

Problem swings – “Across-the-Liners”

Our problem swing this month is generally referred to as Across-the-Liners, and is most often seen with better golfers, from low handicappers to professionals

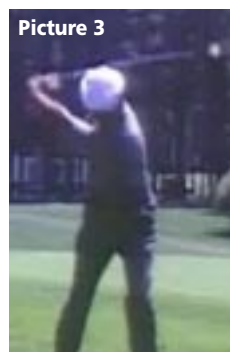
with this type of swing there is some loss of power, although not to the extent of the other problem swings we have examined; the bigger problem is that the player will tend to find it difficult to control the direction of the ball, spraying it both to the left and to the right.

This type of swing is caused by players who are simply trying to do too much. In order to create power, it is necessary to have some shoulder rotation and to shift your weight behind the ball, but Across-the-Liners tend to exaggerate these movements. This leads to the club going “Across the Line”: it will now point to the right of the target (**Picture 1**). It is more difficult to control the direction of the ball, because the body needs to work a lot harder to get the club back on line so that it is square at impact.

A secondary problem is that there is now no resistance in the body, which means that there is nothing to hit against on the way down, and leads to a reduction in power. Think of a karate expert chopping wood: he doesn’t exagger-

ate his movements, rather, he contains them so that his power is not diminished. In this case, less is more.

Ben Hogan and Davis Love III are two high profile players who have worked to overcome this problem. **Picture 2** of Ben Hogan, taken in the 1940’s, shows how his shoulders are over turned and his weight has shifted a long way back. (I call this move catch a cab, because he has moved so far off the ball that he has to catch a cab back to the ball to hit it.)



Picture 4 is of Davis Love III, taken in 1997. You can see how the club is well across the line (compare the club direction with the direction of Love’s feet). In **Picture 5**, taken at the 2002 Ryder Cup, you can see that his swing is a lot shorter and is now in line with his feet.

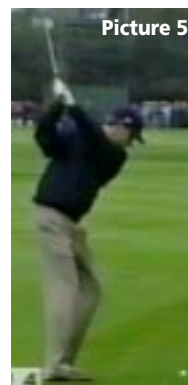
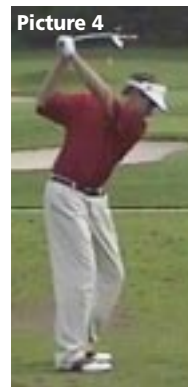
Tee-time with Josh

Joshua Willard



The Fix

To fix the problem, the player needs to restrict the body, with some resistance, so that their movements aren’t so exaggerated. This will both stop the Across-the-Line look at the top of the swing and create more power. It will initially feel weak, as though you are not wound up enough. You may also feel as though you are over the ball on the backswing (*see Hogan in Picture 3*), but in reality you are still behind it – it just takes some getting used to.



Drills

Here is a simple drill to get your body going in the right direction:

Take your set up, look at the target and swing back (**Picture 6**). You will feel a little restricted with your back swing and your arms won’t be able to go back as far. You will also feel a lot more tension in your body, which in turn will stop the club crossing the line. This will feel weak at first, but don’t be deceived. Remember, as I said before, less is more.



Picture 6