

Problem Swings

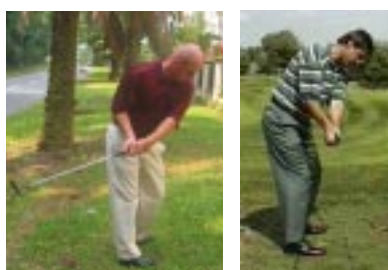
Over the next couple of months, we'll be taking a look at a couple of common swing types often seen used by amateur golfer

the first swing type I'd like to examine is often described as *Casters*, or *Over The Toppers*. These are the two most common words used to describe this type of swing, but I'm sure you've heard more colourful terms used. People with this type of swing will often complain of an incurable slice, of hitting the ground before hitting the ball, or of having to exert a lot of effort to achieve minimal power.

I believe that a lot of the time the problem stems from the player's misconceptions of what has to happen. These misconceptions are often picked up through reading magazines and watching videos, or even through receiving erroneous tips from playing partners. There is so much information out there that I'm sure we've all had the odd look at, myself included, and it can become difficult to filter the good from the bad.

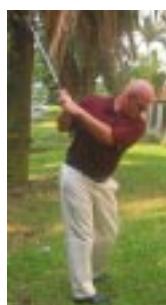
The problem usually starts on the backswing, with players trying to keep their left arm straight. This is fine as long as the arm is hanging straight, but not when it is locked on like a pit bull to a burglar's leg. Also, players are often trying to shift their weight back, and are trying to turn too much. Now don't get me wrong, we do need some weight shift and turn, but players often tend to overdo it.

Looking at the pictures, we can see what I am talking about. **Picture 1** shows what a Caster looks like at the commencement of his backswing, while **Picture 2** shows Nick Faldo at the same



Picture 1

Picture 2



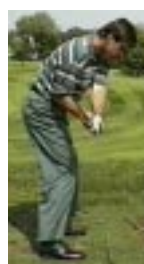
Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6

position. Note how the Caster already has the club too far behind his body, while Faldo's club is still in front of him. Also, the Caster's legs and shoulders have turned considerably more than Faldo's at this early stage of the swing.

Now in **Picture 3** we can see how the Caster's arms have gone up, and at this stage the club is quite flat compared to Faldo's in **Picture 4**. Note how Faldo's club is more over his right shoulder and the club has worked up more vertically.

In **Picture 5**, the Caster's club has released early and is coming down on quite a steep path. This is a classic slicer move that results in the loss of power and, of course, our friend, the slice. **Picture 6** shows Faldo's club coming from a totally different direction and with more lag, which means that there is power to burn.

In **Picture 7**, which shows the Caster's position through impact, we can see how the body has straightened to allow the club to hit the ball. This is purely due to the direction of the arms, which in turn is caused by the previous



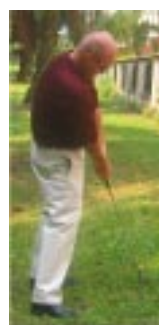
Tee-time with Josh

Joshua Willard

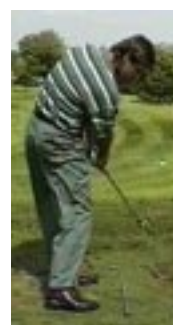
sequence of events. **Picture 8** shows how Faldo has stayed over the ball which means his body and arms don't need to compensate by slowing down to hit the ball, so he can generate more club head speed, which in turn means more power.

Finally, in **Picture 9** we see the Caster's club coming out of his rib cage: this again is because of the previous direction of the arms. Compare this to **Picture 10**, where Faldo's arms have come around, the club has exited through the left shoulder, and is headed into a balanced finish.

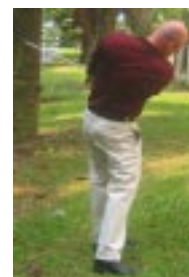
Putting all this together, it is clear that a lot of the problem is created right at the start of the backswing, with the Caster trying to keep his left arm locked straight, shift his weight back and turn his body. The problems then compound from here on in, as the damage has already been done early in the backswing, and the direction of the arms is dictated by previous movements. Also, the Caster usually is trying to do too much, exaggerating the various movements within the swing in the mistaken belief that this will generate more power, when in fact what is really happening is that he is not only losing power but ball control as well.



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9



Picture 10