

Curves Ahead

All players can improve by learning how to shape their approach shots in both directions

BY TOM SIPULA

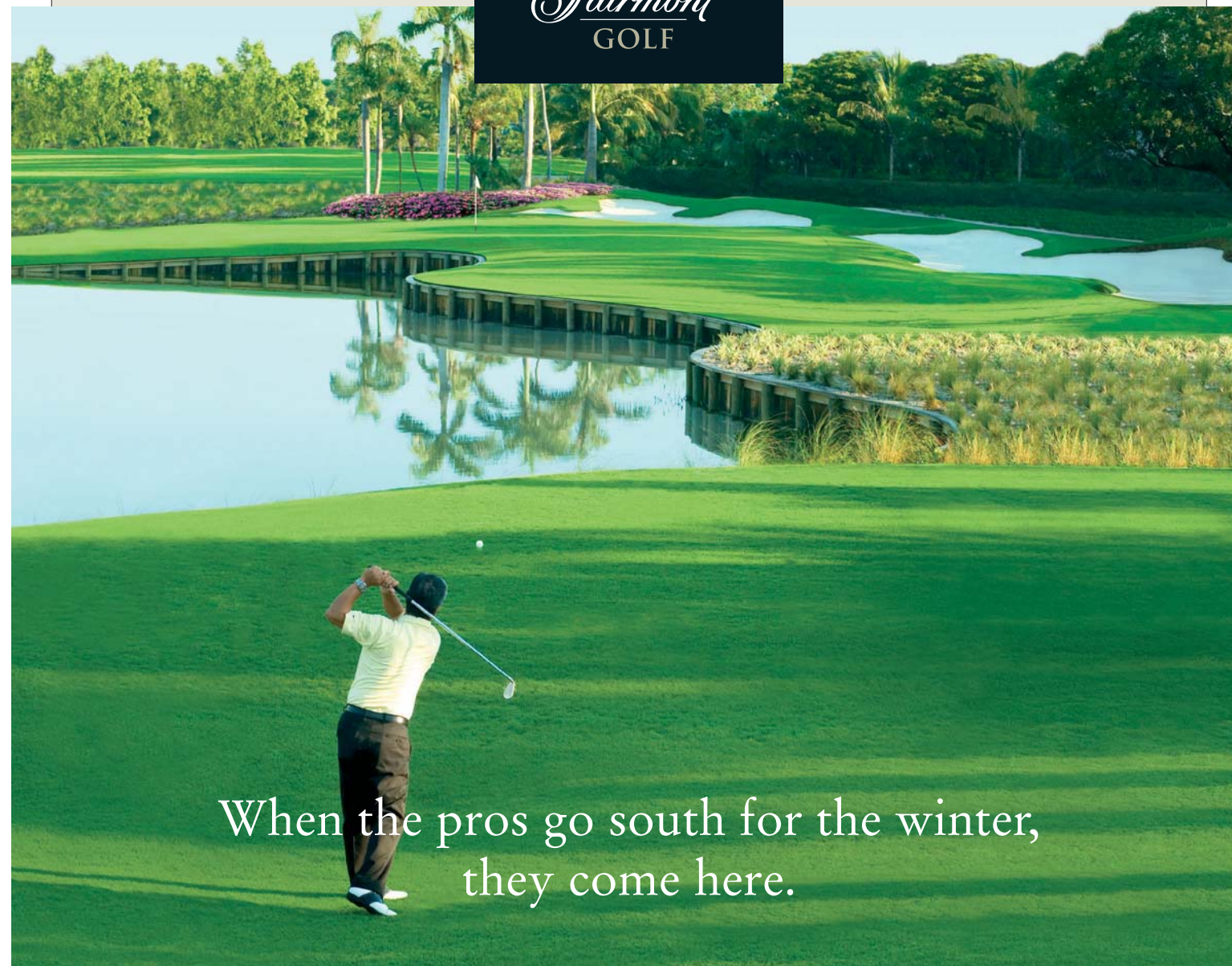
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEONARD KAMSLER



Both my dad and my grandfather were teaching pros, and they emphasized something to me early on: You'll be a better golfer if you are creative with your shotmaking. I encourage my students to use their imagination and not think in terms of a straight ball flight. After all, you've got a round ball and a round swing, so it's pretty difficult to have those two things equal a straight shot! Instead, learn how to hit both draws and fades to curve your shots. It's important to remember that shotmaking is for everyone, not just better players. Here's how to add some curve to your game.

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Fairmont
GOLF



When the pros go south for the winter,
they come here.

It's not whether you win or lose, it's where you play the game. And there's no better place to play than at a Fairmont golf course. Our stunning sun destinations will inspire your passions and challenge your skills. Renowned for reflecting local grandeur — gorgeous Caribbean beaches, lush Mexican and Hawaiian tropics, the stark Arizona desert or the elegance of the Florida coast — all of our luxury golf destinations offer a superior guest experience that is uniquely "Fairmont." Whether it's your annual company tournament or your usual foursome, we cater to the world's most discriminating golfers. When you combine Fairmont with golf, the result is truly memorable, because we believe that a great game demands a great destination.

ACAPULCO • BERMUDA • HAWAII • MIAMI • RIVIERA MAYA • SCOTTSDALE

The Fairmont Southampton Golf Club Bermuda

COURSE DESIGNER: Theodore Robinson
HOLES: 18
COURSE PAR: 54 (Executive course)
LENGTH: 2,684 yards

A Bermuda gem, this course features 18 challenging par-3 holes, dramatic elevation changes, a myriad of bunkers, two water hazards and three tee offerings, and forces prudent club selection, with the island breeze a definite factor.

The Fairmont Turnberry Isle Resort & Club Miami, Florida, United States

COURSE DESIGNER: Raymond Floyd
HOLES: (2 courses) 18 holes each
COURSE PAR: 71
LENGTH: 7,002 yards

Recently renovated, the resort's brand-new South course features lush, tropical grounds accentuated with elevation changes, contoured fairways, sharp changes within holes, and a 100-foot waterfall. The North course will be ready for play in October of 2007.

The Fairmont Pierre Marques Golf Course Acapulco, Mexico

COURSE DESIGNER: Percy Clifford,
renovated by Robert Trent Jones, Jr.
HOLES: 18
COURSE PAR: 72
LENGTH: 6,860 yards

Recently renovated, this course offers players a renewed challenge steps away from the Pacific Ocean. Improvements include seashore paspalum grass, the expansion and contouring of lakes, and the installation of a world-class, double-ended practice facility.

The Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii — The Francis H. I'i Brown Golf Course — Kohala Coast, Hawaii

COURSE DESIGNERS: Homer Flint & Raymond Cain;
Robin Nelson & Rodney Wright
HOLES: (2 courses) 18 holes each
COURSE PAR: (both courses) 72
LENGTH: 6,913–6,938 yards

The Fairmont Orchid, Hawaii provides guests with privileged access to the adjacent, award-winning Francis H. I'i Brown Golf Course, offering spectacular scenery with ocean views and green fairways patterned with black lava — a challenging course for pros and amateurs alike.



El Camaleón at Fairmont Mayakoba Riviera Maya, Mexico

COURSE DESIGNER: Greg Norman
HOLES: 18
COURSE PAR: 72
LENGTH: 7,000 yards

A major-league test, the El Camaleón course is ever changing — bending through dense jungle, mangrove forests and stunning oceanfront stretches of sand. Bisected by massive limestone canals, it is a must for players of all skill levels.

The Fairmont Acapulco Princess Golf Course Mexico

COURSE DESIGNER: Theodore Robinson
HOLES: 18
COURSE PAR: 72
LENGTH: 6,355 yards

Lined by coconut palms, the course is punctuated by narrow fairways and water hazards on 12 of the 18 holes. "Sneaky tough" is an apt description of the challenge offered by this treasure of a course.

The Fairmont Kea Lani, Maui Wailea Golf Club — Maui, Hawaii

COURSE DESIGNERS: Robert Trent Jones, Jr. and
Arthur Jack Snyder
HOLES: (3 courses) 18 holes each
COURSE PAR: (all courses) 72
LENGTH: 6,200–6,825 yards

The Fairmont Kea Lani, Maui is proud to offer guests access to Wailea Golf Club, one of the most acclaimed golf facilities in Hawaii, featuring three championship courses, two full-service pro shops and the finest training facility in the Pacific.

The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess TPC Scottsdale Courses — Scottsdale, Arizona

COURSE DESIGNERS: Tom Weiskopf & Jay Morrish;
Randy Heckenkamper
HOLES: (2 courses) 18 holes each
COURSE PAR: 71
LENGTH: 7,100–7,216 yards

Visit one of the world's top luxury golf destinations, and enjoy a PGA Tour golf experience at TPC Scottsdale. Located adjacent to The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, each course has its own unique qualities and offers guests a variety of challenges.

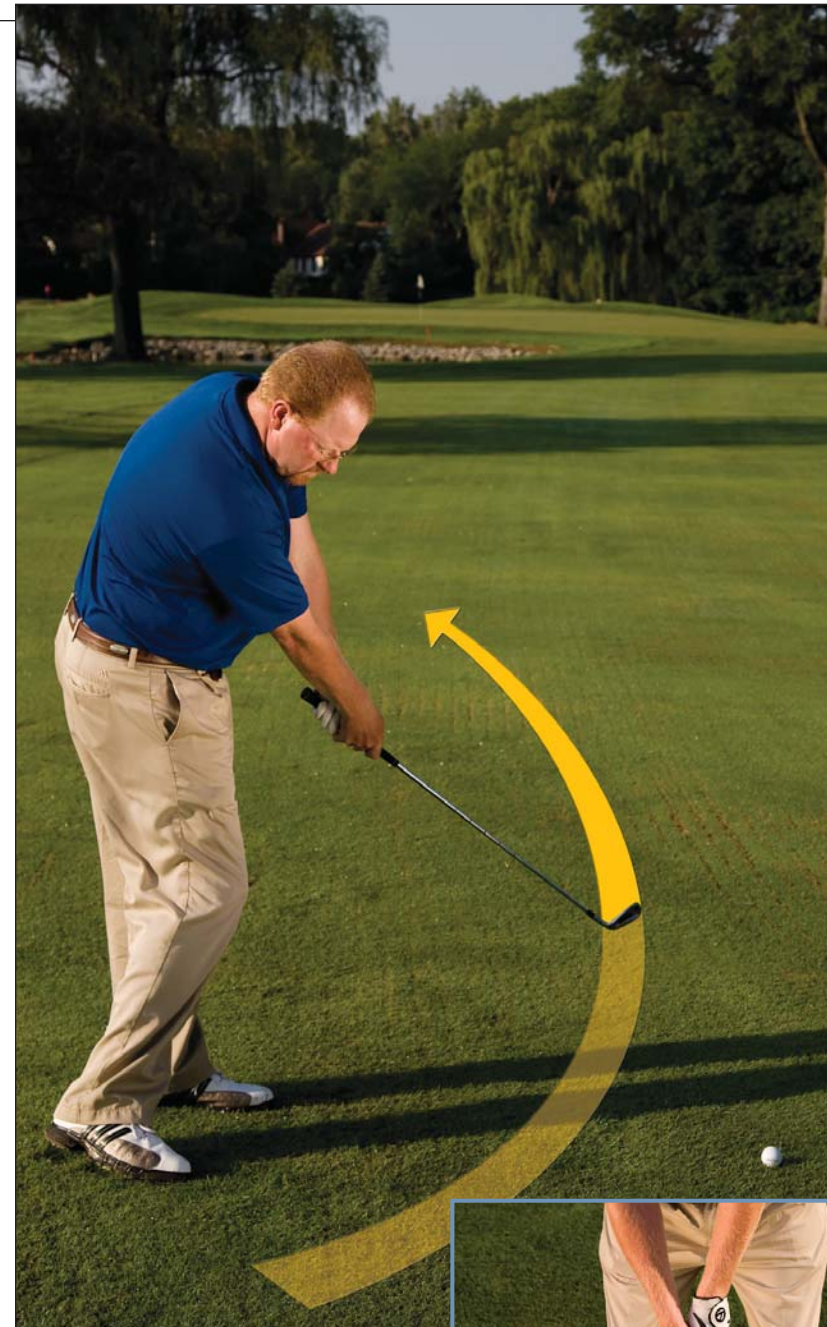
Fairmont
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|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Whistler, British Columbia | 9 Miami, Florida |
| 2 Banff, Alberta | 10 Riviera Maya, Mexico |
| 3 Jasper, Alberta | 11 Acapulco, Mexico |
| 4 Montebello, Québec | 12 Acapulco, Mexico |
| 5 Charlevoix, Québec | 13 Kohala Coast, Hawaii |
| 6 St. Andrews, New Brunswick | 14 Maui, Hawaii |
| 7 St. Andrews, Scotland | 15 Scottsdale, Arizona |
| 8 Southampton, Bermuda | |

When golf and travel come together, every game should be an unforgettable experience, one that is both challenging and that offers the best of its locale. Our distinctive collection of golf courses also includes famous seasonal destinations in Scotland and coast-to-coast in Canada — from British Columbia to the Canadian Rockies, Québec and New Brunswick. Wherever a Fairmont course is found, a memorable round awaits.

For reservations or more information on our golf packages, please contact your travel professional, call 1 888 270 0066, or visit www.fairmontgolf.com

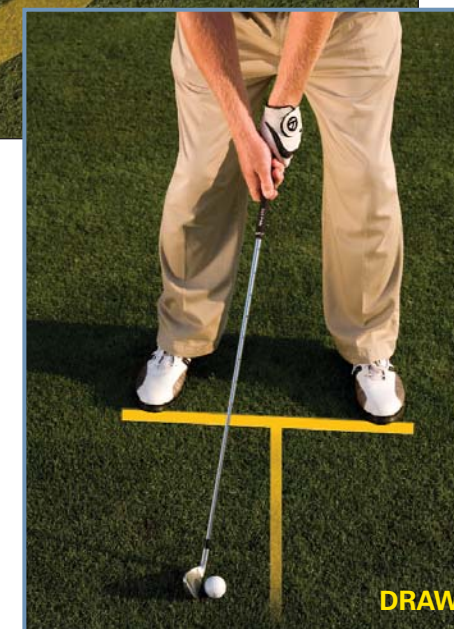


Keys to Shaping Shots

I don't advocate any extreme changes to your swing or setup in order to curve the ball. For example, there's no need to aim your feet way right or way left — aim at the middle or edge of the green, so if you end up hitting it straighter than you expected you'll still be in good position.

If you have a good lie in the fairway, just a few tweaks will do the trick to hit either a draw (right to left) or fade (left to right):

- For a draw, play the ball an inch farther back in your stance than you normally would, and grip down an inch on the club (*below, left*). For a fade, play the ball about an inch farther forward in your stance (*below, right*).
- For a draw, close the clubface very slightly at address... just enough to notice the difference but not so much that it looks awkward. Open the clubface slightly for a fade.
- Take a couple practice swings and visualize the proper swing shape that fits the desired shot. For a draw (*see photo, left*) you want a shallower arc that curves around your body. To hit a fade, you want to feel as if you're swinging the club on a steeper plane and finishing straight at your target.



DRAW



FADE

Watch Your Grip

A fundamentally sound grip is critical to being able to shape shots both ways. If your grip is exceedingly strong, which favors a draw/hook, or very weak, which favors a fade/slice, you will find it difficult to curve the ball the opposite way.

Here's how to get a grip that allows you to hit both types of shots. Place your left hand on the club and then hold it vertically out in front of you (*below*). Your left thumb should be just off-center to the right of the club shaft, as seen here.

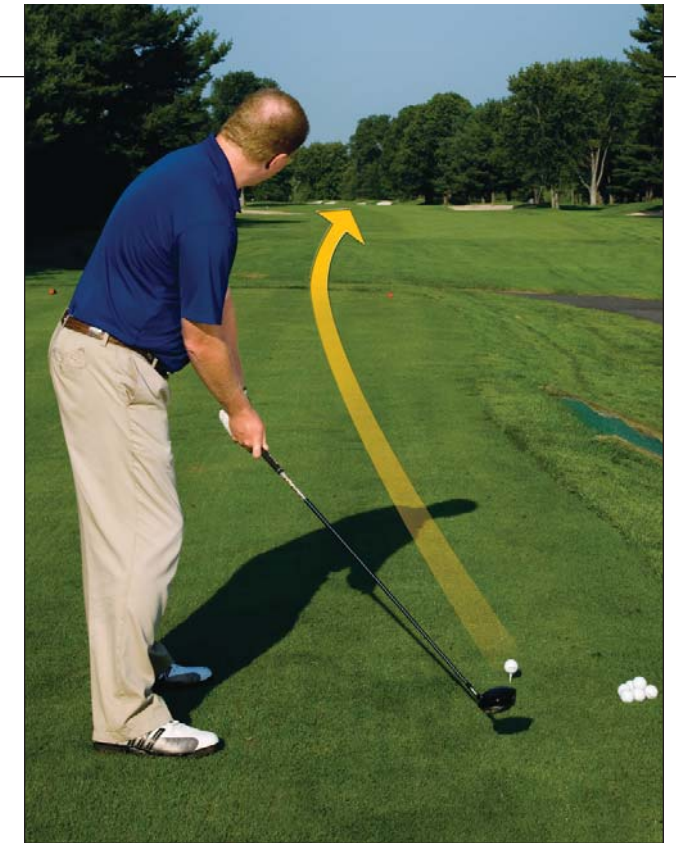


Once you get your left hand placed correctly, lower the club back to the ground and add your right hand to the grip. Angle your palm as if you were about to shake hands (*above*), and your right hand should fit snugly over your left.

Trees and Tees

Now that you have the knowledge of how to hit draws and fades, you can put it into practice. I firmly believe that practice should be fun and creative.

Drill #1: Drop a half-dozen balls behind a tree about 150 yards out from a green. Practice curving shots around the right side of the tree trunk (*below*) then retrieve the balls and practice hitting around the left side of the tree. My dad would have my brother and I do this drill late in the evenings, and it really helps with learning how to shape the ball with some real feedback. When the ball would occasionally ricochet off the tree, we learned how to curve the ball even better!



Drill #2: Find a hole with a straight fairway (no doglegs), and practice hitting fades from the far right side of the teeing ground (*above*), and draws from the far left side of the teeing ground. This will help you develop a “go-to” shot off the tee when you need it, as you determine which ball flight you’re more comfortable using. ■



Tom Sipula is the head professional at Edgewood Country Club in River Vale, New Jersey.

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