

Beware of a Common Pitfall in Golf Putting

This article deals with a problem very well known among golf players: Does the next putt break to the left or to the right? Sometimes, observations from the ball's side and the hole's side lead to different conclusions. Find out why this is so and how to avoid the pitfall in order to save precious strokes to your golf scores.

Now you are on the green, holding your putter, facing the pin and trying to evaluate the shape of that area between your golf ball and the hole. Forget about the strokes needed to reach the green. That's past, that's history. And because it's not the right time to put pressure on yourself, forget also

- a) that the last few yards on the green can take more strokes than the 3 or 4 hundred yards between the tee and the green**
- b) there's no such thing as a recovery for a missed putt**

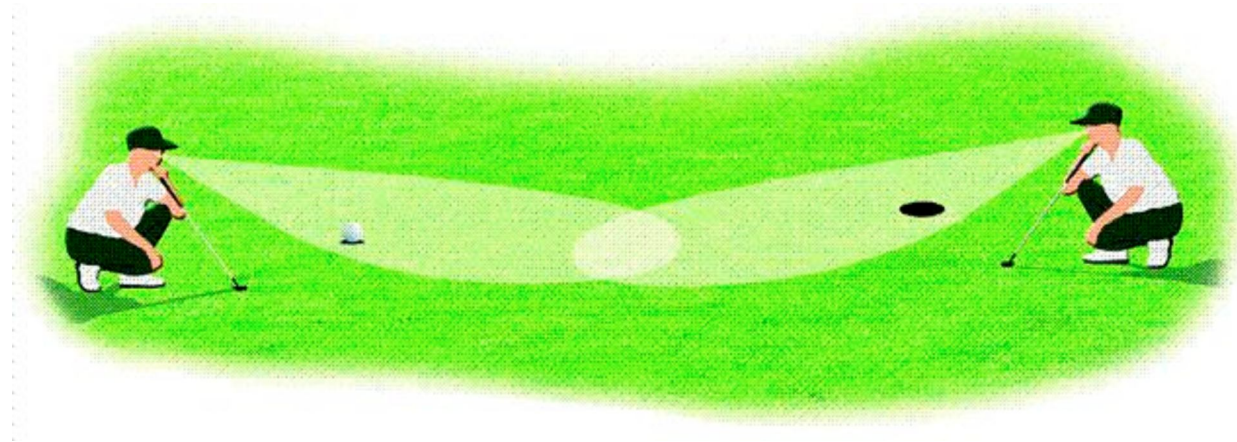
Let's assume that you are aware of all that and take golf putting seriously. So, the most important thing you desperately need now is to know the slope of your putting area, that is the green's zone your ball will cross on its way to the hole. You observe carefully from the ball's side and there's no doubt it will break slightly say, from north to south (n/s). Now, let's have a look from the other side to get a clearer picture. And . . . oops! It breaks slightly from south to north (s/n).

Now you have a big problem that all of us (who look from both sides) faced several times. If your group is alone on the golf course and your buddies aren't pushing too much, you can repeat the entire process but the results won't change. Perhaps it's because the shadows are distorting the image or, perhaps, some objects in front of you (trees, fences, etc) are giving you a wrong perception. Still more likely, perhaps you are a biased observer. Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps! But the truth is that the data your eyes sent to your CPU doesn't match, so your

brain gets confused with that and any commands coming to your muscles will reflect that dilemma. It's easy to predict there's trouble ahead.

Some of us, in this situation, decide to forget what they saw from the hole's side. It's a wise decision. At least you'll act according to what you see when you take your stance to putt. But you can almost safely bet that you won't make that putt. Why? Because if the break is there it won't disappear just because you decided to ignore it.

Another solution is to try to emulate King Solomon's method, when he ruled that a baby was to be cut in two pieces, one for each of two women who wanted the child (fortunately the case was settled before the King's command was executed!). Using this method you just aim straight to the hole. The rationale is that if you see one thing from one side and the opposite from the other side, chances are that the solution is just in the middle. If you are a lucky guy, it might work. But don't expect too much.



My conclusion, after lots of missed putts and careful observations and experiments, is this: When you see something it's better to believe it's true and not a product of your imagination. If you see a n/s break, it's probably there. If, from the other side, you see a s/n break, it's probably also there. You have a putt with double break and your observations just privileged the green's area closer to you in both cases. You shouldn't be surprised to get a better and more detailed view of what is closer to you, should you? And don't forget we are talking about slight breaks, not clear double breaks where we can use the method explained in Golf Putting Lines Ebook.

The double break theory explains why some of us only use the information gathered from the ball's side and don't report a major cognitive dissonance. On one hand, our brain is a bit more confident because it's acting according to what our eyes see when we putt. On the other hand, we witness that the ball starts breaking as it's supposed to. There's only one disturbing factor: it rarely enters in the hole, because we didn't consider in our "putting equation" the second break that was there waiting for the ball. Next time try to make a small adjustment and reduce the anticipated break a little bit. It has worked with me and perhaps it will work for you too. Good luck!

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<http://www.puttinglines.com>