

Press On

Adding a forward press of the hands into your putting routine will help you gain consistency.

► BY BRENDAN REILLY



AS YOU ADDRESS your putt, a so-called “forward press” of your gripped hands — nudging them just a few inches towards your target before starting your takeaway — is essential for you to roll the ball properly and, ultimately, to gain better consistency.

A forward press helps you to get the putter face at impact back to square — or even to negative 1-2 degrees — at impact. This will compress the ball more and give it the greatest potential for having forward spin, retaining its chosen line and rolling out completely.

On the professional tours, the world’s best golfers use putters with as little as 1 degree of loft to as high as 6 or 7 degrees. But their common goal is to have an effective loft *less* than that of their putter at the impact position. My putter has 7 degrees of loft so I am accustomed to a *very pronounced* forward press to get its face back to square

Most amateurs will leave putts short. A forward press, in conjunction with a longer backswing (see the photos), will also have the benefits of more putts reaching the hole, more putts nearer to the hole and more putts in the hole.

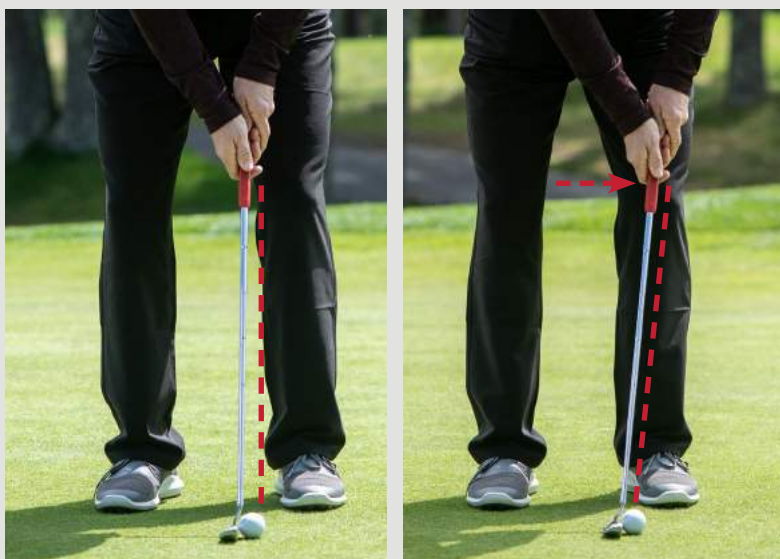
Family: Wife: Kimberly; Children:

Olivia (22), Dylan (17) and Sean (14)

Club: Head professional, The International, host site of the 2019 Mass Four-Ball

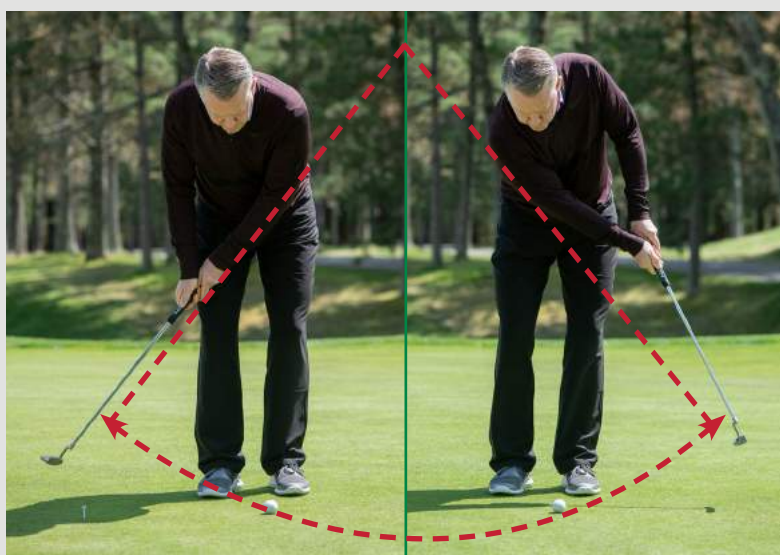
Years as Pro: 21 (3 at The International)

Favorite Course: Royal County Down



A Pronounced Forward Press Of My Hands

The forward press of the hands at your address position is essential to rolling the ball properly and gaining more consistency, with the ultimate result of making more putts. My Ping Eye 52 has 7 degrees of loft, so I am accustomed to a *pronounced* forward press to get the putter face at impact back to square, or even negative 1 or 2 degrees.



Try a Longer Swing With A Pendulum Motion

I’ve switched here to a Scotty Cameron putter with a loft of 1 degree, taking the putter face back to a tee inserted into the green about two feet behind the ball. In conjunction with a forward press, this longer backswing is helpful for getting a better feel for the putter’s weight and allows me to swing more freely with my shoulders, arms, hands and putter moving as one unit in a pendulum motion. This drill also aids consistency with speed on longer putts that require some lagging.