

# The evolution of the golf swing *Part 2*

*For our second instalment of the evolution of the golf swing, we are going to look at weight transference, and how concepts have changed over the years*

*looking* at golf swings is like looking at architecture, fashion or even cars. We can usually tell straight away what time period it comes from.

In the past, most players used to attempt to get as much weight as possible behind the ball before they made contact with it (see *Picture 1, of Tommy Armour*). The idea is that by starting with most of your weight behind the ball, a lot of power is generated as the weight is transferred forwards after the club impacts with the ball. Intuitively, this concept makes sense to most people, and you will see many amateurs today using a similar action in the belief that by doing so they are generating extra power.

However, golf seems to be the only sport where players follow this belief. When you think about tennis, you don't see Andre Agassi moving all his weight back to hit a forehand down the line. He leans into the ball when he hits it, rather than rocking from back to front.

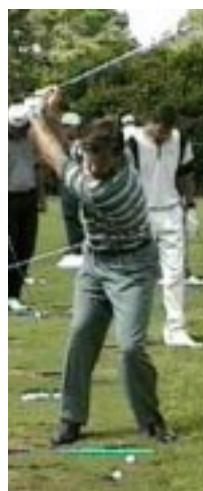


In *tae kwan do*, the fighters demonstrate minimal weight shift when they deliver a forward punch – they keep their weight tending forward the whole time, rather than leaning back before attacking their opponent. Competitors know intuitively, without being told, that transference of weight at impact tends to dissipate power, rather than create it.

Perhaps part of the reason players view golf differently to other sports is because, in golf, we have all the time in the world to hit the ball. We feel that by transferring our weight back, ready to let go with all our power forwards through impact, we are like coiled springs unleashing large amounts of energy as we follow through. In fact, this feeling is nothing but an illusion, and all of that extra weight transference is actually depleting our power, not enhancing it.

Most modern day players are aware of this, as can be seen in the actions of Nick Faldo, Steve Elkington, and Stuart Appleby, who all keep their weight more forward and stable throughout their swings (see *Pictures 2, 3 & 4*).

And for every rule, there is always an exception. Take a look at the photograph of Ben Hogan (*Picture 5*), one of the greatest players ever. He was a player who bucked the trends, and displayed an



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5

action that was well ahead of his time in terms of technique. If we didn't know better, we would assume from his action alone that he is actually a player of the modern era, rather than one of the greats of the past.