

# Seek "Fundamentals" In Teaching Methods

**L**ES BOLSTAD, professional at the University of Minnesota, is very much of the opinion that the search for "fundamentals" in the golf swing should be paralleled by exploration for basic elements in teaching golf.

In teaching golf to university classes and in comparing notes with other teachers on the Minnesota faculty Bolstad has been directed to some conclusions he has presented to fellow professionals. Several of his conclusions apply especially to group instruction.

Professionals at university and college courses often have remarked to GOLF-DOM's editor that their teaching has been greatly aided by teaching principles generally applied in education and which they have learned from men and women with whom they are associated on school staffs.

The outline that Bolstad sets forth as basic instruction elements he has found effective:

1. Developing a golf swing takes time. Whole learning speeds up the learning process. Work to a pattern. Stress pattern, movement, posture and getting set. Bring the details in later.
2. Group instruction inevitably leads to individual instruction within the group.
3. Group instruction offers a means of increasing pro revenue. You can charge more for the same time.
4. Much embarrassment disappears in groups when pupils see others having their troubles.
5. The group approach demands that you have a system which you explain over and over again.
6. The fact of individual differences shouldn't stop you from having a system and teaching plan of your own. Many individual differences take care of themselves. Some basic swing points help everyone.
7. Twenty golfers might as well hear your explanation and see your demonstration as well as one. There are certain elemental understandings every golfer needs.
8. Swing faults fall into a pattern.

Some few wrong tendencies predominate and come up with great frequency. They are: (a) the slice which comes from the open clubface, (b) presenting the heel of the club to the ball, (c) the indirect back-swing.

9. There is a great deal of repetition in group instruction as you make your telling points over and over. The individual problems provide the variety.

10. Habit breaking is one of the toughest problems. Some golfers tend to be habit bound; others, habit free. Before you can create a new swing habit you first have to break the old one.

11. The ability of the pupil to intelligently observe what goes on in a golf swing must be developed. This can be done in "correction sessions" where the group comes together. One golfer hits while the instructor interpolates and asks for constructive criticisms.

12. Habit formation should be one of your aims; in a golf swing you should relegate to habit as much as you can. This is where group drills come into the picture.

13. There is a language barrier. You have to learn to say each point in different ways so as to be sure to penetrate the understanding of your listener.

14. The same rules of learning which apply to the development of any motor skill apply likewise to the learning of a golf swing. An understanding of the principles of learning is as necessary as a knowledge of golf.

15. A forceful swing eventually looks easy if accompanied by the proper balance, an easy "let go" feeling in the body, and a rhythmic flow of motion.

16. The counter-clockwise exercise and the development in the swing which come from it are a necessity. You have to establish a control over the clubface. You have to know how to switch gears at the top of the swing.

17. A golf swing implies torso control. You can't develop a good swing on a poor base. Posture, body control, and correct body action are required assignments.