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PHYSIOLOGY MINUS THE OLOGY

BY JACK HOAG

"You can't beat a man at his own game," and yet that is exactly what many golfers try to do during a match. There has been a lot of bunk written about playing an opponent stroke for stroke, about when to take chances and when to play safe, about the physiology of the difficult carry and the long drive, and a lot of other inside stuff all of which centers on what your opponent is doing and consequently is pure rot.

If your mind is on your opponent's play it, of necessity, can not be on your own game and you'll need all the intelligence you possess to defeat a real golfer. Watching the other fellow is a fine goat-getter, but the trouble is that it is usually your angora which runs bleating down the fairway and you are very apt to be considerably down at the finish of the match.

Few golfers are capable of playing quite up to their game in a tough match, and if your card shows that you are playing about your average it is all you can expect, and you should be satisfied no matter whether you are up or down at the time. The luck of the game will usually run about even through a match, and if your opponent seems to be getting the breaks and he is a hole or two ahead pay no attention to it for, if you get to pressing you are lost, and experience has proven that your turn will come.

Mind your own business and play your own game is the best advice we can give a player regardless of whether the contest is at match or medal play. Don't be timid nor don't be rash. You know or should know about what you are capable of doing, and you will do far better to eliminate your opponent from your mind and try to make the best medal score you are capable of on each hole.

Most golfers defeat themselves. If you play a hole as well as you should, and lose it, you have no kick coming. Your opponent has played golf which should entitle him to win it, but if you get to dubbing and take several strokes above your ordinary play, you are the goat and you will have to take your medicine. The chances of pulling off a neck or nothing shot in a tight match are a 100 to 1 against it, and no golfer should ever attempt a stroke if he feels that he hasn't at least a fifty-fifty chance.

We have seen hundreds of matches thrown away by a player who, after missing a tee shot or getting into trouble, just whaled away blindly hoping against hope that he might hit one which would end up on the green. Don't forget that your opponent is human and that he is liable to miss a shot between the tee and the green just the same as you did, and if you play carelessly and chop away at the ball you may take enough strokes so that he can make a mistake, recover from it, and still win the hole.

A famous professional said, "Make your recovery on your second shot," meaning that the player should be satisfied to get out of trouble in one stroke and then try to make up what he had lost by a cleverly executed stroke from a good lie in the fairway. This is good

dope and the same thing applies to a dangerous shot over a hazard. If you face a pitch which the chances are against your making successfully, it is far better to play out into the fairway and take a chance of laying your chip shot dead to the pin and holing the putt than it is to grab your club and go blindly for the pitch.

Go back to the same spot after the match is over and practice the pitch until you are sure you can do it next time, but remember a close match is no place to try experiments in, and keep your golf along safe and sane lines. Now we do not mean to say that there is never an occasion in match play where you don't have to consider the other fellow's game for if his ball lies on the green a foot from the hole and you lie fifteen feet away with a putt for a half, it is obviously up to you to try and hole out; but we have seen many a match lost by rash putting and, before taking a long chance, just size up the situation carefully and estimate your opponent's chance of holing his putt.

Comply with the etiquette of the game to the minutest detail and play strictly according to rule. Your opponent is undoubtedly a gentleman and should be treated as such, but remember at the same time that tournament golf is an athletic contest and don't attempt to make a conversational round of your match. Many a golfer has talked himself out of a fine cup and the glory which went with winning it. Some men develop a certain style or mannerism in their play for the express purpose of getting their opponent's goat, but such a practice is unsportsmanlike and unfair, and it violates the spirit if not the letter of the Rules of golf.

Give your opponent everything that is coming to him and then defeat him if you can. Play your own game and play it hard. Keep your mind on every stroke and try to execute it correctly, concentrate on producing your best brand of golf, and, if you lose, you need make no apology for your defeat. Congratulate your opponent on his fine play and tell him that you hope some day to play as well. Then think over the mistakes you made and practice until you won't make them again. A good loser is a rare bird and remember there is always another day and another time.

TIN WHISTLES PLAY LAST SCHEDULED EVENT

Forty-nine members of the Tin Whistles divided themselves into two classes on Monday last and played a handicap medal round for the Pine Crest trophy and prizes donated by James Barber.

Burton Preston led the field in both gross and net scoring with a card of 82-10-72, followed by G. M. Howard, 88-11-77, and J. D. Chapman, 85-6-79.

Commodore J. T. Newton's 100-30-70 was the best in Class B and won him the prize in the lower handicap division. N. D. Clark was second in this division at 92-20-72, and J. M. Robinson third, at 99-24-75.

This concluded the Tin Whistles program for the season.

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