

Eliminating the “YIPs”

The dreaded “yips” are the fear of even the greatest golfers. “Yip” is a term used to describe the experience we have when we have a “hiccup” in our stroke. It might be more appropriate to use the word “YIPES!” because that’s really the feeling we experience over the ball! Either way, the experience is one of anxiety that often produces a swing that is tentative and pushes the club- face off line.

One golfer recently made this comment:

“I miss putts that I should be making. I know I can make them so I don’t see what the problem is! I’ve read everything I can get my hands on and listened to every tape I can find and I am still tentative over these putts I know I can make! I know it’s not in my mind because I know I’m capable of making them”

Okay. Here’s the problem. Everything is based on cause and effect. There is no such thing as a yip without a cause for a yip. Period. The cause? Very simple. FEAR AND DOUBT. Either way you cut it is in the mind and it’s one and usually both fear and doubt causing the problem. Whether it’s doubt leading to fear or fear leading to doubt; it makes no difference. The bottom line: missed putts due to a tentative stroke.

The player quoted above did not want to hear that she it was “in her head” because she convinced herself otherwise...but nothing improved. As long as she denied this, she continued to miss putts due to a tentative putting stroke. Even if you do everything correctly, you can still miss putts of course but missing putts because of a tentative and fear-based stroke creates the “yip” experience. Think about it. A yip putt usually feels like you’re pulling off the ball or pushing it, right? Well, what would make you do that? You would only pull off the ball if you didn’t trust it. You don’t trust it because you’re experiencing some level of doubt or fear over it.

From now on, bring your attention back to process (i.e. what you have control over such as line, pace, imagery, breathing, balance over the ball) and you will begin to build the trust factor. Set yourself up for the opportunity for success. Focus on process and you will begin reduce the yips and the YIPES!

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