

McCleery Golf Academy

The Effects of Hit and Rake

Balancing the Heart and Mind

Hit and Rake is a popular practice phenomena seen world over in the golf culture. It is the practice of readying a golf ball, hitting the ball and readying the next ball for a hit. This type of past time does little for the golfer in terms of useful motor skill development and typically leads a sense that ones game does not transfer well from the practice area to the golf course.

Hit and Rakers will typically hit two or more balls per minute giving little if any conscious thought to their processes and overall awarenesses. When a Hit and raker is asked to differentiate between one swing and the next, the responses are difficult and generally vague. When a recent hit and raker was asked what differences they were aware of between two swings, one of which produced a shot 40 yards off line to the left and the next 30 yards to the right, they at first guessed that the clubface might have been different at impact but admitted a complete lack of sense for any difference in what their hands were doing in the two motions.

Left to their own undirected ways where little understanding is in place, little if any progress takes place in time leading to despair frustration and hopelessness.

At it's roots Hit and Rake is really a lack of intelligence about how one acquires a motor skill. It is a misdirected focus in practice that leads to an imbalance of awareness in play. It is a failure to appreciate the whole process of hitting a golf shot replaced by an overly strong motivation to achieve an outcome.

Like wanting to get from the golf course to BC Place in morning rush hour, one simply should not ignore the traffic and decision making processes that will allow them to get safely and surely to their destination. It doesn't matter how badly one wants to get to their destination, it's a combination of the awarenesses and decisions one makes along the way that determines ones success.

What happens to the Hit and Raker in practice is often a false sense of learning and settling into an acceptable pattern of ball results, arrived at by exercise of only a small part of the system. If one plays with the much larger context coming into focus, one is then is ill prepared for the task, having not practiced and achieved success in the manner it is to be put to use. There is no opportunity for hit and rake on the golf course, only due care and attention to the situation at hand. The practice imbalance then leads to a certain unknowing and stress then manifests itself in the golfers action.

The resulting "poor on course results" are blamed on an inconsistent "swing" or a sudden loss of feel and inability to execute. No wonder so many golfers report to the lesson tee, begging for keys to consistency. So many practice this way.

If practice makes perfect, partial practice makes partial perfect and that just doesn't make any sense.

If you want more out of your game, commit yourself to achievement with a lesson and practice program tailored to your needs.

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