

## BEGINNERS GOLF

11-02-2013 by Harry Zirkelbach

*From the first, children played games, without instructors. The agile, quick, daring, inquisitive, most often the successful. In addition to enjoyment, these became even more keen factors to success.*

*And so it was in the playgrounds of western Pennsylvania in the 1920s. The only adult with our children at Catholic Schools, the Nun, whose very garment was a deterrent to activity. No matter the game, her demonstration ended with initial visual and verbal instruction. Renewed again when recess concluded. From this, the children became pretty much self taught, predominant improvement gained through innate skill. It was an asset to be thin, of quick response/reaction. When not, the child could be relegated to an also-ran or worse an observer. Then in time, survivors were similarly talented, skillful.*

*On one life we follow, there was some two-left-foot syndrome.*

*Married, children raised, nest finally empty. Began plying tennis regularly with husband and in foursomes. Great exercise, the fresh air, availability of courts and little expense.*

*With exposure to Elderhostel in 1984 still another sport enters her life. Golf. This exercise always an addition to the main topics, students of widely different interest levels. And the course, always a Par 3, genteel and interesting challenge.*

*The first helping is at Briar Cliff College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Here, Iowan teacher motivation to student was nil, maybe less.*

*A few years later with John Steinbeck as primary topic, we come to the Monterrey Peninsula where golf is a beautiful afternoon exercise. The teacher is a genuine pro. Has all the qualities for excellence at the game. Only he cannot teach. Typically he would ask the group to perform some swing or stance, watch their duplication, and reply, "Class I'm very disappointed". He left one exercise that was productive. The practice field had little grass, many clump of weed. He had all practice driving an iron close to the ground, the weed as object, just nip it from its root. Victims were plentiful; the students cleared an acre of weed in one afternoon. At graduation, a round was played at a fine Pebble Beach course; little interest from the student we follow.*

*A third Elderhostel, St George Utah, had afternoon golf, good Pro.*

*Pre-graduation dinner, a game, six teams of four played a local course. Our subject's team has this unusual experience. In an early hole, one lady player hit erratically, the ball amiss to the left, bounces high off a rock, careens to another rocky knoll right of the hole, bounces less high left, lands on the green, runs to the hole. An incredible hole-in-one. Later, same round, male in the foursome has his drive land in the cup. The stunned teacher never had a student make a hole-in-one. Viola, two rarities, the same round. Our player is in the same foursome, takes pleasure in the result. Still, golf a mystery.*

*Later back home a friendly round is played. The foursome includes her husband. When she addresses the ball in a manner certain to drive and avoid the fairway, she is asked to consider a realignment. The “Don’t tell me how to play” the last golf communication between the couple that round, their final round of golf together,  
or an Elderhostel or any Denver Golf Course.  
And that was perfectly agreeable to the lady we followed for she never plays again, nor watches others ruin a nice day.*