTELY!

This is the best advice you can ever get for determining how far from the ball you should stay and how hinged your left wrist should be, assuming that your hands are between your legs as they are in the Setup Point Address - following the so called “fundamentals.”

The problem is that at NO POINT in the Golf Swing should your hands be between your legs to begin with. Your hands have NO BUSINESS between your legs ever (in the full golf swing that is).

So the above professional advice truly and honestly offers the BEST cures ... for a problem that is **totally eliminated** by the *Zar Point Address*. They simply do not come to bear in the context of the NEW, Contemporary fundamentals of golf.

Should you see 2 knuckles or 3? Neither - you should see none since the back of your left hand should be facing the target at address!

The very question is irrelevant. The same holds true for the notion of distance from the ball and many other concepts we will address throughout this book. In this respect, the *Zar Point Address* doesn't even compete with these otherwise sound lessons we get from professionals like Ben and Butch - professionals who I deeply respect and fully trust. The point is that most of their teachings about fundamentals - fixes for numerous problems that come up as a result of adopting the traditional Setup Point Address - are just out of place in the context of the new *Zar Point Address*.

Let's examine the 2 possible address positions - the Setup Point Address which we suffer everyday with, and the new *Zar Point Address*.

The very name "Setup" by itself implies a:

- "passive"
- "neutral"
- "initial"
- "stationary"
- "frozen"
- "inactive"

mindset and attitude toward the upcoming swing ; the new *Zar Point Address* implies a:

- "Dynamic"
- "Explosive"
- "Powerful"
- "Vigorous"
- "Ignited"
- "Burning"

mindset and attitude.

As already mentioned, I searched the vast collection of Getty Images for point of impact photos of Tiger and some other top-notch players. You yourself can go to Getty and purchase some of these in bigger formats if you like. The images are very instructive, if viewed with an open mind.

Here is how Tiger looks at impact - which in essence is the *Zar Point Address*. These pictures show the point of impact with different clubs:



This is Tiger's Impact Position and Your *Zar Point Address* position - here are some more examples:



The rest of the PGA field doesn't look much different:



These are their Impact Positions, and Your *Zar Point Address* position.

The following is a photographic illustration of a “Setup Point Address” compared side-by-side with the “*Zar Point Address*” (the point of IMPACT that is) as executed by the undisputed king of the Golf Mechanics and multiple World Champion, British Open, Masters, etc. winner Nick Faldo (watch the video on the website!):



... and below, as executed during competition many years ago by the still-current world record holder in Long Driving (515 yards), the late Mike Austin:



... and by the smooth “Big Easy” (Ernie Els):



Finally, despite the fact that the quality of the pictures of Tiger below is not great (they are captured from a video), I just cannot resist to putting these two pictures at the end of this section to show how DIFFERENT the Address and Impact positions are:



Feet, knees, hips, torso, shoulders, head, arms, hands, wrists, shaft, clubhead, plane, ... everything is different - only his attire is the same.

The static 'attitude' which the Setup Point Address projects (shown on the left-hand side of the pictures above), engraves corresponding "static" types of thoughts in one's mind, which in turn influences the movements that follow.

The dynamic nature of the *Zar Point Address* (shown on the right-hand-side of the pictures above) projects the opposite sort of feeling, and suggests an attitude of "action" and "ignition" and "activation", etc., in your mind and the subsequent movements. It simply discards the very cause of the problems that you have to deal with due to the harmful Setup Point Address so you can swing with a clear mind the way you throw a stone in the water, or run down the street - without thinking about the mechanics of the movements, or the sequences of those movements, the forces involved, etc.

The new *Zar Point Address* feels both natural and effortless while requiring far less maintenance than the Setup Point Address where you have so many things to think about. It forms the Impact Framework which you will RETURN to (on the forward or down swing). It is a simple idea that wipes out most of the complicated “fixes” you would (if playing from the old Setup Point Address) have to learn, think about, and execute with the 1-2 seconds you have to put the ball in motion.

Let’s have a quick look at what “powers” the motion in both address positions, keeping in mind what Nick Faldo says about the challenges one faces at the start of the golf swing:

“It’s hard to come to play from being static.”

The old engine, which “powers” the backswing starting at the Setup Point Address, emphasizes the upper torso, shoulders and arms - they are the ones that you use to “execute” the backswing. This is the main reason why “It will take you 3 years just to learn how to relax”, as the guy told me when I first showed up on a golf course.

The new engine you get from the *Zar Point Address* unloads and relaxes the upper body because of:

- The energy coming from the COIL of your body at address - you start with a 40-20 X factor (hips vs. shoulders) coiled toward the target, as we will explain later in the book;
- The WEIGHT is shifted some 75% on the right foot, rather than being in the stationary 50-50 distribution;
- The right leg etc., etc. ... - we cover them all in detail in “The Execution” section.

There is no better solution to a problem than simply eliminating the problem altogether - all “fixes” and “cures” and “compensations” and “secrets” just prolong the problem, which just happens to coincide with the strategy of many consulting companies:

“If you cannot solve the problem, there is lots of money to be made in prolonging it.”

In the coming sections we will address the questions of what is actually discarded and unloaded off your mind and shoulders forever - and how it occurs. That’s the essence of what the new approach provides.

Many people ask if these new Contemporary Golf Fundamentals are “**something like**” the Iron Byron Machine, or the Golfing Machine, or the Count Yogi’s Elliptic Swing, or the Natural Golf swing, etc. Some of these aspects are individually addressed in the book, but let me make one very important and common thing clear.

Every motion has 3 fundamental components: Start, Engine, and Trajectory. That is, what is the position you start the motion from; what is the engine that feeds the energy into the motion; and what is the path taken by the motion. These “**three elephants of motion**” are the SAME in all the above-mentioned approaches (and any other known so far, actually), while they are all completely different in the New Golf Fundamentals. That is

- They all start from the archaic **Setup Point** Address with your hands hanging between your legs, rather than from the *Zar Point Address* with your hands on the side;
- They all have the same engine initiating and feeding the motion — the rotation of the **upper torso**, rather than using the power of the **hips and legs** on the backswing, just as you use them on the downswing;
- They all are forced to initiate the swing on one plane and end up on a **different plane** at the top, which you cannot see at address. With the new fundamentals you have everything on a **single plane** from the get-go and you see that plane in front of your eyes at the very point of address.

Indeed, we change all Golf Fundamentals, but that is actually a mere “side effect” of changing the Motion Fundamentals. That’s the key to answering the question “WHY is it suddenly so natural and easy to produce a smooth, yet powerful golf swing?” The correct Motion Fundamentals lead to correct Motion.

And that’s all a Golf Swing should be - a correct motion.

1) Playing to Your Potential

The sad fact is that you block your chance to achieve your potential with the Static “Classic” set-up. You can reach neither the precision nor the distance you get from the *Zar Point Address* by staying with the old fundamentals - see below for the suggested numbers for that. The new fundamentals just unleash your potential and let you do that with ease.

Here are the average yardages from Pro to High Handicapper as indicated by Golf Magazine (numbers slightly rounded):

who	average
Pro	285
Scratch	245
Low Hdcp	215
High Hdcp	175

who	range	average	spread
Pro	260-310	285	50
Scratch	210-280	245	70
Low Hdcp	160-260	215	110
High Hdcp	100-240	175	140

This fits the USGA definition of a scratch golfer (driving 250) and a bogey - golfer (driving 200). The number-changes with the *Zar Point Address* would look like that:

who	range	average	spread
Pro	300-340	320	40
Scratch	270-320	290	50
Low Hdcp	240-300	270	60
High Hdcp	210-280	240	70

The biggest benefit is the shortened spread - basically cut in half for the higher Handicappers due to dramatically increased consistency of the shots. This is where the reliability and consistency come s from.

For your convenience I have prepared 2 tables giving you the different distances different golfers hit their clubs:

How far different professionals hit their clubs

PRO	DR	3W	2i	3i	4i	5i	6i	7i	8i	9i	PW	SW	LW
A. Scott	285	250	235	220	210	200	190	175	160	150	135	115	95
C. Vijegas	290	265	245	230	215	205	190	175	165	147	133	115	100
M.Campbell	300	250	230	215	205	190	177	165	155	142	135	118	85
C.Dimarco	286	260	230	215	205	195	180	165	155	145	130	110	95
J. Furik	260	245	225	210	195	180	170	155	140	130	115	100	85
S. Garcia	290	265	235	220	210	200	190	175	165	155	135	124	110
P.Harrington	300	265	235	225	210	200	187	175	160	148	134	115	90
T.Immelman	285	260	235	220	210	200	190	175	160	145	130	105	90
L.Donnald	270	250	230	215	205	195	185	170	160	145	125	110	90
F.Mickelson	300	270	245	230	220	205	190	175	160	150	135	110	90
L. Ochoa	275	235	215	200	180	170	160	150	138	125	115	105	90
T. Woods	285	265	245	230	220	208	190	172	158	140	125	105	90
V. Singh	300	265	240	225	215	205	190	175	160	145	135	120	100

How far different average weekend-Handicappers hit their clubs

Handicap	DR	3W	2i	3i	4i	5i	6i	7i	8i	9i	PW	SW	LW
0	255	230	210	195	185	175	165	155	145	135	125	110	95
5	240	210	200	190	175	165	155	145	135	125	110	100	85
10	230	200	190	180	165	155	145	135	125	110	100	85	75
15	220	190	175	170	155	145	135	125	110	100	90	77	65
20	210	180	165	155	140	130	120	110	100	90	80	70	60
24	190	170	155	145	133	120	110	100	90	80	70	55	50

This will give you an idea about how far you are expected to hit your clubs according to your personal Handicap. Playing to you potential doesn't mean "trying to play above your potential" - you just don't know what your potential is! The sooner you realize that, the better.

The average PGA-tour player hits a bit over 60% of the fairways and 60% of the greens in regulation, with an average drive of some 285 yards ...

Do you think that this is their potential?

2) The Swing Plane

This is the most important thing in both the golf swing in general and the *Zar Point Address* approach itself.

I am sure you know about the swing plane from various sources - and invariably they all teach you how to GET on the correct plane.

Guess what - with the *Zar Point Address* you ARE on the correct plane right from the get-go.

It automatically puts you on the correct Swing Plane because your HANDS and ARMS are ALREADY ON that plane, rather than starting with you shaft and arms at an angle, trying to "somehow find" the correct plane later on the back swing.

If you use the traditional Setup Point Address known for the last 6 centuries, you can get on the plane at earliest at the 9 o'clock position - at this point the butt of you club should point toward the ball - and the shaft and your left arm should be on the SAME PLANE with the ball. See the Plane Definition discussions later in this chapter.

Before reaching that point, your efforts are concentrated on making a "wide" and "one piece takeaway", extending your arms in order to correct the inconvenient position at the start where your arms and the shaft are at a substantial angle, with your arms "hanging down toward the ground" as your teacher has probably told you.

With the *Zar Point Address* there is nothing to correct since you are on plane immediately, even before making any movement.

You arms and the shaft are on the plane that passes through your shoulders and the ball, exactly as Ben Hogan describes it in his classic "Five Lessons" book.

Moving everything on plane is probably the single most important thing for delivering a synchronized powerful blow at the point of impact - everything OUTSIDE the swing pane is basically a wasted effort.

The most important difference between the pros and the amateurs is the swinging on plane - that's why the power of the pros seems to be so easy and effortless (well, so SOME of them actually).

Effortless - because of no wasted effort - is the key. Everything is working toward the common goal - reaching the peak at the point of impact. As we will see later, most of the PGA tour professionals including top-notch champions and former "#1 in the World" players are actually FAILING in their effort to swing on plane, as strange as it sounds.

The key to that "no waste" is to START on plane from address - the *Zar Point Address* that is. The position itself engenders easy and natural way to keep everything on plane as we will see in "The Execution" chapter. If you are outside the plane, then the natural body-reaction is to "overdo" the "compensatory move" toward the other side - just like it happens with the "coming over the top" problem.

Here is Fred Funk, the #1 in accuracy with the driver states:

"I just try to return the club back on the same plane it was on the backswing".

The problem is that he does not START on plane to begin with - he has to first PUT it on plane somewhere half-way to the top of the back swing.

Here is what the king of the Golf Swing Mechanics Nick Faldo states as the key points of his swing:

- *"Good Setup allows you to return the club to the same square position it was at address".*
- *"That's why I work so hard on setting the club on plane ... "*
- *"A good downswing is very much a reflexive action..."*

Note how all these key points *automatically follow* from the correct new *Zar Point Fundamentals* rather than something you have to think about and act upon. Nick is certainly correct (as usual) saying "I work so hard on setting the club on plane ... " ... when he starts from the old Setup Point Address, that is.

Hard work is definitely needed in golf, but we have to eliminate the unnecessary hard work and concentrate on what must be mastered.

Think for a moment how exactly this plane is defined. WHAT is it specifically, and HOW can you “draw” it geometrically! And HOW is it established?

Let’s clarify a couple of definitions first. We will actually focus on 3 things - the Target Line, the Swing line, and the Effective Target Line.

1) The TARGET LINE

It is the line on the ground drawn from the ball to your Final target - like the flag on an approach shot, for example.

2) The SWING LINE

It is the line on the ground “drawn by your club” as it swings through the ball - the line of the divot that is. It is tangent to the curvature of the swing, be it a circle, an ellipse, or some crazy curve. You have heard different people call it different names, like “the line where you want the ball to start”, or “the line of the initial flight”, or ... whatever. The real name of it is simple - the SWING LINE. And without the definition of swing line it is impossible to define the swing plane, as we will see real soon.

The ball always starts on the swing line and always ends on the target line, provided at impact your clubface is perpendicular to the target line as it always should be - this is the case with any shot, be it a draw, a fade, a lob, send, straight, etc.

In fact, it is also the case with your ERRANT shots - the horrific slices and hooks you manage to “achieve” much to your surprise. You simply have your clubface pointing there at impact.

The bigger the angle between the target and the swing line, the bigger the side spin of the ball and from there the bigger the drift. The side effect of making that angle bigger is that you effectively increase the loft of the club a lot - that’s why you can get the ball above the tree in front of you with a well-executed lob shot. Note that contrary to what some people may have told you, you do NOT open the clubface - you increase the angle between the swing line and the target line while certainly keeping the clubface pointing to the final target - that is why it LOOKS open.

If you really want to “open” your clubface, you actually want to **PURPOSFULLY** change the target itself - due to some wind conditions, tilted target spot, etc. That is another matter which doesn’t defeat the rule.

If you actually hit from hardpan, bad lie, or from the rough, you will have your clubface open for yet a different reason - to pre-compensate for the turn of the toe of the club at impact. This doesn’t defeat the rule either.

3) The EFFECTIVE TARGET LINE

Now you see why your powerful tee shot ends up at the airport near-by, rather than close to the fairway, which was your fuzzy target ... Your swing line was straight down the fairway, but your **EFFECTIVE TARGET LINE** (which is perpendicular to your clubface at impact), was pointing towards that private jet on the other side of the fence.

I often use the association of your clubface being the eye of a laser-beam device with which you have to light the target - where the laser-beam points, that is where the actual effective target line is.

Before addressing the issue of defining the Swing Plane, let us also point out that whatever the definition is, it should **ULTIMATELY FIX** the plane - it is impossible to have a correct definition, yet being able to draw 2 or more planes that meet the definition.

There are many definitions that you have heard of, all of them wrong. You can easily make the test making above and see for yourself - if you can make 2 planes under the same definition, it’s no good.

Many golfers (including **PRO**-teachers inspired by Ben Hogan!) think that the plane is established by the “glass plane” resting on your shoulders passing through the ball. While this is the **BEST** definition of all the wrong definitions (as strange as it may sound), it depends on the **ALIGNMENT** of your shoulders. So if I tilt or twist my shoulders to open or close them, everything is ruined. I can make as many different planes as I want just by tilting and twisting my shoulder line ... and this is not good.

Others think that it is the plane established by your left straight arm at 9 o’clock on the back swing and the ball. It looks “plausible”, but again I can turn my arm in any direction and produce as many planes as I want. Not good.

Yet others think that it is the plane established by your left straight arm at 9 o'clock on the back swing and the shaft. Sounds good too ... but I can produce as many planes as I want by tilting the shaft the way I please... Not good again.

So now that we know how to judge, let's have a look at the real definition - the one that establishes THE ONE and ONLY plane. The plane is established by:

- The **straight line of your left arm** running down as a continuation of the shaft toward the ball at the *Zar Point Address*,
- and
- The **Swing Line**, crossing the shaft **at the ball!!!**

Now you can turn and tilt your shoulders in ANY way you want, yet staying disabled from producing another plane. You are just STUCK there from the very beginning of the *Zar Point Address*. Neither the shoulders nor the angle between shaft and left arm are involved in the definition of the swing plane!

You certainly understand that this definition is an "inconvenient truth" for the old fashioned address - it just "doesn't fit the bill" since you can not see that plane from the position of your hanging hands and "the stick between your legs". It is a miserable picture to watch and the cause of tons of mistakes...

Not only you cannot see the plane, but you have to actually blindly try to find it on the backswing - that is why Nick Faldo correctly states "I work so hard **on setting the club on plane** ...". It's just not easy even for a magician like Nick, let alone you and me. Now the club is set on plane from the start!

If you start with the *Zar Point Address*, everything naturally falls into place. You ARE already on plane and from there you "slide" the shaft back and up, rotating around your left shoulder and left hip as you transfer the weight back - in a natural and unforced one-piece-takeaway. No need to even think about it.

It is important to know that it is the same definition of Swing Plane that the Iron Byron actually uses without even knowing it. The lateral movement is ignored since it's not supposed to change the plane - it just moves the arms-shaft combo through the plane in order to create a force toward the target. Armed with this definition, you can now actually "draw" the plane geometrically. Remember:

Left arm through the shaft to the ball, crossed with the Swing Line.

As we mentioned in the beginning of the section, much to your surprise the majority of the PGA players does NOT swing on plane. And as we will see, this means wasting substantial power and length.

Let's take Vijay as an example - using Jim Furik as a tour-payer not being on plane would be too easy of a task, with all due respect to Jim and his remarkable results. Vijay is a classical example of a top-notch player (not that Jim Furik isn't) wasting his power in vain by getting OFF plane at many different points, as you will see on the pictures below.

Let's see why it is not only VISUALLY ridiculous to get off plane, but also very important from a couple of golf perspectives:

- From POWER point of view;
- From DIRECTION control point of view.

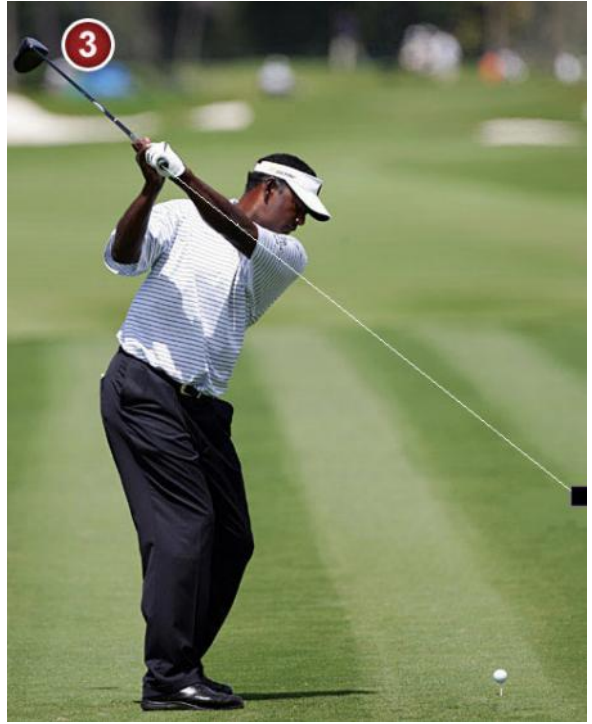
Every move in which the shaft and your left arm get off plane is essentially **wobbling**.

It looks like a "twisted on 8" wheel of a car - you know how it wobbles, slows the speed, and hampers following the correct direction. Worse yet, you are constantly and desperately trying to get back on plane, thus losing even more energy and direction control - it's just a snowballing process.

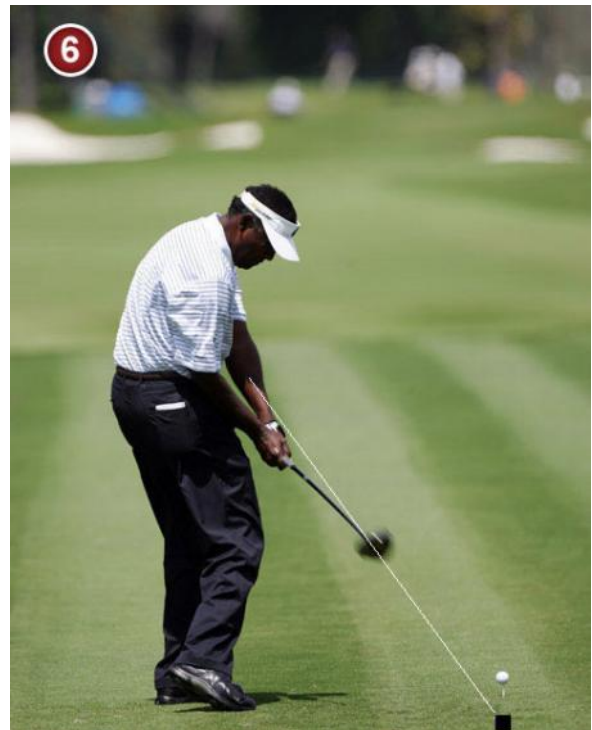
Just try to imagine how Iron Byron would look like if you actually twist its wheel "like an 8" - that is how all these respected golfers look like under a careful examination - a "twisted Iron Byron", wobbling the club on the way towards the ball.

Here is Vijay - with all due respect again. Pictures are again from Golf Magazine, which in my view (along with Golf Digest) shares the #1 place as a source for golf information - I don't get paid a red cent for saying that, so that should be my honest opinion 😊.

I have even kept the sequence numbers that Golf.COM provides, so it is easier for you to know the PHASE of the golf swing :



And now on the way down:



He is all-over the place indeed ...

Let's now have a look at my favorite golfer Fred Couples (Golf Digest).



And on the way down:



He is my favorite for very many reasons, as you will see throughout this book. Fred just has everything a #1 Golfer must have.

As you will see from other pictures later in the book, the reason why Fred is the #1 Golfer in Acceleration is exactly this - he is always on plane, once he gets his club on plane, half-away through the backswing.

At any point of the swing, IF you are on plane, then the shaft-arm plane passes through the ball! This is a very important observation and with the old fashioned address it is possible to achieve only half-way-through the backswing, rather than from the get-go (at the Setup Point Address, the shaft, arm, and Swing Line are NOT in a single plane since your hands hang down).

Not only does the shaft-arm plane pass through the ball - it also passes through the Swing Line! This is why there is ONLY ONE SWING PLANE - fixed and “unmovable” throughout the swing. You stay there, you don’t wobble.

If someone tells you that there are 2 or 3 or 4 swing planes, kindly thank him and move on.

If on other hand he tells you that the plane is established by the Left Arm and the Shaft, tell him that he is a “very lucky golfer” since by his definition he will always be on plane - 2 crossing lines are always in one plane no mater what.

Finally, if he tells you that the plane is established by the Left Arm and the Ball, or the Shaft and the ball, tell him that he again is a “very lucky golfer” because he will never get off plane by his definition - a straight line and a point (the ball) are always on the same plane.

The moment the Shaft “leaves” the plane you are wobbling with all the already known consequences - no ifs or buts.

The moment your club doesn’t “cut the ground” at the swing line, you are shooting off-target (left or right). It is the Swing Plane that determines direction and your planned-in-advance Swing Line is the best direction you can take.

I am sure Vijay would also agree - all it takes is to compare the 2 sets of pictures above: Vijay’s and Fred’s. Remember:

You get off plane - you lose POWER and PRECISION.

Left Arm, shaft, and ball must be constantly on the same plane - the plane that “cuts the ground” through the planned Swing line.

What happens after the impact? After impact the Right arm, shaft, and the tee-spot should be on the same plane .

Now you hopefully appreciate the fact that *Zar Point Address* puts you on plane from the start, since your entire left arm is projected straight forward through the shaft at the ball.

And the ball is always sitting on both the Target Line and the Swing Line, regardless of anything - lie, direction, wind, draw, fade, sting, and the rest of “all 9 yards” of considerations.

Finally - what about visualization?

If there is ONE single thing that you really must visualize:

- it is not the trajectory,
- it is not the flight,
- it is not the landing spot,
- it is not the finish of your swing .

You must visualize the **SWING PLANE**.

The Planned Swing Line crossed at the ball by the straight Left-Arm-Shaft line.

Simple.

The *Zar Point Address* allows you for the first time to see this Swing Plane from the very beginning, to fit your setup to it accordingly, and then to gracefully SINK your swing into it.

Beautiful ...