

THE SIX MONTH PLAN

DISTANCE

PART 3

by John Bertges

Here is third in our series of lessons, "The 6 Month Plan". Previously, we worked on swinging the club in-line with a square blade. Now its time to learn how to get the distance to go with that straight ball.

What causes distance in the golf swing comes as somewhat of mystery to most of us. All the things that you may have tried in the past including; swinging your arms, driving your hips, making a weight shift, coiling your body, or pulling with your lead arm are NOT getting you any closer to the secret. After teaching for sixteen plus years, I can tell you now, these remedies lead to little advancement.

Simply put, If you want to hit the golf ball far you need clubhead speed and at the right moment during the swing motion. Just because you rotate your hips back and through or make a big shoulder turn doesn't guarantee the clubhead is going fast through the ball.

There are three elemental facts you need to know first in order to create real clubhead speed in your swing.

John Bertges Biography:



John has spent over fifteen years traveling around the world teaching & coaching the game of golf. He has trained with top PGA touring pros and well-known instructors in the business. He has spent time at the world renowned PGA West in LaQuinta, California, studying golf swing mechanics with such notables as Mac O'Grady.

In 1995, John became a Class A member of the PGA of America. In 1998, he became a Master Professional of the Professional Golf Teachers and Coaches of America.

From 2000 through 2002, John was a Division III women's golf coach. He led his team to two consecutive conference championships and a top tenfinish in the NCAA Women's Golf Championship. He was awarded "College Golf Coach of the Year" two years in a row by the NCAA's CCIW Conference.

In Asia, John is honored as being the first ever golf professional to teach a golf instruction certification school in China. To date, John has taught over 15,000 individual lessons around the world.

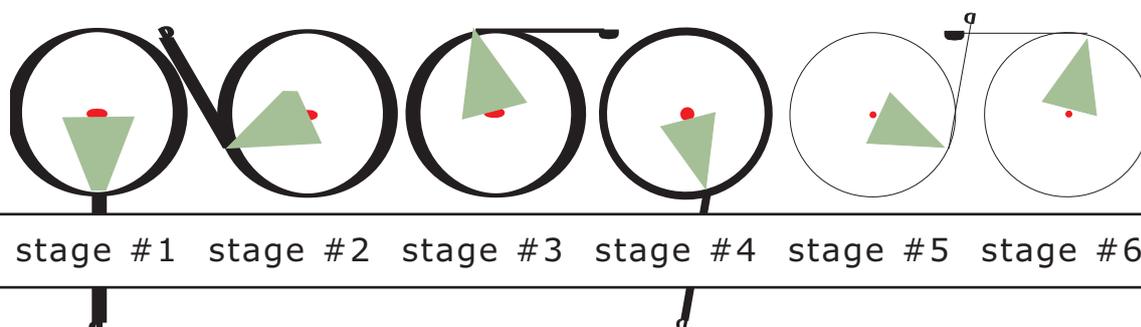
Presently, John operates Bertges Golf Academy, Inc. He is also the director of instruction for all Guaranteed Golf Schools in Indiana.

for more information about John:
www.bertgesgolf.com • (317) 753-3950

Fact #1 - The golf swing is circular in nature.

The club is orbiting around our body. The body rotates with the momentum of the club to accommodate for the circle. (see illustration below) The shoulders, hips, torso, and head all turn in this circle. The more the body cooperates and rotates with the club, the bigger the circle is. The bigger the circle becomes the greater its potential power.

This illustration shows the movement of the golf swing in 6 stages from left to right. The triangle top (near the red dot) represents the shoulders. The red dot is the center of the swing located near the chest cavity. The end of the triangle is the wrists. As the club begins it movement, the circle rotates along with the shoulders (stage #2). Momentum begins to cause the club to hinge from the wrists (stage #2, #3). As the circle changes directions, momentum causes the wrists to unhinge near the ball. (stage #4). The club's momentum travels past the rest of the body and is going must faster than the body's rotation (stage #5). Momentum stops. (stage #6)



stage #1 stage #2 stage #3 stage #4 stage #5 stage #6

Fact #2 - The club hinges off the wrists during this circular motion.

There is a lever system attached to the circle. Picture a circle with a whip attached at the end. (photo Below) The golf club rotates around the body and at the right moment, the lever system whips the clubhead around to go much faster than the arms and body. This whip is what catapults the club through the ball at a much faster rate. The only way to make the clubhead go fast enough to hit the golf ball far is to swing it faster than any other body part in motion. This whipping effect is accomplished by hinging the wrists and staying relaxed enough to rehinge or whip the clubhead through the ball at the right time. (see illustration on previous page)

The hands move around in a circle as the club hinges off the wrists to create a lever. The wrists then rehinge past the ball during the motion to create the whip.



Heres a simple drill. Take a long club and hold upside down near the club head. Practice making swishes with the back arm only.

Fact #3 - The club needs to reach it maximum speed just past the ball not at it.

If you want to hit the ball really far the speed needs to be increased after impact, this is what truly compresses the ball and launches it forward. Most amateurs try to hit at the ball while professionals golfers always hit through it. (see swish photo above)

Bottom-line, distance in your golf swing comes from a whip off of a circle all happening at the right time during the swing. On the following page, I have included a schedule for you try specific drills tailored to training your muscles properly over the next couple of months. I am confident over time, practicing these drills will give you much more distance in your golf swing.

Trail Hand Push Drill (helps create a large circle)

Here is a great drill to create a large circle in your swing. Hold the club normal in your lead hand. Next, Place your trail hand palm into your lead hand's wrists. (trail hand photo) Swing to the top and push your trail hand out against your lead hand's wrist. This drill will get your hands away from your center and maximize your swing circle.

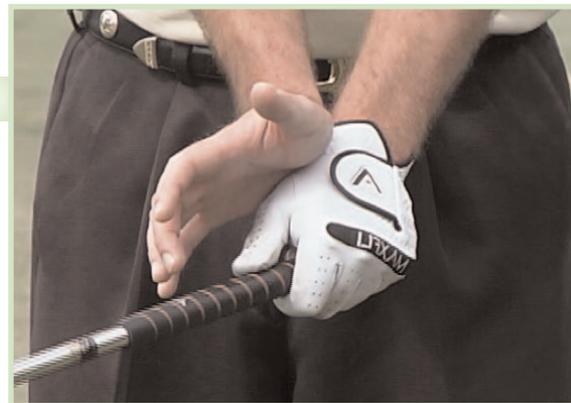
Feet Together Drill (helps to free up your wrist hinge)

Stand with your feet and knees touching with the ball directly in the center of your stance. Next, begin hitting shots. You will have to relax your wrists otherwise you'll lose control and balance. You will be surprised as far you hit the ball with this drill.

Pump Drill (all around power drill)

Swing to the top of your backswing and stop. Note how close the club shaft is to your trail shoulder. This indicates a lever system. You can also see that there is a nice acute angle between your lead arm and the shaft (photo #1). Begin a slow motion half downswing by paying close attention that the shaft stays the same distance away from your trail shoulder. This is stored energy (photo#2). Continue Rotating down until the shaft is exactly parallel to the ground and pointing at the target. In this position you will notice that your hips are rotated about 45 degrees open and your trail shoulder is much lower than your lead shoulder. Also, there is plenty of bend in your trail arm. This all indicates that you have stored energy in your downswing (photo#3).

This revolution down is considered a pump action in this drill. Next, repeat this pumping down action two or three times in real time but on the last rotation, time the swing to unload a loud whistle sound just past the ball. You should feel how the clubhead pulls your body outward on the through swing. This is true centrifugal force and displaced momentum working in your swing



trail hand photo



feet together photo



pump drill

2 Month Practice Schedule

Make 50 swings a day for two weeks doing the trail hand push drill. For the next 4 weeks hit 3 buckets of balls a week doing the feet together drill. For the the last month hit 3 to 4 bucketds a week using the pump drill. These drills will ingrain the motion into your swing and assure you of more distance.