

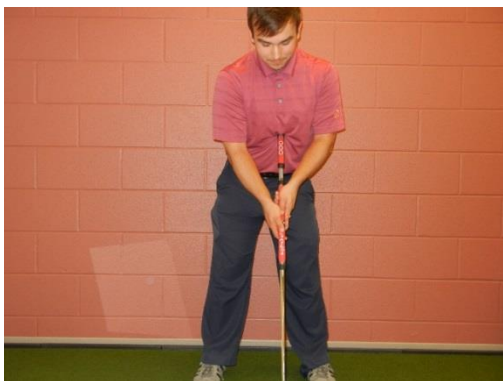
PRO2PRO BEST PRACTICES "ANCHORING THE CLUB"

BY: TYLER CAVINESS



As all PGA Professionals know, the year 2016 began with the release of the 2016-2019 *Rules of Golf*. With the release came a variety of changes to the Rules, the most substantive being the addition of 14-1b prohibiting the player from anchoring the club to the body. While we could spend our time arguing for or against the logic behind this change, the USGA and R&A have made it official and golfers must abide by this rule in competition.

The language of the rule is very clear. Rule 14-1b states that “in making a *stroke*, the player must not anchor the club, either “directly” or by use of an “anchor point.” Note 1 of the Rule interprets that the club is anchored “directly” when a player touches the club to the body, as pictured below, to make a *stroke*.



(EKU PGA Golf Management student: Ross Holtsclaw, junior from Fort Wayne, IN)

Additionally, Note 2 describes an “anchor point” as a “player intentionally holding a forearm in contact with any part of the body to establish a gripping hand as a stable point.” The *Decisions on the Rules of Golf* (14-1b/2) offers clarity on an “anchor point” by saying that two criteria must be met: the player must intentionally hold a forearm against the body and he must grip the club so that the hands are separated and work independently” (pictured below). In other words, the putting stroke that Adam Scott has been using over the last few years is no longer permitted.



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What happens if a player breaches this rule? The player takes a loss of hole in match play or two strokes in stroke play.

As is the case with all of the *Rules*, there are exceptions and decisions on the subject of anchoring that may be helpful. For example, Rule 14-b allows for the club to be touching the forearm (in the style of Matt Kuchar). What constitutes the forearm? The answer lies within Decision 14-1b/3. In the club setting, these types of decisions may be relevant as members constantly find new ways to get the ball in the hole sooner.

While not everyone agrees with this rule, it is important to remember that the Rules of Golf are written with a guiding principle of fairness. In the eyes of the USGA and R&A, anchoring a club could potentially provide an advantage for a player and does not constitute a stroke.