

By Kip Puterbaugh

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HOLE

THE GOLF COURSE

FULL SWING

For better ball-striking, key on a shallow approach into impact

A New Approach

DO YOUR GOLF SWING a big favor: Forget about hitting down at the ball. Golfers who key on hitting down yank the club from the top, creating a steep approach into impact. The clubhead should approach more level to the ground and into the back of the ball. To do this, the downswing path must be from the inside (right).

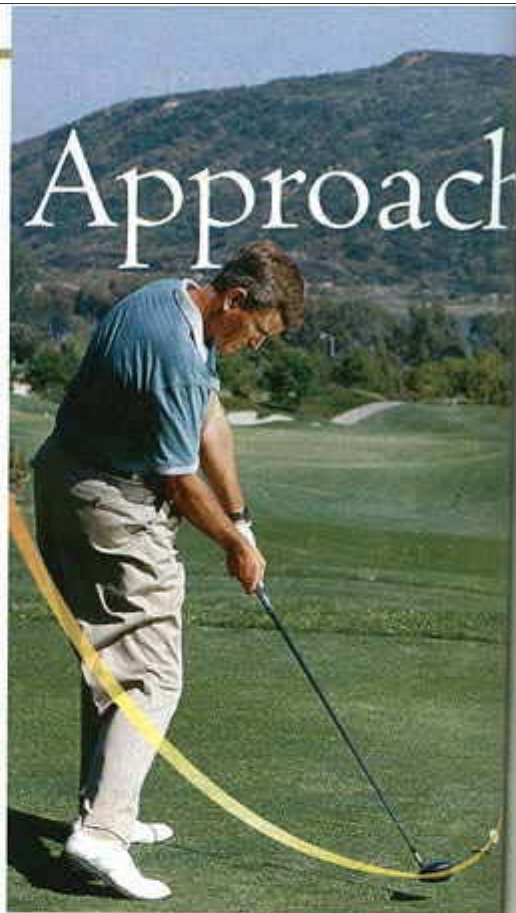
Take a look at what happens. When golfers try to hit down from the top, their arms move out away from the body (below, left), guaranteeing a steep approach. And steep can only mean out-to-in through the hitting area—a common fault among slicers.

Better golfers start the forward swing by shifting their weight to the left and letting the body start to unwind (below, right), instead of pulling downward. This puts the clubhead on a more level path through impact. The result is stronger, straighter shots.

ONE OF GOLF MAGAZINE'S TOP 100 TEACHERS

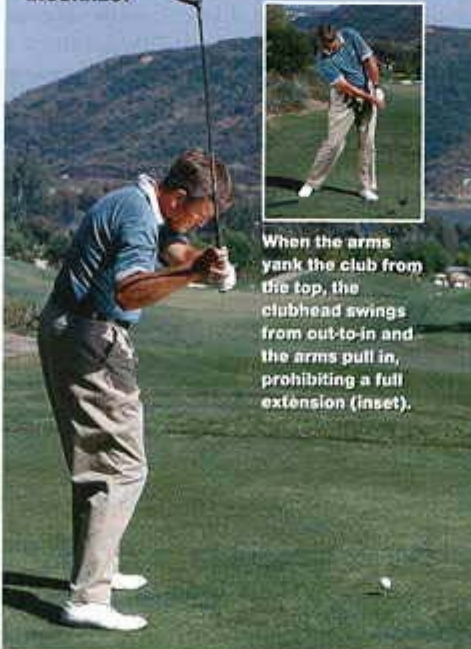
KIP PUTERBAUGH

WITH PETER MORRICE



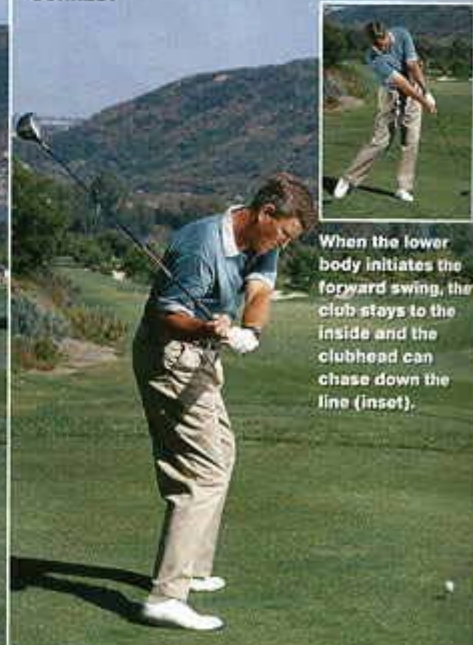
Kip Puterbaugh is the director of instruction at Aviara Golf Academy in Carlsbad, California.

INCORRECT



When the arms yank the club from the top, the clubhead swings from out-to-in and the arms pull in, prohibiting a full extension (inset).

CORRECT

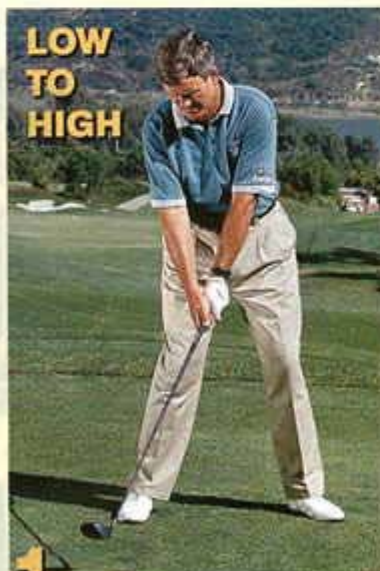
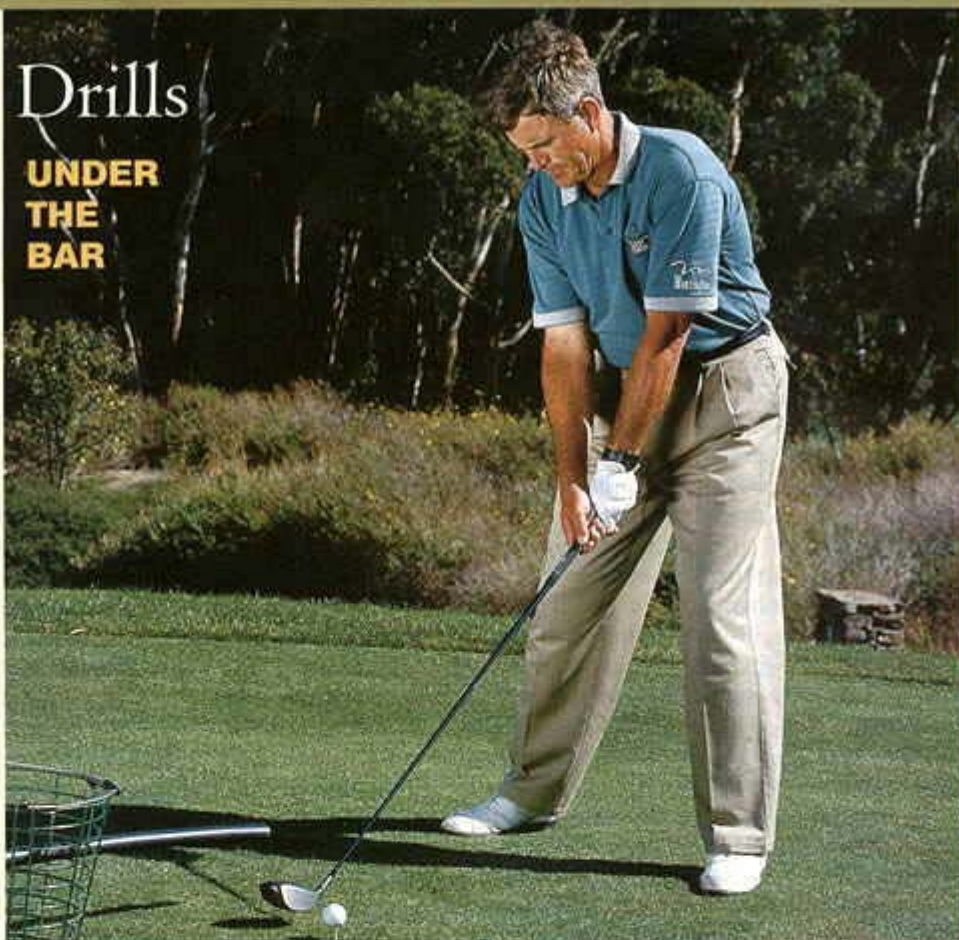


When the lower body initiates the forward swing, the club stays to the inside and the clubhead can chase down the line (inset).

Practice Drills

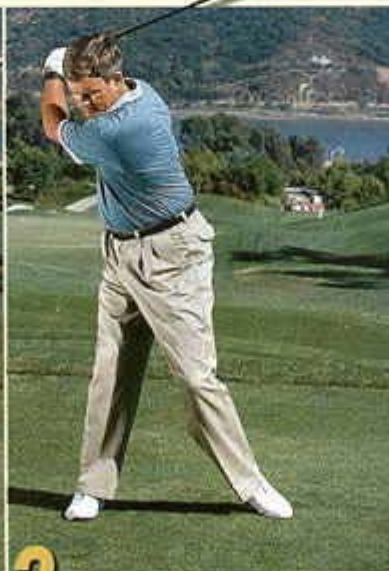
Stick a plastic club sleeve or similar object in a range bucket so it extends about six inches off the ground. Position the tube one foot behind the ball with the end suspended above the target line. Hit balls using your driver with the tube in place. To miss the tube coming into impact, the club-head has to approach at a shallow angle and, therefore, from the inside. Key on turning your body back and through and keeping your arms relaxed.

UNDER THE BAR



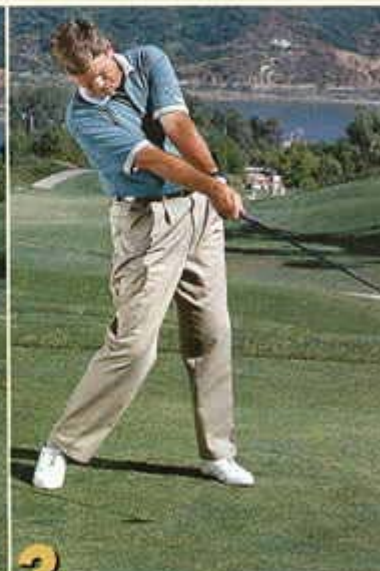
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This drill will help shallow out your forward swing. Using your driver, address an imaginary ball off your right instep but six inches above the ground.



2

Swing to the top and then try to hit the imaginary ball. To return the clubhead to its starting position, you'll have to keep your arms relaxed and turn your body.



3

Continue into a full extension three feet off the ground, feeling how your body rotation moves the club from in-to-out through the bottom of the swing.