

ONE HOUR PRACTICE SESSION

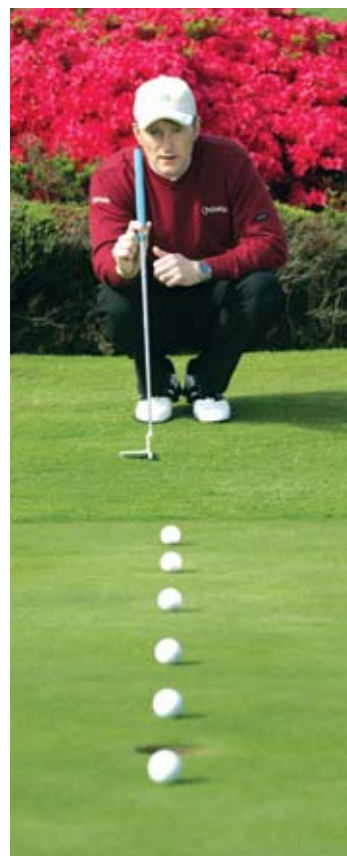
# BETTER BY *Putting* SATURDAY...

An expert in biomechanics, Dr Paul Hurrion has given putting advice to Rory McIlroy, Padraig Harrington, Lee Westwood and Paul McGinley. Here he offers some very useful tips to use on the practice green, which could easily help you better your scores by a few vital strokes...



## 1 READ PUTTS ACCURATELY

Before you even think about working on your stroke you need to make sure that you are setting up on your intended line. This is heavily influenced by whether, at address, what you perceive as a straight putt is actually straight. You can easily test this by finding a flat putt of around six feet. Place a line of balls from just behind the hole in a straight line back to where you intend to putt from (below). Set up to the end ball and line up square to the next ball in the line. Then look to the hole and see if the balls appear straight. For many they will curve one way or the other (right). If this is the case you need to adjust your posture to get your eyes directly over the ball until the line of balls appears straight.



## 2 SQUARE THE FACE

One change can have a big influence on your green-reading. When on the putting green check whether your face is pointing at the floor, rather than at an angle with your eyes looking down. If your face is parallel with the ground it will make green-reading much easier. In the top image you can see that my face is at an angle, which makes depth perception much harder to judge. Think of this as if you are holding a book; you would never read at such an angle. Also the posture in the bottom picture is much better for the neck as it puts less pressure on the cervical spine and reduces muscular tension.

## 3 IMPROVE YOUR BALANCE

When putting from any range one of the keys to consistency is good balance. Throughout the stroke the core of your body should remain fixed. By improving your balance you can dramatically improve your consistency. The ProStance training

aid will help highlight the flaws in your set-up position and your movement through the stroke. By standing on the inflated tube you will see whether your toes or heels are off the ground at address. You should work on hitting putts and maintaining an even balance throughout the stroke. You can make the challenge harder or easier by adding and removing the amount of air in the tube.



## 5 PRE GAME PREPARATION

This is a great drill to help find a solid stroke before you play a round. It is a drill used by many of the tour professionals I work with before they go out to play. Hit ten to 20 putts from around 15 feet with one foot in the air. Any unnecessary movement in your stroke will destabilise you and highlight any flaws in your stroke. This will help you set up for a more solid stroke when you return to normal putting.

## 4 BETTER STRIKE

A common problem I often see is players lifting their head too early and looking for putts. This produces an inconsistent stroke and can result in frustrating results. Your head and eyes should be set in position until after the ball has been struck. A simple but very useful drill is to place a penny under your ball when practising. When the ball is struck keep your eyes locked on the penny as the ball rolls towards the hole. This will help encourage you to keep your head down until after impact.

