

Secrets of the pros revealed

So now we know. The pros really do use mirrors to pull off some of those spectacular shots. Yup. And chairs and beach balls, too. Today in *Journal Golf* some of Canada's top female professionals explain how you can use them to cut a few strokes off your game, too.

Curtis Stock, *Journal Golf* Writer, Edmonton



TAKE A SEAT

If you want to tell if you are swaying — moving your hips and your body left and right instead of making a good turn — grab a chair, said Susan Wright, a three-time winner of the Edmonton Amateur.

"If you are right-handed get a chair and position it with the highest point on your right side. Now take your normal swing. Did you bump the chair? Then you've got a problem," said Wright.

"If you are swaying you are losing power, accuracy and control.

"But don't make the mistake of forcing yourself to tilt away from the chair, either. If you throw your left hip towards the target it's going to cause a wave of other problems.

"Get a solid right side and make a good turn with your hips and shoulders."

MIRROR MIRROR ON THE GREEN

Edmonton's Heather Lee, who qualified to play in the BMO Canadian Women's Open July 10-13 in Vancouver, said the best way to make sure your eyes are directly over the ball when you are putting is to practise using a mirror.

"Put the golf ball on a mirror or a reflective compact disc and then take your normal putting stance.

Do you see your eyes? No. Well, then you've got a problem," said Lee, a four-time Edmonton Amateur winner and a two-time Alberta Amateur champion.

"If your eyes aren't directly over the ball it is going to distort your vision. Conversely, when your eyes are directly over the ball it is going to give you the best view of the line of your putt.

"Practise putting a mirror under a ball until you get the feel of where your eyes need to be. You'll probably be surprised at what you see. Or don't see."

Lee, who narrowly missed getting her LPGA card last year, said you can make a small allowance for having your eyes a little inside the ball. But only a little. Too far outside the ball and that will really cause problems.



Quebec's Sylvie Schetagne said building a set of train tracks to the hole when you are practising will give you the confidence you need when you are out on the course.

"On a flat piece of ground take two golf clubs, two pieces of wood or even just one piece of wood or club and align them up perfectly to the hole so that if you follow the tracks your putt has to go in," said Schetagne, a rookie on the BMO Canadian Women's tour.

"Just make sure you keep the heel of the putter

DOWN THE TRACK

against the inside track — the putter perpendicular to the tracks. If your tracks are lined up perfectly and you keep the heel of the putter against the inside track, then the putt has to go into the hole."

Schetagne said the drill accomplishes several things.

"First and foremost it builds the confidence and the good feelings you want to take with you onto the golf course," said

Schetagne, who has a masters degree in sports psychology.

"Start three feet out. Make 10 putts in a row. Move back to six feet. Make another 10 in a row. And keep going back. When you get on the course you'll feel like you can't miss."

Schetagne said the other thing the tracks accomplish is to keep you from taking the club inside or outside. If you don't keep your putter in the tracks, your putts aren't going to go in. Instead you are going to get derailed.



Vancouver teaching professional Sandra Comadina said a beach ball will help you make a good turn.

"I like using a beach ball because it will train your body what to do without having to get feedback from hitting a ball.

"Take a striped beach ball and, with the red stripe up, hold it in your elbows and forearms. As you turn back you want to feel your hands and torso working together. You also want to feel the extension

GOLF IS A BEACH

in your backswing," said Comadina. "As you turn you want to keep the ball aligned to the middle of your chest at all times. Turning back, at impact and in the follow-through the ball stays in the middle of your chest and the red stripe stays pointing to the top.

"You can also do the same thing holding the beach ball in your hands.

Again you want to keep the red stripe up to show that you aren't doing anything funky with your hands going through the ball."

Then Comadina says to place the ball between your knees.

"A common fault is to take on the knees and draw it in too much or to move laterally. You want the ball to remain still.

"What all three of these drills do is simulate a good turn with your torso."



Laura Witvoet, who played three years on the LPGA and is getting ready to make another run at it, said, "One of the biggest swing faults I see, particularly from women, is an incorrect weight shift. It comes from women trying to get more power in their golf swing," said Witvoet.

"What happens is that as the weight goes to transfer onto the back leg, the back leg straightens and we end up

WEIGHT WATCHERS

in a reverse weight shift or a side C position, which takes away power, clubhead speed and everything else."

Witvoet said what you are looking for is to be in the same posture at the top of your swing as you are at address with a nice flex in your legs — particularly in your right leg, which is where

the coil and torque that gives you your power comes from.

"At setup with an iron you want your weight 50 per cent on your back foot and 50 per cent on your front foot," said Witvoet.

"At the top of the swing — if you are right-handed — you should have 70 to 80 per cent of your weight on your right heel. At the finish of the swing you should have 90 per cent of your weight on your left foot."

