

Articles and Tips - Three-tee Drill - Shaving Strokes, Better Putting



Make More Putts! By using this three-tee drill, you'll develop better feel, which leads to a more consistent stroke

The purpose of this three-tee drill is two-fold. The first two tees help you develop a feel for striking the ball in the center of the putter face – you need that to consistently hole short putts. The third tee, then, acts as a “purposeful distraction” as you practice your putting.

The idea is this: If you can hit more solid putts, your distance control improves and you will make more putts. Also, if you can learn to putt with your eyes focused on a spot in front of the ball and never watch the ball leave the putter face or watch what the putter is doing during the motion, the better a putter you will become.

It may sound odd – not watching the ball – but it works. Trust me.

Here's how to apply the drill to your practice routine: Start from three feet and advance to six feet away from the hole. Place two tees at a distance just wide enough for the putter to swing through. The tees acting as a gate (see photo).

Bury the third tee in the green a half inch in front of the ball directly on the line you intend to roll the ball on into the middle of the hole. Stick that third tee in the ground far enough so you can see the top of it but it won't stop your ball.

As you practice hitting putts, stay focused on the tee buried in the green. Ideally, you can swing the putter through the gate without thinking or watching. If the tendency is to hit one tee or the other, get curious as to how to miss it.

Consider that there must be a pattern before trying to fix anything.

Last year, my PGA Tour student Ryan Palmer made 840 of 849 putts from three feet and closer – that's 98.9 percent, just a shade under the Tour average. He made 170 of 175 (97.2 percent) from four feet, which was well above the Tour average.

The 2006 PGA Tour average from six feet was 70 percent; Ryan made 67.6 percent from six feet. From 10 feet, the Tour average was 41 percent; Ryan came in below the average there, making 29 of 73 attempts (38.8 percent).

The best players in the world only hole four out of 10 from 10 feet, but they improve drastically from six feet, and they make nearly everything all from three feet and in. The moral of the story – and what you should take from this to help your putting – is that the most valuable practice on the putting green should occur from six feet and closer.

So scoot closer to the practice cups, stick three tees in the ground and make 2007 your best putting season ever.
