

A word about Course Management:

Playing golf is about managing your emotions, your swing, and, most importantly, your decisions.

Every shot that you play during a round requires evaluations and decisions such as, how's the ball lying, how far to the green, what's the wind doing, where is the trouble on this hole, where is the pin located on the green, etc, etc?

You then decide what club to use, commit to the shot and execute it with confidence.

That is the concept but you have to take practical steps, before you play and during play, to make sure it turns into reality.

If you go to the range before hand, take account of your swing and tempo that day. If you are fading the driver or long irons – expect that to happen on the course. That will mean for example, teeing it up on the left hand side of the tee to give the ball room to fade onto the fairway. The opposite is true if you find you are drawing the ball. Tee it up to the right hand side of the tee.

Don't begin your round by trying to "fix" your fade (because you usually draw the ball) on the range. Go with it initially. You may find as you relax into the round, your natural shape of shot comes back into play.

So that leads us onto the next key part of course management: although you should take into account how you are hitting the ball on any given day – NEVER use a setup that will put the ball into danger should the expected shape of shot not transpire. Too many club players aim the ball over hazards (to allow for their "slice") and come to grief when the shot continues in the direction they are aiming.

Now let's think about this for a moment: how focussed* and process* orientated will your mind be if you are constantly worried about aiming too far left (or right) to allow for a fade or slice? Your mind will have that nagging worry that the decision to aim way out there could end up in disaster. And as you know from the Inner Golf Coach teachings, your subconscious will give you what you think about. So while its good course management to take into account the way you are hitting the ball on a given day, never take this to the extremes and potentially put yourself in trouble – you know at some point it will happen. So play away from trouble on the course.

Next, never hit a shot without having a target in mind. Remember your pre-shot routine*:

AMPLE*: Acquiring the target is the first step. It's not simply part of playing process* golf, its good course management too. Planning your way around the course will save many strokes and your subconscious works better if it has something to focus on. The more specific the target, the better it will be.

Make the target in an area where you want to play your next shot from. You should always know where you want to play the next shot from on the course. As you approach your ball think - Is there more trouble in front of the green or behind the green, for example? How's the ball lying? etc, etc. As you approach the ball, this is the time to take into account all of the "conscious" factors that will determine your next shot because once you have given them due consideration – you go into process mode* to execute the shot – and as you know – there is no room for mechanical thoughts when you are in process mode.

So course management intertwines with your Inner Golf Coach teachings. It is not a separate entity. Make it part of your game. I'm sure that you will find when you are in the Zone and playing well, your course management will be sport on as well.

Think your way to lower scores!

* Concepts explained in the Inner Golf Coach Audio Programme