



# THE THONG ADJUSTER



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## The Putter speaks

A word from the editor

Well, here it is, gang, the fall and winter season for the Iron Thong Golf Gang. Temperatures are beginning to go down a little, some precipitation may drop on our noggins now and then, and generally it's one of the best times in the year to play GOLF!

During the fall and winter season, we typically take a trip to some of the "outer" courses -- Devine, Castroville, Floresville, Comfort and sometimes even all the way out to Bastrop. But we'll make a stop at our home course, the Golf Course of Texas, as well -- and plenty of local courses.

Some reminders: dues for the second half of the year are due now. It's only \$20 and that's cheap, especially considering what you get for your money. Paying your dues is the first step to make you eligible to play in our next Iron Thong Golf Tournament, which will be sometime in March 2008. Get your money in to Mike Linares, our Treasurer, or any other officer of the club.

Also, we haven't had any inputs for bios from anyone in a while. Take a look at the Bios section of our webpage and send me your information -- and have some fun with it! You'll not only get your ugly mug (I mean, pretty face) on the webpage, you'll also find yourself honored in the Thong Adjuster. Hurry up and grab your 15 minutes of fame! Send your bio information to me at [stevevanwert@hughes.net](mailto:stevevanwert@hughes.net).

Lastly, our group continues to grow. Our newest member is Willie Mojica. Welcome, Mo, to the Iron Thong





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## Hit straighter with an oval ball?

Are you one of the majority that can't control that little round thing and never know where it will end up? Then you're the kind of person New Zealand inventor Burton Silver has designed an oval golf ball for. Silver claims he has spent 12 years developing the concept of his rugby football-shaped golf ball and it is no spoof.

In a new book called "New Zealand GolfCross" Silver argues that the flight path of his oval ball is more predictable than that of traditional round ball.

"Central to the game of GolfCross is the oval golf ball which, due to its two axis of spin, is more aerodynamically stable than the round ball," according to his Web site .

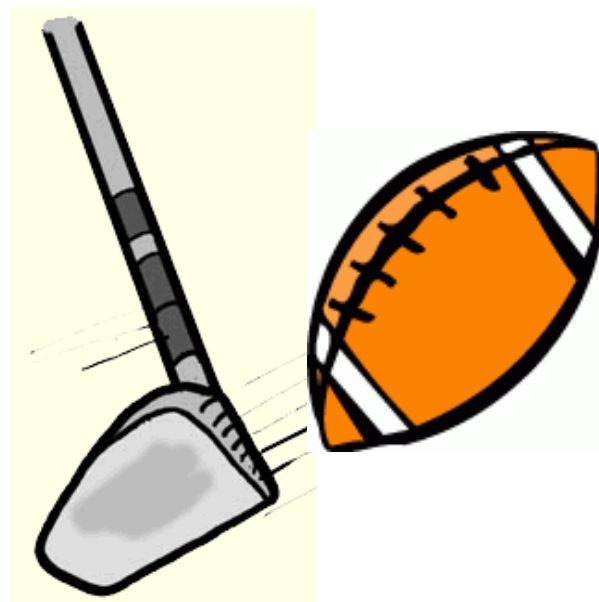
"It's impossible to slice or hook which is a huge advantage."

This could come as exciting news to many frustrated golfers and one that could save a lot of money in lost balls!

However, Silver doesn't stop there in his attempt to revolutionise the ancient game of golf. If his ideas take hold he will have players teeing off using a "tee cup" and aiming at large netted goals rather than greens with a hole, reflecting the unpredictable roll of an oval ball. It becomes slightly harder to take Silver seriously when you look at his previous work. These include producing the best selling book "Why Cats Paint" in 1994 in which he purported to reveal the artistic side of felines.

In 1999 he sought to pre-empt the Sydney Olympics (news - web sites) with his "Fringe Games" that were to feature events such as lateral running and the assisted high jump.

Another Silver endeavour was a 1990 book called Kokigami, in which he illustrated what he said was an ancient erotic paper folding art for the penis, which he described as "the intimate art of the little paper costume."





## Rules Quiz

1. Information on matters such as the location of the hole on the putting green during play is not advice.

True or False

2. Hazards on the course include both bunkers and water hazards.

True or False

3. Damage to a club which occurred prior to a round may be repaired during the round, provided the playing characteristics are not changed and play is not unduly delayed.

True or False

4. A ball is out of bounds when all of it lies out of bounds.

True or False

5. A practice swing is not a practice stroke and may be taken at any place, provided the player does not otherwise breach the Rules.

True or False

6. A player's ball comes to rest inside a paper cup on the putting green. Then, the wind moves the paper cup with the ball inside to a new position. What is the ruling?

a. He must play the ball from its new position since wind is not an outside agency.

b. He must replace the ball and cup to where they lay prior to the wind blowing them.

c. He must lift the ball and place it as near as possible to the spot directly under the place where the ball lay inside the cup prior to the wind blowing it.

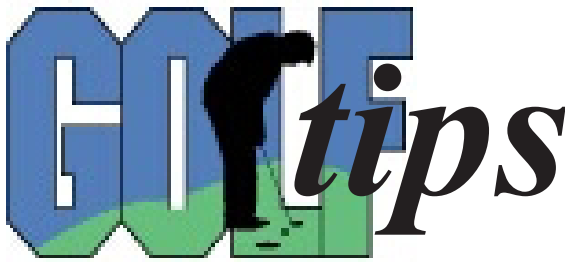
7. In stroke play, a player's ball lies on a putting green. As he approaches the ball, the wind blows it into a nearby bunker. He replaces the ball on the putting green, holes out and tees off on the next hole. What is the ruling?

a. There is no penalty.

b. There is a two stroke penalty.

c. He is disqualified.

Answers: 1-True, 2-True, 3-True, 4-True, 5-True, 6-c, 7-c



# Learn the 6-8-10 method to chip better

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From Mel Sole, Ritson-Sole Golf School

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The golden rule in chipping is: Fly the ball as little as possible and roll the ball as much as possible.

With that in mind, it is important to understand the air-time/ground-time ratios of shots hit with different clubs. The selection of the correct club is vital. You can chip with anything from a 3-iron to a sand wedge depending on the situation, but you must know the following formulas to decide which club is required.

When you chip with a 10-iron (the pitching wedge), the ball will fly half the distance to the hole and roll half the distance. When you chip with an 8-iron the ball will fly 1/3 of the distance and roll 2/3. When you chip with a 6-iron the ball will fly 1/4 of the distance and roll 3/4.

These formulas are based on a normal paced, level green (a situation we don't often find on the course), so if you are going uphill you would need to go up one club, and downhill requires going down one club.

If the green is fast you again will need to go down one club and if the green is slow you will go up one club. I know this may sound confusing at first, but once you understand the basic formula, it really is just common sense.

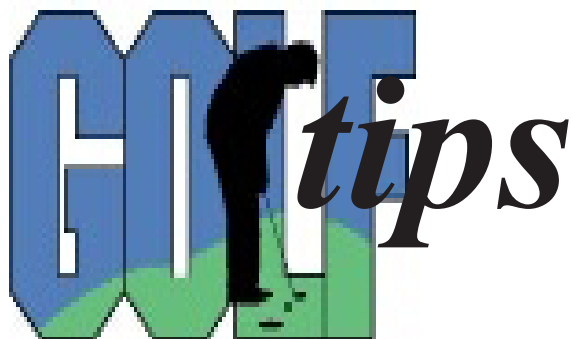
Always try to land the ball about 3 feet onto the putting surface and let the ball roll the rest of the way.

## **Keep a solid left wrist**

The most important aspect of chipping (besides choosing the right club) is to make sure that the left wrist (right wrist for left-handers) does not break down during the chipping motion. The moment the wrist breaks down two things happen:

1. The loft on the club changes, therefore changing the trajectory that in turn affects the roll of the ball. Inconsistent distances will result.
2. The arm breaks down as well, causing bladed shots that go screaming across the green.

To ensure that neither of these things happen, work on keeping your arm straight and your wrist firm during the shot. If you find this difficult to achieve in practice try this: Take a thick rubber band and place it around your wrist. Slide the butt end of the club under the elastic band, keeping the butt end of the club close to the wrist.



## Remember 6-8-10 when you chip

Continued from page 4

This will give you the correct feel when chipping the ball.

If you wish to lower your handicap, miss a few sessions on the driving range, and head for the chipping green instead. You'll love the results to your game - and your opponents won't!



### Taking your address

*At the address position the weight is on the front foot, with the ball position in the middle of the feet. The hands are then slightly ahead of the ball.*



### Strike the ball

*Make sure that the left wrist (right wrist for left-handers) does not break down during the chipping motion.*

***A Luke Samuel Goodyear Mystery by Steve VanWert*****MURDER ON THE 13TH GREEN****Chapter 16 -- The love match**

Friday evening, the night before the big match, found Luke hoping to retire early and get some badly-needed sleep. At eight o'clock, though, he was still at Griffon Lakes, supping with the Irregulars, basking in their confidence and good cheer.

He only wished he shared their enthusiasm.

As Luke was getting up from the table, Ellen rose, too. "Are we leaving now, honey?"

Luke looked at her and smiled. "I am," he replied.

"Not alone," she answered, carefully laying her folded napkin on the table. "Tonight, we leave together, just like old married folks."

The Irregulars chuckled between themselves, as Ellen used that forbidden word. She put her arm in Luke's and turned him toward the door. He didn't resist very strongly.

"All right," Luke said, kinda under his breath, "but I need to go to sleep tonight, understand? No hanky. No panky. And no poetry."

"No poetry?"

"Not a Machiavellian meter."

"Bye boys," she said to the table, "I'll take good care of the new club champ."

"Sssh, every time someone says that I end up buying a round."

They left arm in arm, but in different cars. And that ain't easy.

A half-hour later they plunked down on Luke's once-over-stuffed couch. Luke reached for the TV remote. Ellen grabbed his hand before it got to the black rectangle.

"No, no TV," she murmured, cuddling closer, "let's just talk."

"But there's a golf tournament on," Luke

protested.

"No," she replied, petulantly.

Luke raised an eyebrow slightly. "Game-of-the-Week?"

She shook her head.

"Pro bowling?"

She frowned.

"The American Gladiators are on cable."

She reached out her hand as if to caress, or slug him, but at the last second, grabbed the remote and heaved it across the room.

"Absolutely not," she said.

Luke watched it sail over the sawed-off golf bag he used for a wastebasket and thump onto a pile of old Golf Digests. At least he knew where he could find it day-after-tomorrow. If there was a day-after-tomorrow.

Ellen looked up at Luke with love in her eyes, mixed with concern.

"Are you going to be all right tomorrow?"

"Sure," Luke said nonchalantly, as if he believed it. "No problem. We've got a plan."

"Who? You and the Irregulars? The same bozos who couldn't follow the plans to hook the VCR up to the VIP Lounge TV?"

"Where'd you hear about that?"

"It's legendary."

"Well, we got help from Jack McGarvey. And besides, the directions were written in French."

Ellen leaned over and kissed the tip of Luke's nose. "Ooh, I love French." She kissed his nose again. "They were probably in English on the other side, silly."

"Well, we figured that out. After a while."

"After a case of beer?"

Luke knew Ellen was kidding, just trying to

keep things light so he wouldn't worry too much about the match, but his nerves were vibrating kinda close to the surface. So, rather than say something stupid, he got up and started pacing.

Ellen watched in silence as Luke stopped to gaze out the dining room window. She watched as he walked to the corner of the living room, leaned over, picked up the remote and tossed it on the never-over-stuffed chair.

She stood up, reached over and turned off the golf-ball-shaped table lamp by the sofa. The only light in the room came from the streetlight outside. And the fixture in the hall leading to the bedroom.

She crossed over to Luke and stopped just an arm's length away. Slowly, she unbuttoned her cotton blouse. She wasn't wearing a bra. She put her hands on Luke's chest.

"You'll catch your death of cold dressed like that," Luke said, picking up her hands in his and kissing the back of each one, right then left, then the right one again.

A shiver passed through her, just enough to make her nipples stand out, but Luke don't think it was a cold shiver.

"No hanky?" she asked, removing her hands carefully from Luke's and pulling each snap on his shirt, starting at the bottom.

"Ah-h-h, no hanky."

"No panky?" she asked, taking a lapel in each hand and sliding Luke's shirt over his shoulders.

"Ah-h-h, no, no panky, neither."

"No poetry?" she asked, leaning over and lightly kissing Luke's nipples, every bit as erect as hers.

"No-no, uh, poetry, either. Absolutely no poetry."

She clicked her tongue. "My, my ... you'll catch your death of cold dressed like that."

Luke leaned over as she tilted her head back slightly, letting him kiss her, softly. Her

arms crept around Luke's neck. Her half-naked body rubbed against his as they momentarily forgot that all mammals have to breathe.

Their lips parted, just enough for Luke to say, "No poetry. But maybe some hanky."

She kissed him again.

"Definitely some panky."

Her laugh was deep in her throat, bubbling like an alto serenade.

"Say, Ellen, do you mind if I ask you an important question?"

"Anything."

"This is important."

"Ask away."

"Do you know the difference between an over-lapping and an inter-locking grip?"

Ellen smiled. "The over-lapping is a Varden, silly. My major was Sports Management."

Luke picked her up and carried her down the hall to the master bedroom.

Making love to Ellen Chamberlain, Luke found, was as different from having sex with Cassy Cassenberg as, well, an ocean cruise is from a roller-coaster ride. The coaster is exhilarating, but you end up more scared than satisfied. With Ellen, the ride was long and slow and smooth, like gentle waves hitting the Love Boat, rocking him, soothing him, enveloping him in layers of warm bliss.

Luke could hear her whimper, and gurgle, and moan. He could feel her body heat rise as surely as old Phil, as they rolled on through the evening, sharing their souls and their bodies, uniting as only two people in love can really meld into one.

It was magic. It was electric. It was love. And it was even a little bit of desperation, as they both hoped their first time wouldn't be their last time.

When they were through, Luke wiped the sweat from the corner of his right eye as Ellen lay on his chest, her chestnut hair sticking to his shoulder, his arm, his pillow. Luke tried to

listen to his breathing becoming shallower, but the only sound he heard was Ellen's. She was sobbing.

"Hey, hey," Luke said, smoothing the damp strands of auburn hair. "I'll be all right. I promise."

"I have a confession to make," she said, her lips brushing his neck as she spoke.

"Don't tell me," Luke said, making his usual lame attempt at levity. "You're the murderess. You killed Bruce when you found out we were gay lovers."

She hit Luke with her fist, right in the middle of his chest.

"You fool," she replied, "can't you take anything seriously?"

Luke grabbed her little fist in his right hand. "I'm sorry, bad joke. What's your confession?"

"I love you so much, Luke Samuel Goodyear. I can't imagine living without you."

"I'll be all right!"

"Listen to me, stupido. I love you so much, I've done a foolish thing, maybe."

"What?"

"I stopped taking my pill."

"Why?"

"Just in case I lose you tomorrow, I wanted a chance to keep a part of you with me forever."

"Damn," Luke said, "you can have any part of me you want. I signed a donor card."

She tried to hit him again, but he was still holding her hand. Her other was pinned under her fantastic body.

"Oh, I hate you sometimes," she pouted.

Luke let go of her hand and picked a stray hair from her cheek and deposited it gently on her mane.

Luke looked long and hard into her green eyes, and made a decision. "I have a confession to make, too."

"What?"

"Well, when I was rousting the Cassenberg mansion, I kinda got roused myself, sorta. By

Cassy. We kind of did it, you know what I mean?"

"It?"

"You know, the belly bump. Sorta like what you and I just did, only with a world less meaning."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"It's just that I think you should know. After all, it was after we started dating, and I don't want you to find out later, and I'm sorry, you know, that it happened, and it won't happen again ..."

Ellen smiled, thinking back to her audience with Cassy at Conandria. "I know it won't," she said. "I've got the poetry book."

It was Luke's turn to smile. This girl was really something. "Well, if there's a chance we might be bringing another Goodyear into this world, we probably ought to get married, don't you think?"

She began sobbing again. "When?"

"Whenever you want."

"Tonight."

Luke smiled. "There is such a thing as a license, and blood tests, and stuff like that, you know."

"Mrs. Luke Samuel Goodyear," she said. "Ellen Chamberlain Goodyear. Mrs. Ellen C. Goodyear. Mrs."

"Go to sleep, my Irish rose. We'll make plans after the match."

She faded off after a minute or so, still murmuring "Mrs. Luke, Mrs. Ellen, Mrs. Goodyear."

Luke faded off, too, wondering why love and tomorrow's match had to happen so close together.

Next month, Chapter 17 - The final match.

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# Great **odd** moments in golf

## **Opps!**

In the 1932 Walker Cup, Leonard Crawley hit a wayward shot into the 18th green that resulted in hitting the actual Walker Cup trophy, putting a dent into it.

## **Big hitter**

In the 1992 Texas Open, at San Antonio's Oak Hills C.C., journeyman pro Carl Hooper ripped a drive that wound up hitting a cart path and continuing on for 787 yards. After returning to the fairway by hitting a 4 iron and then an 8 iron, Cooper took a double bogey 6, and missed the cut.

## **Slow down boys!**

Mark Calcavecchia and John Daly were both fined by the US Tour for playing too quickly. They completed the final round in the Tournament Players' Championship in 2 hours and 3 minutes. Daly fired an 80 and Calcavecchia an 81.

## **Only 1 hole in 1!**

Legendary professional Harry Vardon, the greatest Open Champion of all-time, had only one hole-in-one during his long career.

## **Expensive lake balls!**

Scotland's Raymond Russell had high hopes of a top-10 position going into the last round of the 2001 Compass English Open at the Marriott Forest of Arden course. However, these hopes were ruined at the 17th green when he threw his ball to the caddy for cleaning. The caddy took his eye off the ball, missed it and watched in horror as it rolled into the lake. Unfortunately it couldn't be found in the murky depths, the result was a two-stroke penalty!

## **Watson did what?**

The sets of clubs with which Tom Watson won the 1975 Open Championship, 1977 USPGA Championship, and 1977 Open Championship were later deemed not to conform to R&A and USGA rules and regulations. Fortunately, for Watson, no disciplinary action was taken

## **Unusual tactics**

Standing on the final tee in a professional event, legendary Canadian ball-striker Moe Norman was informed by his caddy that all he needed to do to break the course record was to hit a driver, a 9 iron and take two putts. After informing his caddy of his intended tactics, he proceeded to hit a 9 iron off the tee, a driver off the fairway to the green, and took two putts to successfully break the course record.

## **Consistent play**

In the final round of the 1987 Open Championship at Muirfield, Nick Faldo took a par on every hole to take the title.

## **How many?**

The biggest number ever posted in a professional event is a staggering 23 by Tommy Armour in the 1927 Shawnee Open.

# We all know one ... or two

## Beware the sandbagger!

### What is the origin of the term “Sandbagger”?

A sandbagger is a nasty species of golf vermin who lies about his true playing abilities - making himself seem worse than he is -- in order to gain advantage in tournaments or bets.



We all know what a sand bag is, but how did bags of sand enter the golf lexicon?

First, the word doesn't derive from the type of sand bags we're all familiar with. It's not the defensive sand bags - those used for flood control, lining foxholes, and so on - but the offensive sand bags that give us the word "sandbagger."

Gangs and street toughs of the 19th century used sand bags as a weapon of choice. Take a sock or small bag, fill it with sand, wrap it tightly, and wail away on someone (well, don't actually wail away on someone, but imagine that you are) and you'll see how effective a weapon a small sand bag can be.

Gang members used such weapons to intimidate their foes or average citizens. To threaten and bully the populace.

This definition of sandbagger - a person who uses a sand bag as a weapon - can still be found in many dictionaries; it's the first definition for the word in most older dictionaries.

But the word didn't go directly from its gangland origins into golf; there was an intermediary step in its adoption by the sports world, and golf, to mean someone who misrepresents his ability to gain an advantage.

According to the website [Word-Detective.com](http://Word-Detective.com), that intermediary step was poker.

Say you're in a poker match and you're dealt a fantastic hand. If you place a huge bet right off the bat, you might scare most of your poker mates into folding. Instead, you might choose to bet small amounts, hoping to keep your opponents in the match, increasing the pot, up until the moment you show your cards.

As [Word-Detective.com](http://Word-Detective.com) puts it, the poker meaning "... described a player who held off raising the stakes in order to lull the other players into a false sense of security. The poker sandbagger would pounce late in the game, clobbering the other players with his good hand."

The poker player, in other words, misled his opponents about how good his hand was ... until it was time to whip out the "sand bag" and beat those same opponents with it.

And that's how "sandbagger" came to have its golf meaning.