

the DIMPLED SPHERE

Lessons to Improve All Aspects of Your Game



FUNDAMENTALS • THE SHORT GAME • MAJOR FAULTS & CURES
PRODUCTIVE PRACTICE • THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT • COURSE MANAGEMENT
HOW LADIES CAN HIT FARTHER

STEVE KIRKPATRICK
PGA PROFESSIONAL

the
DIMPLED SPHERE
Lessons to Improve All Aspects of Your Game

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The reason I decided to write this book was because I was seeing very little improvement in the vast majority of players. Even with the advancement in golf equipment, video analysis, and instructional resources, the average handicap has not improved in the past twenty-five years. Amazing, isn't it?

I thought to myself, "What is the problem? With all the new high-tech equipment and instructional aids available, why are player's scores not improving?" Four responses immediately came to mind:

- **Clubs:** There is this misconception players have that equipment can correct a flawed swing. Regardless of how many times a player changes drivers or iron sets they won't transform a weak, high-cut shot to a solid, gentle draw. The only true club guarantee is that it will send the ball exactly where the player hits it.
- **Bad Practice Habits:** Most players think that hitting as many practice balls as possible when they practice is the way to improve their game. Hitting lots of golf balls incorrectly is only ingraining bad habits. Practice doesn't make perfect – perfect practice makes perfect.

- **Not Seeking Help:** Few people take instruction. People spend an amazing amount of money on new equipment, but very little money for professional instruction. This makes about as much sense as buying a piano so your child can learn to play and then not hiring a teacher.
- **Short Game Neglect:** Players don't practice the short game. Statistics show two-thirds of the total strokes in a round of golf take place inside 75 yards. However, visit a local range and see how many people are actually practicing chipping, pitching, putting, and sand play. The answer is one in fifteen or twenty. The rest are flailing away with their drivers and fairway woods.

I strongly believe the key to improving your game begins with correct fundamentals and understanding their influence on your swing. This might not be what you wanted to hear, or perhaps sounds too simple, but ask any top-notch teacher and they will testify to the importance of solid fundamentals. Regardless of what you've been told, it is an undisputed fact that the golf swing is based on the laws of physics. Developing correct fundamentals and a swing that adheres to these laws is what this book is based on.

Does this mean you will need a degree in quantum physics to benefit from this book? On the contrary, by using clear and concise terms, analogies as well as photographs, this book will simplify your learning process.

After reading this book you will:

- Have a much better understanding of the swing, and how it must adhere to the laws of ball flight.
- Learn the correct techniques used in the short game to improve your chipping, pitching, putting, and sand play.
- Know how to find a good instructor and how to benefit from your lessons.
- Improve your course management (the other 50 percent of the game), which leads to becoming a better competitive player and dealing with pressure.
- Develop a more effective practice regimen and schedule to

reach your goals more quickly.

- Have learned the right equipment for your size and swing.
- Understand the cause of major faults (such as slicing and topping) and how to correct them. (The answers might surprise you.)
- Know how to use practice drills to speed your learning.
- Learn why commonly heard advice is actually bad advice.
- Develop a sound plan for long term improvement.

This book is based on the knowledge and experience I have learned through 20 years of working with students. I have spent hundreds of hours studying and researching the golf swing and discussing ideas with some of the world's best teachers. I am thankful to them for sharing their knowledge and expertise with me. It has enabled me to become a better teacher.

My desire is that by reading this book and using the recommended practice regiment, you will improve as a player and gain more enjoyment from the game.

STEVE KIRKPATRICK
PGA Professional



The word "golf" comes from the German word Kolbe, which means club. The general consensus is the Scots were the first to play golf as it is today. The first recorded reference to golf was in 1457, from the Scottish Parliament.



CHAPTER 7

FINDING AN INSTRUCTOR

It is a fact that in any profession some individuals are better trained, more knowledgeable, and more experienced than others. There are also those who are more passionate about their work, have the desire to continue learning, and to be the best at what they do. Finding an instructor with these traits should be your goal.

I recommend that if you are serious about improving your game that you first consider a PGA or LPGA Teaching Professional. In my opinion, PGA Professionals are the best trained and most qualified instructors. After earning their PGA membership, these professionals must satisfy continuing education requirements throughout their career. This gives PGA members the opportunity to learn from the world's best instructors to improve their teaching skills. For members desiring more study, the PGA offers a Specialty Certification Program distinguishing these members' additional training.

I believe there are certain characteristics that all good teachers share:

1. They emphasize the importance of correct fundamentals.
2. They realize over-teaching is a disservice to their students.
3. They are experts in all areas of the game including full swing, short game, course management, and club fitting.
4. They have the ability to communicate with a student in simple terms.
5. They use a variety of tools such as training aids, video analysis and swing drills.
6. They are patient and truly enjoy working with people.

There are a number of ways to find a qualified instructor in your area. Usually the best teachers do not advertise. They don't have to because most of their referrals are through word of mouth from satisfied students who tell others of their positive experience. Generally, by talking to as many people as possible about instructors – fellow players and friends, staff members at the golf course or practice range – one name will be repeated more than others. That is the person to seek for your instructor.

You can also inquire about courses offered by your community college or adult education program. Instructors for these classes usually have a good reputation and are well qualified. Additionally, you can contact the PGA (561) 624-8400 or www.PGA.com or the LPGA (386) 274-6200 or www.LPGA.com to locate PGA instructors in your area.

I believe having a good relationship with your instructor is very important. Like all people, different instructors have different personalities, demeanors and teaching styles. Because of this, I would suggest signing up for a two or three lesson package rather than an eight or ten lesson package. The reason is you may not click with that particular instructor. Your personalities may be too far apart, or you don't like his or her teaching style. Commit to two or three lessons, and if things go well continue with further lessons. If not, then you're not financially committed, and you can search for another instructor.

The USGA uses a robot for testing golf clubs and balls that is called "Iron Byron." This is because it was modeled after the swing of professional golfer Byron Nelson.



**Want to hit
the ball longer?**

**Want to improve
your total game and
get more enjoyment
from playing golf?**

**Let PGA Professional
Steve Kirkpatrick's methods and
training bring you success!**

Steve has taught thousands, from beginners to top ranked amateurs. With Steve's 20 years experience of teaching, **the DIMPLED SPHERE** will take you through the complicated golf swing with simple and effective steps to *finally* better golf.

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