



**MIKE BENNETT
ANDY PLUMMER**
Stack and Tilt Academy,
Mount Holly, N.J.
[Top 100 since 2013]



“Chop” Your Handicap in Half

To hit it longer and straighter than ever, pretend you’re splitting wood in your backswing

A solid backswing features rotation, side bend and extension. Most players get the first two right, because that’s what most teachers talk about. Extension is rarely taught, but when you watch the world’s best players on TV, you’ll see them reach full extension, which generates greater force.

EXTEND FOR A BETTER BACKSWING

As you rotate back, feel as if your body and arms are raising an ax high above your head, as though you were getting ready to chop wood. Because you’re also rotating, you won’t actually get the “ax” over your head like a woodcutter does, but it’s the correct feeling.

The images below will help you understand the move. In the photo below left, Mike is simply turning back with a normal amount of arm swing. Uninspiring, especially when you compare it with the photo on the right, where he has added vertical

force to his backswing by using the image of a woodcutter. [In the inset, Andy shows what the extension should feel like by imitating an axman at the top of his swing.] Note the position of the butt end of the grip in both photos, and how much farther it has moved by adding extension. That’s a ton of extra swing power! Moreover, Mike has maintained a sufficient level of spine angle. You don’t have to stay bent over from start to impact, as some teachers suggest. Just extend correctly and you’ll create more leverage and force, which in turn will produce longer and straighter shots.



Scan this photo to watch a video of this lesson. See p. 10.

No!

Turning back without extending leads to insufficient width and limited power.



Yes!



Extending while turning (pretend that you’re an axman chopping wood, above) produces huge width and loads of energy.

