

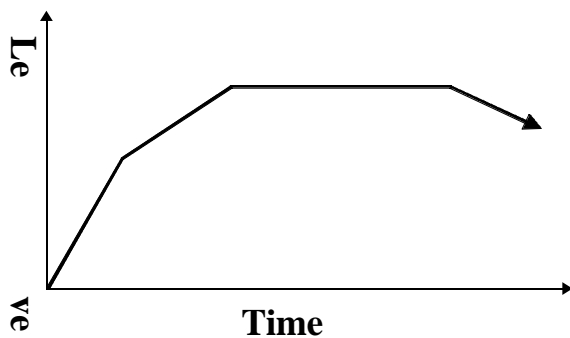
# BANDAID

OR

## RECONSTRUCTION ?

*You sometimes hear teachers refer to 'Band-Aid', a term which refers to a short-term swing remedy, as opposed to long term reconstruction. So how does a golf teacher know when to apply a plaster and when does he know to get the scalpel out and perform more drastic surgery?*

The first thing to look at is Performance History. Is the player improving every year, or has he stagnated, or is his game in decline ?



Ultimately, a golfer's level of play will reflect his inner belief, his inner image of himself as a golfer. He will only go this far and no further. If a player has a deep down belief that he is a better player than at the level of which he is playing now, but also strongly believes that it his swing technique that is holding him back, then rehabilitation is the correct strategy.

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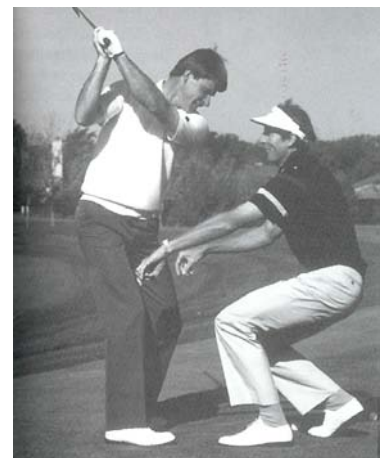
A good example of this is Nick Faldo. In 1983 he was European No. 1 and had won 5 tournaments, but the tournament he most wanted to win, the British Open, he had lost belief in his swing on the final 9 holes, and had lost

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out on the opportunity of winning. This had confirmed an inner held belief of Nick Faldo's that his

swing was suspect under extreme pressure. In order for Nick Faldo to build further success, he needed to change this disempowering belief and the route he chose was

technical improvements to his swing. He started this in 1984 and endured a serious dip in form as he sought to rebuild his swing. The rest is history



as he came back into the winners circle in 1987 and later that year won the British Open with a final round of 18 straight pars. This was a springboard to world dominance at this time and further major championships.

On the other hand, a player may not possess a 'textbook' swing, but in spite of this may still possess a strong belief in his swing to deliver a repeatable shot, and to deliver results under pressure. Ray Floyd is a good example of this, and of the more modern era Jim Furyk. How many times do you think that Jim Furyk has had to withstand comments like "that swing won't hold up under pressure".

He probably heard it first at Club level, then College level, then when he first got on Tour, then again that it won't hold up to win tournaments on Tour, and then once he had achieved this that it won't be good enough to win a major! I guess the last story will be that swing technique gurus will concede that although he can win majors with this swing, it will be injury prone and will shorten his career!!

The key point is that at a deep level Furyk believes in his swing, and Faldo didn't. But like all golfers, I'm sure that Furyk would have gone through short periods of loss of form, but as he possesses deep belief in his technique it would be wrong to try to reconstruct his swing. A swing tip, a swing key, to get him swinging back to a period where he experienced good form would be the correct tuition, or using American phraseology 'a band-aid'.

Of course, with weekend players it is also essential that the teacher also assesses;

- what can a pupil realistically achieve ?
- how much time can he devote to his/her golf ?
- what is his/her aims ?
- What are the existing strengths and weaknesses of their game

For example, some weekend golfers go to the

Pro citing lack of power as the reason that they can't break through to a single figure handicap, that they can't reach the Par 5's in two shots, when on analyzing their last five handicap rounds they average 38 putts!

We ask clients at our Academy to keep statistics of their competitive rounds. With a higher handicapper the analysis chart is very basic, ranging to a more sophisticated analysis for some of the Pro's we work with. This, together with detailed questioning about a player's history and their beliefs, allows us to make a decision about what is holding the player back from improving their game. This is an important step of the process, as many players often PERCEIVE the key to improvement is better swing technique, whereas sometimes this perception is incorrect, and the cure lies in another area. Then, the teacher's role would be to alter this PERCEPTION, and then direct the student to the area of the game they should concentrate on.

To summarize the two critical factors that determine 'Band-Aid' or 'Re-construction' for a player are

1. Where is the player on Performance History graph ?
2. What is his/her perception, and deep down beliefs, about their own swing ?

Technical rehabilitation is only a tool in which to develop belief, but only one of the many 'therapies' that a teacher has at his disposal – it is not the only one.



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