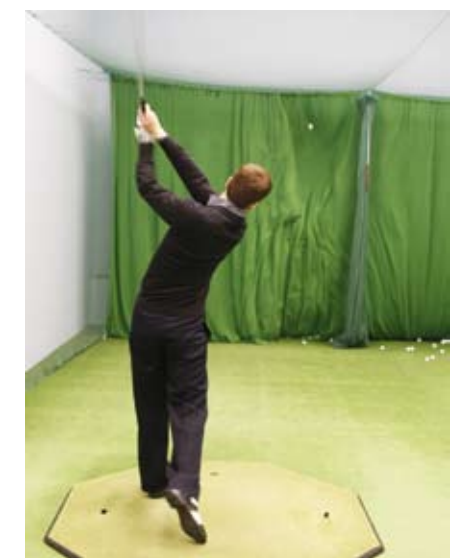
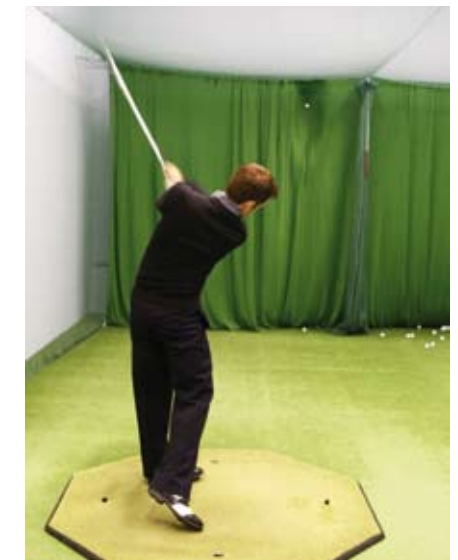
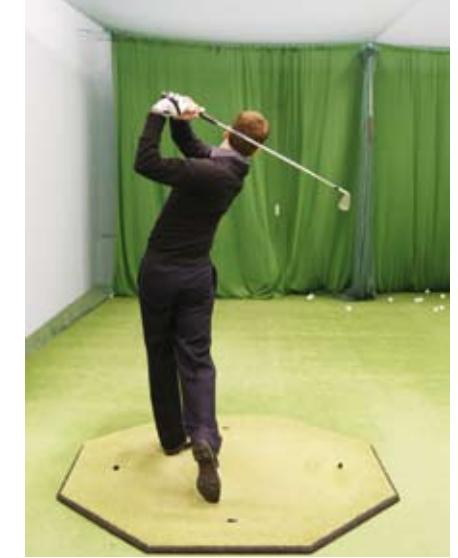




Leslie King, the Knightsbridge Golf School and the Golf Delusion



Knightsbridge is one of the most prestigious locations in Europe. It is home to the rich and the famous, the socialites and the aristocrats and – surprisingly enough – to one of the most glamorous and successful golf schools in the world.

Located a mere Tiger drive away from Harrods and a short chip from the Harvey Nichols handbag display, a converted squash court beneath a Georgian façade may be the last place you would expect to see a golf lesson taking place. Yet it is our belief that, since its conception in 1951, more lessons have been given at the Knightsbridge Golf School than anywhere else on earth.

The school was founded by Leslie King, one of the first instructors to develop a system of teaching the golf swing. He never claimed to have invented a swing, but to have watched it and categorised it, pulling it apart to enable him to help

his pupils build a swing that was as near perfect as possible. He had devised his swing model from watching the great players of his day, building their swing fundamentals into a foolproof technique that could be learnt by all.

During the 1970s and 80s Mr King passed his knowledge down to us, and over the past twenty years we have developed his original technique into a modelled swing that can be taught to anyone, from the wonderfully talented to the woefully inept.

In the time we have been at the School, we have taught tens of thousands of golfers. Sadly, the swings that we see today are no better than those we saw when we first started teaching in the 1970s. How can this be in an age where golf instruction is such a massive industry?

Golfers of all levels have greater access to more instructional information than

The Golf Delusion:

The majority of golfers fail to realise that golf must be learnt in the same way that one would learn to speak a foreign language, play a musical instrument or fly an aeroplane. The reason for this is that it is possible for anyone to hit a good golf shot purely by accident.

ever before. Books, magazines, DVDs, online tuition, computer analysis and more bombard the desperate golfer in his search to find the key to this enthralling, if frustrating, game. Yet all this information barely makes a difference. We see the results every day of our working lives and experience has taught us overwhelmingly that almost every golfer naïvely believes that the next golden tip or magic clue will elevate them to a higher level.

Let's face it, it's what everyone hopes for, one quick fix and everything will suddenly fall into place. Unfortunately it's not as easy as that. The majority of golfers fail to realise that golf must be learnt in the same way that one would learn to speak a foreign language, play a musical instrument or fly an aeroplane. The reason for this is that it is possible for anyone to hit a good golf shot purely by accident. Take a bucket of balls, swing the club back and through and even the most un-coordinated would make good contact with a few balls, watching them fly long and straight. This gives the golfer the impression that a few tips here and there will smooth out the rough edges and they will soon be playing good consistent golf, forgetting the fact that maybe only five or six shots from a bucket of balls have been purely struck. Learning a good golf swing is no different to learning anything of value. It must be learnt under controlled

circumstances, slowly, one step at a time and in great detail.

Most golfers don't think this way because of the accidental good shot. For example, you would not be capable of conversing in fluent Cantonese one minute and be unable to utter a single word seconds later; play a musical solo, then moments later not hit a single note; fly the Atlantic, then lack the ability to get the aircraft airborne again. However, this is very much the case in golf. A booming accurate drive can be followed by a huge shank into the woods, a fluff, a top or even an air shot, and often is!

The purpose of this book is to teach you a structured modelled swing; to teach you where to be at each and every stage of your swing and to blend the swing's structure into one beautiful free-flowing movement. It offers the only guaranteed solution to the 'trial and error' golf played by 90% of golfers. Building swings this way has been our life's work, and if you study this book in great detail we are convinced that it can do the same for you. Every word, every sentence and lesson has been written for a reason, and nothing should be overlooked. It is important to remember that these teachings are not theoretical. They have been proven in well over half a million teaching sessions and will build a sound, solid swing that will last for life.

2

Leslie King 1961

What is the point of curing a slice by planting the germ of a hook which erupts within the next few days? The wretched golfer, overjoyed at losing his slice, is soon in despair again as he struggles on the left hand side of the course instead of the right.

Solving one problem by creating another simply adds to the confusion and depresses his moral. It is negative teaching which can never lead to lasting progress.

My method of instruction is not built upon a vague series of hit and miss experiences, one or other of which may give temporary tidiness to a pupil's game. My aim is a positive one – to build a sound and lasting technique in which all the fundamentals are fitted together into one cohesive swing unit.

I am not prepared to waste time on gimmicks or smart tricks and I will admit at once that I know of no short cuts to success at this fascinating game. It demands hard work and practise before one even begins to master the precise art of delivering the centre of the club face firmly and squarely into the back of the ball and on through into the finish.

There is positively no secret tip which can turn a mediocre player into a good one overnight. Yet there are players struggling vaguely along, pathetically searching for the elixir of a new golfing life in the upper strata of the game.

I have in mind a pupil who came into my school for the first and only time. He really had no swing worth the description. He moved the clubhead sharply back and forwards in a series of wristy jerks.

I set him to work on the first and elementary stage which leads in due course to the shaping of a serviceable swing. I had quickly seen that this player lacked the ability to become good at the game but I could have worked a definite improvement in him had he been prepared to listen to my first instruction.

However, I never saw that pupil again and this is why. Meeting the person who had introduced him to me, he told me that his friend had said that I had treated him as a beginner!

I was genuinely sorry to lose him as a pupil, notwithstanding that I always have more work than I can fit in. My secretary is regularly working on my appointments book for weeks ahead and claims a constant headache as a result. But I could have given him a sound foundation and helped to build a modest but nonetheless rewarding game.

This player, however, quite obviously had a sadly inflated assessment of his own ability and potential. With this attitude of mind he came to me expecting to impress with what he already knew,

requiring me to provide the simple tip which would shoot him straightaway into the single-figure handicap class.

He flattered not only himself but me as well. I would work no sudden miracle, I had to treat him as a beginner but he was desperate to run before he could walk.

In sharp contrast is the case of Ian Caldwell, 1961 English Amateur Champion, who came to me at the beginning of 1960 in an unhappy frame of mind about his game.

I decided that his swing needed re-shaping on a major scale and I set to work on him in exactly the same way as I had done with the pupil I have just referred to.

Caldwell, be it noted, was already a good and experienced player with a fine international record behind him. Yet, in a sense, he was more humble than the other man, the raw novice.

He did not expect a golden tip which would solve his problems overnight, and he was not worried when I warned him that what I proposed to do would take some time but would bring about some marked degree of improvement within a few months.

So it proved – four months later he reached the semi-final of the English Amateur Championship.

We kept working on his swing and the following year he won the English Title. Even then I had not completed my task; I was certain that he could get even better – yet for all his God-given golfing gifts,

he had his own complex problems of approach to master, and the measure of his ultimate progress must depend on the extent to which he overcomes these problems.

However, the headway he made under me following a long period of uncertainty was most revealing. He had put his swing into my hands and shown a readiness to work over a period. While the player at the other end of the scale had expected me to produce a gimmick, which would turn him into a golfer overnight, this sort of miracle simply cannot be worked.

Even a noted tournament player like South African Harold Henning was prepared to accept my blunt assessment of his swing. At the suggestion of a friend he came to my school a few years ago and I told him quite frankly that he had a terrible loop in his backswing.

He took my advice and when I next saw him at Royal Birkdale in the 1961 Open Championship, I noted at once that he had smoothed out his backswing and so given himself a very fine clubline into the ball.

Henning remembered how I had advised him and thanked me for what I had told him two or three years earlier when we had last met.

My model offers no trick transition from rabbit to first-class golfer. I gradually shape a sound smooth swing which once acquired will stand up under pressure. Such is my objective with every pupil who comes to me. I set out to implant in his



David, Leslie and Steve

mind a picture of the shape he needs to acquire, taking him along, stage by stage, until he can sense the shape developing.

Let it be understood that I teach a definite method based on years of experience and proven principles. Various people have their own particular problems arising from characteristics of bone structure and general build. I note these and prescribe accordingly.

But my fundamentals apply in the main to anyone capable of swinging a club through an arc.

The shaping of the swing is all important; once you have it keep it. Don't bend it out of shape by tinkering. This is where many a better-than-average performer leads himself still further off the rails when his game goes temporarily sour on him.

Leslie King 1961

This passage was written by Leslie King nearly fifty years ago. It is as relevant to the amateur golfer today as it was then.