

MANUEL DE LA TORRE: SIMPLICITY COUNTS



By Lorin Anderson, President

I had the great pleasure of hosting Manuel de la Torre's induction into the World Golf Teachers Hall of Fame a little over a decade ago and that evening we printed up table cards for the guests that included half-a-dozen of Manuel's favorite quotes about teaching and playing. My wife, upon hearing of Manuel's passing,

dug around in her bookshelves and brought me the entire set of six cards she had kept from that night. And I'm very happy she did, because for my column this month I want to remember one of the all-time teaching greats by sharing these golden nuggets filled with simple ideas and simple concepts that still resonate many decades later. Enjoy:

"Swing the entire club (not just the clubhead) with the arms from the end of the backswing to the finish of the swing."

"If asked you to draw an apple, you'd keep an image of an apple in your head until you finished drawing. In golf, you have to visualize the club going directly toward the target while you're actually doing it. That's far more important than visualizing the ball going to the target. If you visualize what the club must do, the



Manuel de la Torre being inducted into the World Golf Teachers Hall of Fame in 2005.

mind takes care of the mechanics that get the ball there."

"Your only concern in holding the golf club is to do just that: Hold it with a constant attitude and allow the natural reactions to the swing to take place without interference on your part."

"My teaching is based on what I learned from Ernest Jones. It's simply learning to use the tool – the club – correctly. If you allow the swing to happen, it will happen correctly. The hips don't hit the ball. The shoulders don't hit the ball. The hands don't hit it. The club does. Ernest Jones was teaching this in 1920, and it's just as true now."

"The golf swing is such a simple movement and we humans complicate it to such an extent that it does not work. Our movement in the golf swing is essentially the same as many other everyday motions – the only difference is that in golf we do it with an implement called a golf club."

"Do you shop? Do you make a list of all the things you *don't* want to buy? Of course not. But that's the way people play golf. They stand over a shot thinking about all the things they don't want to do, instead of focusing on what they want to do." **PG**

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