

Slow Practice Will Get You There Faster

Link between Ben Hogans' mirror practice and his slow motion drill

by Ernest Dras



“Whenever I’m working on something
I always do it in slow motion.”

- Ben Hogan

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Ben Hogans' teachings

Ben Hogan was one of the best golfers in the history of the game. Although he played more than fifty years ago, his teachings, his books, and his influence still dominate the world of golf. Hogan was known to practice more than his contemporaries and is even said to have "invented practice." Many aspiring golfers have studied his approach and books. As a result, they have developed their own theories about his swing and his teachings. Many golf aficionados speak of some special secret he was supposed to have revealed, however, there are some that say Hogan was actually a sly person, i.e., he did not actually want to reveal anything important.

That he may well have not given us his deepest realizations is understandable. Just look at the competitive world around us. Not so long ago, there were lawsuits in Formula One circles because somebody was revealing technical secrets to a competitive team. No team wants to give out information; they want to use their secrets and discoveries to their own advantage. This is also the case with golf. Golf professionals will give out some general tips in magazines or to reporters, but the really important knowledge is considered a personal asset, helping them to maintain competitive edge. They don't reveal these techniques. If I was still active in tennis, either as a tournament player or a coach in the competitive environment, then it is almost certain that I

would not have written this booklet for the very same reason.

My realization is that, over the course of time, Ben Hogan did actually reveal his secret knowledge, but he didn't serve it up on a silver platter. When he was asked about his chief secret, he mysteriously replied, "The secret is in the dirt." Many talk about his technique, about minute details concerning his stance, his grip, his backswing, etc. However, what was really special about him was that he was able to ingrain the swing so deeply into his sub consciousness that he could perform it with unmatched consistency and precision.

There were and remain many top golfers who employ a different swing than Hogan's, so I am sure that, even if Ben Hogan would today choose a slightly different swing style, he would still be able to program it to his great level of consistency and precision. The question is: What did he do that enabled him to ingrain his swing so perfectly? The ultimate question would be: How did he practice?

In his books, he speaks about fundamentals that every beginner should understand and work on. However, he admits that this is just A.B.C: "In these lessons, we will certainly not be attempting to cover all of golf or even one-hundredth of that almost inexhaustible subject." Five Lessons, The Modern Fundamentals of Golf

Not so long ago, a video of Ben Hogan appeared on the Internet, where he is seen showing his friends

how he practiced. It is obvious that this footage was not meant for the broader public, however, after so much time, we can be thankful for its appearance. The movie was taken at Seminole Golf Club, in a backyard of one of his friends.

Golf instructor Chuck Evans comments on it:

“As Hogan was getting set up, he kept directing the person shooting the video to move the camera so that it would be in the right place—teaching pros who use video take note!

Once he was satisfied with the camera placement, he started wagging the club but in slow motion. Once the waggle was done, he started his backstroke—again in slow motion. Once he reached the top of the backstroke, he started the downstroke—again in slow motion, all of the way into impact, follow through, and finish.

One of the ladies present at that time asks, ‘Ben-ny, why are swinging so slow?’ Hogan replied, ‘At this pace, I can control the golf club and everything in my swing. Whenever I am working on something, I always do it in slow motion. That way I can monitor what I am doing.’”

Please take a look at the excerpt of this recently published video on the following website:

<http://www.thesolarsweetspot.com/BenHogan>



Picture 3. Snapshot from the footage of Ben Hogan taken at the Seminole Golf Club

From the entire video, it is obvious that Hogan felt relaxed amongst his friends. He was already aged, and his heart had softened in this private atmosphere. He was willing to show his friends whatever they asked him.

In his books, he spoke about swinging in front of a mirror (without a ball) in order to shape the correct form of the swing. However, in the truest sense of the term, he never spoke about the slow motion practice presented in this video. On this basis, the video can be considered as a very important revelation concerning Ben Hogan's mysterious knowledge; there should be no doubt about this. On the assumption that you watched the video (as directed previously), you might have noticed some slow motion footage. It is an additional great piece of evidence related to Hogan's training methods. This footage is much older, however. At first glance, it seems that it is

just a swing at normal speed in slow motion. However, notice the audience in the background!



Picture 4. Snapshot from much older footage of Ben Hogans' slow motion practice

It is amazing how smoothly and with such a flow he is able to conduct his swing in slow motion. At first glance, I was sure that this was just a slow motion movie. His slow motion swing is a perfect copy of the full speed swing. It is obvious that he practiced golf innumerable hours in this way.

Link between Ben Hogan's mirror practice and his slow-motion drill

Ben Hogan divided the fundamentals of his golf swing into grip, stance and posture, the first part of the swing, and the second part of the swing. He proposed that a beginner learns these fundamentals in front of a big mirror. He assumed that a golfer who followed these directions would gradually develop a swing that would automatically lead to crisp impact. However, studies have shown that the majority of golfers just cannot hit the sweet spot, although going through various teaching programs and knowing these fundamentals. A group of fifty golfers were tested; they had handicaps of ten and above. It came out that they were able to make solid contact every fifth or sixth shot, i.e., by accident. On average, they missed the sweet spot by three-fourths (3/4") of an inch.¹

The next drill Hogan wonderfully demonstrated was the slow motion drill presented in the abovementioned videos previously presented. This is a great drill, and I think that the post-modern outlook on slow motion practice will drastically change after the recent release of these long hidden films.

There are golfers who think that slow motion practice will make their swing slow. The answer to that doubt

¹ Tests made by Power Golf Academy by John Darling

is this: If you practice in slow motion *with the proper mental attitude*, then this will never be the result. The final outcome will be just the opposite; your swing will be more precise, sharper, and more powerful. Correct slow motion practice will accumulate energy. Just see Hogan while he performs his drill, especially in the video of him when he was younger. How concentrated he is, and how precise and smoothly he conducts his slow swing. His attitude is just like that of a Shoalin monk conducting slow motion martial arts practice. They say that, with proper slow practice, the flow of chi energy increases. Professional musicians say, "Practice slow in order to play fast."

Imagine that you sit on a chair and are fanning yourself with a folding fan. Your hand moves slowly while moving the fan. Now imagine that you are sitting on a chair and, in one hand, you hold a needle. In the other hand, you hold a piece of a thread or a thin wire. In this exercise, you are continually trying to perfectly pierce the small hole of a needle. You are so fully concentrated on the small hole and on the point of the wire that you feel pins and needles throughout your whole body. Superficially, in both scenes, the right arm is moving slowly. However, there is a dramatic difference in the inner state of mind and awareness between these activities.

In the first visualization, I can sit without attention and fan myself. In this way, I will certainly not increase

In this breakthrough manual, you will now learn the way that many great masters and teachers in various disciplines recommend we learn things, the way they developed their amazing skill. It is astounding to discover that, at root, they all eventually excelled in their art using the same approach, and this has been used for centuries in martial arts, in fencing, and, in the post-modern era, in a variety of sports. It is known as the slow motion practice method, and we find it used by virtually all great performers in the world of pianists, violinists, guitarists, and other musicians. In golf, Ben Hogan exemplified an outstanding example of this method, but he kept it hidden from almost everyone. Slow motion practice was more or less unknown in golf until recently, when some very rare and safeguarded footage of him appeared on the INTERNET demonstrating the technique. However, it is very difficult for a serious golfer to take advantage of this method unless he or she has it explained along with access to directly implement the technique. This is what my book and invention provide to the international golfing public for the first time.

