

PGA INSTRUCTION /// GOLF PRO GRANT HEPBURN

INSTRUCTION

THE BEST
DRILLS ON
THE PLANET

GOLFRSA

In this series, PGA professional Grant Hepburn takes an iconic golf shot and helps explain what you can learn from it. This month, he looks at YE Yang's famous approach shot on the 18th hole during the final round of the 2009 PGA Championship at Hazeltine

Hybrid to Heaven



If I think of iconic hybrid golf shots, there can surely be no better one than YE Yang's approach to the 72nd hole of the 2009 PGA Championship at Hazeltine.

This impressive shot from almost 200 metres delivered not only the first Asian male to win a Major but also ended Tiger Woods' remarkable streak of closing out Majors when holding a 54-hole lead. Up

to that point, Tiger had won 14 out of 14 Majors when holding at least a share of the lead going into the final round.

Yang's shot was remarkable for a number of reasons. Firstly, the occasion - it was on the final hole of a Major championship, where he held a slender one-shot lead over playing partner Tiger Woods. Secondly, the shot was almost 200m from the rough,

into a slight breeze and Yang had to contend with a large oak tree on the path towards the hole.

Nevertheless, the fearless Korean flushed his shot right at the flag, clearing the tree and bunker and landing gently on the green before settling 10 feet from the hole. It was game, set and match for Tiger after that.



The key emphasis around this shot is the choice of club. Many people still think of a hybrid as another wood in the bag, but it is essentially a long-iron with some characteristics that make it easier to hit than your regular 2-, 3- or 4-irons. One of the key reasons to use this club from the rough, as I'm doing in this example, is that there is enough loft on the club to get the ball up quickly and, in this case, over the tree. The hybrid certainly has more loft than a conventional 3- or 4-iron.

There is also a very different clubface when compared to a long-iron. If you look at the picture above you will see there is a rounded, smooth leading edge on the clubface, which makes it easier to skim through the long grass without getting caught up. A long-iron has a much straighter, sharper leading edge that tends to get caught up in the longer grass, slowing down club speed or forcing the face of the club to close.

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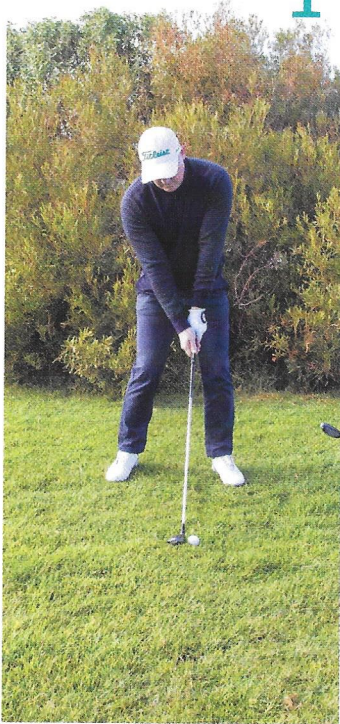
Once I have chosen the club, I need to ensure I make a full and smooth swing. Often when an amateur is in the long rough they are so concerned with gouging the ball out that they make a steeper swing with their arms only and forget to turn their body.

You will notice that I make a full turn of my hips and shoulders, allowing my weight to move on to my right leg. In the downswing, I then transfer my weight by

driving my legs towards the target. This adds natural power and dynamics to the downswing, causing the club to sweep through the ball at high speed.

The rounded sole of the club will skim through the rough and collect the ball with maximum efficiency and little hindrance from the grass. My followthrough ensures the weight that I transferred to the right in the backswing moves fully to the left as I complete my followthrough.

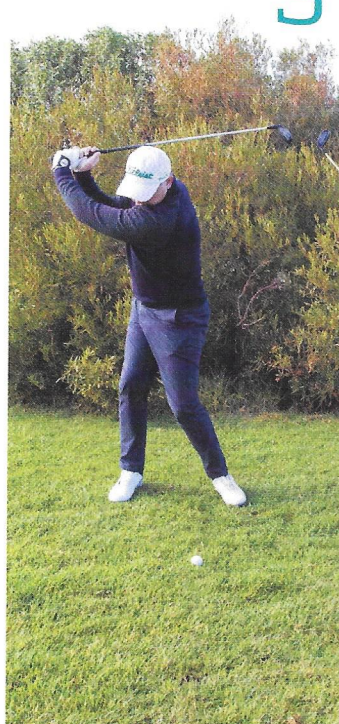
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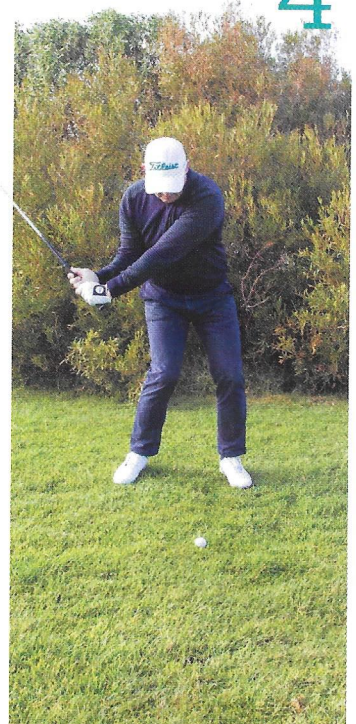
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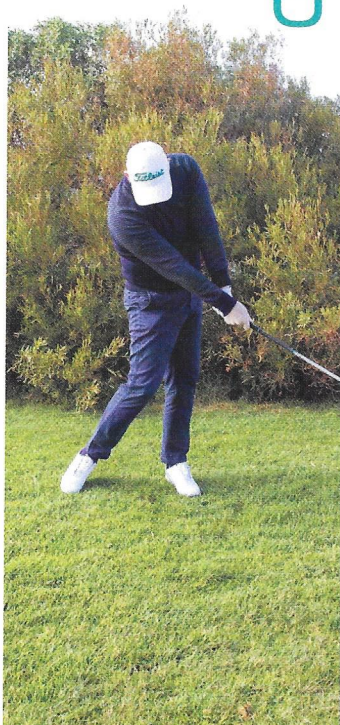
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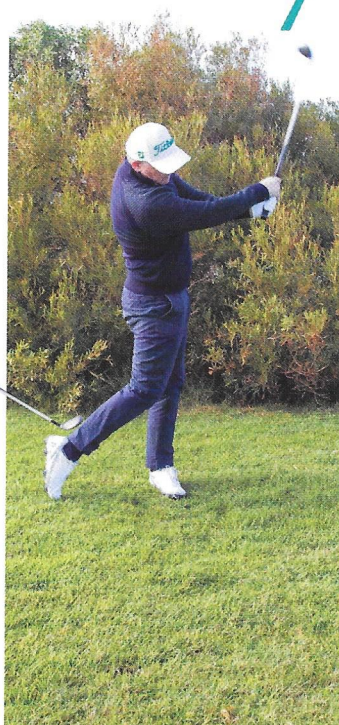
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