

The Glorious Game Of Golf

by Gina lafrate

This is dedicated mainly to the new players, who have decided to take up and adventure in this game.

Congratulations! You have made a good choice.

My first advice to any one, with the intention of taking up this game is; to enroll in a golf lesson program or to take some private lessons with golf pro. The place to start is calling one of the golf courses, or where ever they offer classes in golf recreation, in your local area. A lesson with a Golf professional will give you the basic fundamentals to performing a golf swing. The rest is practice, and you need to apply what you have learned.

Remind yourself it is only a game. Regardless of the results of the game, the rewards of participating in it are immeasurable.

Place yourself on the golf course; you are on the first tee.

Stop for a minute, and take inventory, look around you. Here you are in golf attire, assuming its warm and pleasant out-door. You are either alone or have chosen to play with a friend or a foursome. Your clubs are beside you. The extension of the course is lush green and inviting right in front of you. Or if you really want to start on the right track, like most good players. It is a good habit to get into, before the game, to direct yourself, with your clubs and a bucket of balls to the driving ranch.

Here prepare yourself for the game.

Start your drill. This practice is very beneficial:

A-physically,

B-psychologically,

The requirements are:

c- grip, The foundation of the swing

d- aim, perfect shots aimed wrong look like bad ones

e- set up, proper posture will help generate power

f- balance, will allow control

g- clubface, needs to be square to your target or the ball will curve

h- confidence, knowing you can do it helps perform quality shots

After a short practice you are ready to move on to your game.

Relax and enjoy and engage. Know that you have prepared properly and have fun. You are on the first tee, the fairway extended and leading you on to the course. Or the possibility of some water body in front of you. You are surrounded by nature. You drive your ball from the fairway, to the green. What a great accomplishment. Now you are on the dance floor with your ball. A total different approach is needed here. This is the most important part to become a good golfer. Putting requires you to read the green, study it, figure out the angle, position, the slope, will you be putting down or up. The green itself? Is it slow for the ball to roll, is it fast? You need to recognize the condition. Your putter position, it needs to be held in a pendulum motion, gentle, the stroke should initiate from your shoulders movement only, execute with precision. One put is great to complete your hole, two is acceptable.

Three puts disappointing, four or five is not acceptable, but happens to all of us.

The very fortunate zero putt, is a jolt of joy. I have witnessed a few, including the occasional one happened to me. Very rewarding and will hook to the game for life.

The more you focus your attention on your action, the better the results.

Remember not to be hard on yourself. Golf is one of the most difficult games out there and you need to realize it's just a game. Try to play relaxed, you are here for fun. You like to see fairway drive long and straight, good chipping and putting, will result in good score. Yes this is what all of us care about is the low score. It is our ego that we need to feed. Forget about the score, take this game for whatever beneficial rewards offers to you, eventually the score will come.

I must warn you that one day; you might have the ability to perform like a pro. You will feel so good about yourself and the game .But the chances are; be willing to accept a total failure the next time you might be playing. "This is golf!!"

When you perform well, you cannot wait to go back and play, because you think you have conquered it, and you feel exuberant, about it. Than you play badly, you are also eager to get back on the course, because you want to prove yourself that you can do it.

Golf can be frustrating if you play badly, and you take it to heart. From my experience it is wise to take it in good stride.

A recollection as a beginner of golf lessons; I like to share this with you. One of my golf pros John Piccolo, who is a very gentle and patient teacher said to me " To achieve a good drive, once you bring back

your club , your arm reaches your chin , it is time to bring your club back and follow trough.”

I am so thankful to him for that little maneuver. When I am playing and I remember to send that message to the brain it works all the time, of course combined with my positioning and the rest of the requirements for a perfect shot.

I was foolish enough to believe back in my days that this game could be conquered in no time. How foolish of me! Little did I know!

Time passed, the frustration was accumulating. The more frustrated I got the more frustrated I became, all for this game of golf.

I joined the nine whole leagues at St. Catharines Golf and country Club.

I persisted to play with the league weekly. It never occurred to me, that I must have been a burden for my fellow foursome, since I was a beginner.

Nine holes were more than enough for me. My husband again kept insisting that a golfer is not a golfer unless you play eighteen holes. Whenever we played together this was expected of me.

I wanted to feel that I could play this game complete, half game was not acceptable.

My next step, when the spring season rolled around I proceeded to join the eighteen holes league. This presented more challenge; I needed to play good now for my sake, and for the respect of my foursome. These girls were more serious about the game. Of course they needed to be, this was the weekly league.

You had to abide by the rules seriously. “Good “I thought, this will really motivate me and turn me into a good golfer”.

Besides I liked to follow rules to perfect the game. Whenever I had the chance, I would take myself to the driving range. There for hours, I would practice, and practice, mainly the long drives, finally I was having some pleasure in observing the distance of the travel of my ball. The chipping was important, if the chipping was good, the putting would fallow.

Most of us are neglecting to practice the chipping and putting. We all seem to concentrate more on the drive, fairway shots, again is the show. The saying goes, drive for show and putt for dough. The short game is so important, it makes up 65% of your shots.

I remember one morning in particular, I was playing very bad, with my eighteen whole companions. We had completed the first nine holes, ready to go on the tenth hole for the next nine. I turned to my partners and said “I have had enough of this game for today, I am going home”. They must have been dismayed. But I left, went home, childishly, got myself under the covers and wept my frustration out all for

a bad golf game. In looking back I think, “How foolish of me”.

I must also warn you that this game can be addictive. Before you know it you will find yourself either on the golf course playing a game, or on the driving range practicing. I CAN HONESTLY say; not a bad place to find yourself. This practice not only is good for the game, the brain, the waist line, the fresh air for your lungs. You have all to gain and it is for you! And you only.

This is what I was doing every time I had a chance; the driving range became, my place , where I would escape. It got to be a joke, if any one looked for me, I could be found at the driving range or on the course. I found It to be a great therapy. Many times I thought; “This golf, has become so pleasurable, why I looked at it as an imposition upon me by my husband!”

The appreciation of this game will materialize itself only after the inventory of its benefits start to take place.

Many times regardless of where I find myself in any part of the world, alone or in company, I am so grateful to know this game, thanks to my husband. In company or by oneself you can have the pleasure to explore the beautiful courses. You meet wonderful people and indulge in the beauty of nature. .

This takes me to when I was given an assignment, in one of my writing courses. Entitled “A special place.”

This is what I wrote.

It is seven o'clock in the morning; I make my way and descend into the sloped valley of the driving range, at the golf course. I take my clubs, a bucket of balls and proceed. Than I stop for a minute, I notice the place is all set up and the spots are all empty. “Good!” I said to myself, “I can pick the best spot, and no one can see my bad shots.” Besides, this tranquility, is all for me to enjoy. I take a good look around and all I see is nature at its best. The air feels warm, and the peacefulness is soothing my soul.

As I start to position myself, and just about ready to address my first ball, two birds, fly right by me, at ground level, chirping and singing at each other. They land very close to me. So here I am: instead of continuing with my practice of golf I stop to sit on the bench and I am totally immersed in admiring the two lovely birds. One was orange and black, and had some streaks of white feathers, the other had two tons of blue and black feathers, and they seemed to be in harmony with one another.

“Yes this place is lovely” I said to myself. “The surrounding is breathtaking. What a great place to meditate. Why not!” I thought, “And who is going to stop me!” I closed my eyes, and tuned into my senses. There connected to my hearing, the rippling noise of water running seemed close by. I opened my eyes

and followed the sound. Very close to the right of me, there it was a little running creek covered by shrubberies, and wild flowers cascading gently on a bed of white river stones. "How beautiful!" I say, talking to myself, and what a way to start my day with all this heavenly scenery to enjoy. After replenishing my being, I walked back to my post, and started my golf drill very energized. Ready to take on a game of golf. "YOU bet", mentally and physically, the requirements have been fulfilled.

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