

GOOD GOLF IS EASY—NO. 6

By ERNEST JONES

SINCE there seems to be such a lot of controversy as to the difference between a "swinger" and a "hitter" in golf I think it a very good idea to try to get a perfectly clear conception of the best way to hit a golf ball. As Sir Walter Simpson says in his book, "The Art of Golf." "There is only one categorical imperative," that is, "Hit the ball. There are no minor absolutes." The point that interests me, however, is to find out which is the best way to get the most force into the clubhead in hitting the ball.

It must be very misleading to the struggling beginner, when he hears some well known golfer make the statement: "I am not a swinger, I am a hitter." Of course he is a hitter, and so is every good player, but the players who say they hit, without swinging, and know that they hit without swinging the clubhead, are not by any means as good as they could be. Not only that, they miss the real thrill of hitting a golf ball properly. They are what I class as "dead hand" players. The remarkable thing is, that there are a great number of good players who can, and do swing the club, but are not aware of it, and invariably spoil their golf, also their pleasure in the game, by deliberately trying to cultivate a method of hitting the ball without swinging the clubhead.

I often hear the remark: "You have to do a lot more than *let* the club swing." This is, to me, the most ridiculous part of the whole thing. Of course you have to do more than *let* the club swing. You don't *let* it swing, you *swing* it, and you must learn to develop as much force as ever you can, by *swinging* it, and not by *letting* it swing. The slogan "Let the clubhead do the work," has, like so many other things about the game, become very much misunderstood. I am all the time telling pupils that they mustn't expect the club to do anything itself, but they must develop the control to do something with the club.

To get back to the idea of hitting. As I said, everyone to play golf well, must hit the ball with the clubhead, so the whole point to consider, is how to transmit the greatest force to the clubhead when it comes in contact with the ball. The greatest force was used by David, when he slew Goliath, the stone in the sling. **Centrifugal force.** There is no greater force and the whole point to realize is, that there is also the minimum of power expended. It is quite a mistaken idea to suppose, that the more power that is used,

the more force or speed, will be created. There are certainly a great many players who are more powerful than Miss Virginia Van Wie, or even Bobby Jones, but there are very few who can develop more force with the clubhead.

I think Miss Van Wie's achievement of winning the Women's Championship again this year was a wonderful example of golf as it can be played under the most trying of circumstances. I know that for some time previous to the international matches, and the championship, she had not been at all well, and the weather especially in the final was perfectly vile; not the kind of weather that would make you look forward to a pleasurable golf game. But through it all Miss Van Wie played beautiful golf, although her putts were not sinking any too well at anytime. It was a ruthless test of her golfing skill, and the perfection of her ability to swing the clubhead, and also her serene disposition.

Another angle to this swinging or hitting, is the idea that you can swing with your wooden clubs and your putter, but with your irons, you must punch. It really is amazing how very complicated this hitting of a golf ball can be made. Why in the name of common sense should you swing the club for your longest shots and your shortest shots, and do something different for the shots in between?

The action of swinging can never alter. All that is different is the length to which you can swing. The longer, or further you can swing the clubhead backward and forwards the greater force you can produce, but it is quite a fallacy to imagine that you can hit the ball with more force than you can swing the clubhead. If you could only convince yourself that each club is made differently, and that they are all designed to play different shots, instead of being used in a different manner, I am perfectly certain you would find it a wonderful help.

Again, if you would only realize that any ball that flies upwards must have backspin, it is easy to understand that the more loft on the face of the club, the more backspin it will impart; that is, given the same force when it comes in contact with the ball. It should give you greater confidence to play all your shots using the same method of hitting the ball, than to try some different way of hitting because you are using a different club. There is one thing I am certain of, and that is, you will undoubtedly get a



great deal more pleasure out of the game, if you have a definite method of playing your shots, and not a bag of tricks to counteract all the faults we are all prone to fall into.

The trouble in such a course is that one can never know how and where to start in trying to correct any new fault that develops. Unless there is some one definite purpose in mind, no player can hope to go about developing his or her game consistently and well. Learning the true meaning of swinging the clubhead is the keynote to real progress.

I have entitled these articles "Good Golf is Easy." I mean it absolutely. When you play your best shots they are easier on you physically, than when you play them badly. It is very simple, when it is realized, that for *anything* to attain its greatest speed, it must necessarily find, or take, the line of least resistance. Therefore, if it is conceded, that it is the amount of speed, or force in the clubhead, when it comes in contact with the ball, that gives the distance to the flight of the ball, it should be simple to reason it out in this manner.

If you swing anything, whether it is a stone on the end of a string, or the clubhead on the end of a shaft, there must be no resistance; if there is no resistance, there can be no strain; if there is no strain, it must produce freedom and ease in yourself. So then, good golf is easy.



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Miss Virginia Van Wie is an excellent case in point of the real swinger in wielding a golf club. From start to finish her swing represents a feel of control of the clubhead through the hands, with a resultant accommodation of the entire body to maintain a feeling of easy balance

No. 1 is offered to show her position at the address. No. 2 shows the club started on the backswing with the body turning easily with the arms. No. 3 is a stage beyond No. 2, giving a further showing of the body turn as the hands and the clubhead are swung

No. 4 shows the limit of the backswing with the body fully turned and wound up. Nos. 5 and 6 show the action just after impact. Note in No. 6 how the hands are being swung on through, free from any tendency of being drawn inward. Here is clear indication of a free-swing action