

local knowledge

See Ball Run

LEARNING TO READ AT THE BROADMOOR **BY TRENT WEARNER**



THERE ARE A multitude of hints you should begin to recognize and use to improve your green reading ability. Before playing a course, always ask the professionals in the golf shop if there are any clues that will assist you in accurately reading your putts. At The Broadmoor, the rule is that the ball will roll away from the Will Rogers Shrine, which sits on the side of Cheyenne Mountain directly west of the golf course. Deceptively, there are a number of greens at The Broadmoor that appear to slope toward the mountain.

Convincing yourself of the rule can be quite difficult when the green looks as it does in the photo at left. As you can see, it is clear the green tilts to the player's right, which is why we chose to aim at the tee a little left of the hole. However, the shrine, situated to the player's right, suggests the ball would actually curve to the left—which is empirically proven by the level in the second photo. Ignoring the mountain results in a misread, as seen in the bottom shot.

Base all your putts on that rule regardless of what you see, and you won't be tricked into reading something different. In addition to this local knowledge, the following putting habits will help you improve your green reading ability on every course.

WATCH AND LEARN

Observe the putts of other golfers in your group. Even if you're not on the same line, you can still see where your playing partners' putts roll, especially as the ball approaches the hole. Also notice where your chips, pitches and even your approach shots roll once they reach the green. Having the discipline to watch your ball until it completely stops provides key information about the green's slope.

WATCH AND LEARN

GO WITH THE FLOW

Greens are meant to drain water. Your ball will roll in the same direction water would. Look for drains or low spots around the green's perimeter. Also pay particular attention to greenside bunkers. Architects typically build up small slopes or mounds to guard any water from draining into bunkers. Consequently, your ball tends to roll away from them.

GO WITH THE FLOW

IF YOU CAN'T SEE IT, FEEL IT

As you walk on the green to survey your putt, be aware of what you feel in your feet. It may be easier to feel the slope as you walk than by actually seeing it with your eyes.

IF YOU CAN'T SEE IT, FEEL IT

Also remember that the speed at which you hit the putt will determine how much it breaks. Your ability to control the distance your putts roll will definitely reduce your three-putts and help get your misreads closer to the hole.

PGA teaching professionals Trent Wearner, Tim Odegard, Dana Smith and Tom Talbott own and operate the Meridian Golf Learning Center in Englewood. For more information, call 303-645-8000 or visit MeridianGolfLearningCenter.com.

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Broadmoor East, Mallon finished one stroke behind champion Annika Sorenstam.

"The Broadmoor's greens are so tricky because they are very difficult to read," Mallon says. "The slopes come off the mountains, and you have to look at the entire mountain range to see which way the greens are breaking."

Many first-time Broadmoor golfers walk off the courses muttering about a scorecard loaded with three-putts. Putting tips from a member or from Director of Golf Russ Miller are invaluable.

"In theory it is pretty simple," Miller says. "The general rule is to keep the ball on the front part of the green with the flagstick between you and Cheyenne Mountain, and you will have an easier, uphill putt." The optical illusions can be mystifying, especially when a green is sloped, appearing downhill, when it is actually uphill.

The Broadmoor comprises three courses: The East opened in 1918, a Donald Ross masterpiece that he declared his best work—even surpassing a layout that later became known as Pinehurst No. 2. Robert Trent Jones redesigned the East Course in 1958 and added what was called The Broadmoor Nine before returning in 1964 to complete the West Course, which is actually a conglomeration of Ross and Jones holes wrapped up in a new routing. The third is the Mountain Course. After being closed because of erosion problems, it is currently being rebuilt.

The Mountain Course

IN 1976 ARNOLD Palmer and Ed Seay designed the Mountain Course, a popular shorter course that was unknowingly built with an ancient water source beneath its fairways. Several years ago, that water began causing major erosion problems, and The Broadmoor decided to close the course.

But the latest news is good. The Broadmoor hired Nicklaus Design to build a new 7,700-yard, par-72 course on the site, and using the latest technology innovations, engineers have dealt with the erosion problems. The new design comes 45 years after nineteen-year-old Jack