

Chipping Contest - Feel

By Dean O'Connell



If you want to really improve at your golf and cut shots off your score, you need to be good around the greens. Twenty metres and closer is a very important area. I see a lot of amateur players who don't have the certain sensitivity or 'feel' to hit these shots with great control. In other words players don't know how hard they need to hit the ball to get it next to the pin. There is a great little game you can play on your own, or with others.

On the practice range take your golf towel and place it on the ground about 5 metres in front of where you are chipping from. Then get another towel (or umbrella) and place it 20 metres in front of where you are (so 15 metres away from the first towel). The aim of the game is to hit your first chip just past the first towel. Continue hitting chip shots so that each ball goes slightly further than the previous.

As soon as you hit a shot that doesn't go past the previous ball, you are out of the game. Keep chipping until you get as many balls between the towels as you possibly can. It's amazing the feel you will start to develop. You'll know how far to take your backswing and how hard to hit a 5 metre, 10 metre, 15 metre shot etc. It's a lot of fun if you do it with a friend as you can play against each other - maybe even have some money on it. Adding this pressure is a great way to practice your shortgame.

It's a drill that can be practiced anywhere. All you need is 20 or 30 metres of clear space. Give it a go, and when you become good at it move the towels a little further away and practice your pitch shots this way.

