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Grant Waite understands the fundamentals of low scoring.
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Master the elements of scoring

By [Patrick Cohn](#)
GolfWeb Columnist

Many golfers lose sight of the fact that golf is a game of numbers. The object is to shoot the lowest score possible. Chip Beck knows about scoring as he was the second PGA Tour player to shoot a 59 in competition.

In order to score that well, you have to hit a lot of greens and make putts, and that's just what he did. But all golfers know it's not that simple.

In my work with professional and amateur golfers, I often encounter players that get too concerned with playing the "perfect round" and hitting perfect shots.

They forget the goal of the game -- to shoot low. Instead, they become obsessed with hitting pretty shots that feel great, but the first bad shot causes them to unravel mentally.

Many golfers have told me that they would rather hit the ball great and shoot 72 than hit the ball poorly and shoot 69! But hitting the ball well simply means you are in control of your ball striking, which doesn't guarantee low scores.

What allows a player to shoot low? It comes down to the player's ability to score and master the elements of scoring.

Grant Waite shot a career round 60 during the last round of the [1996 Phoenix Open](#). Realizing he was seven under par on his first nine, Waite felt it was his best chance ever to shoot 59. His attitude was: "Let's see how low we can go. Let's try to

shoot the lowest score we can."

All the normal hang ups on hitting perfect shots must take a "back seat" to the elements of scoring: "All I thought about was seeing the shot and making that image happen," said Waite. "I had no thoughts of mechanics or routine".

Waite attributes shooting 60 to being able to master the elements of scoring. For him, the elements of scoring includes physical and mental skills such as making important putts, getting up and down when you miss the green, being confident, staying calm, and making good decisions.

Let's see how you can apply these scoring tactics to your game:

Making Key Putts

- Players often encounter key putts in the round that help build confidence and momentum. That first 10-foot birdie putt is critical to getting the round going. If you make it, you are off to the races, but a miss can crush your confidence. Grant said it wasn't the best putting round ever, but "every time I had a chance to make birdie, I made the putt."

Believing in Your Ability

- Momentum is a big confidence booster in golf. If you make a string of putts, you can build upon it to enhance your game. But you have to start with a good foundation and believe in your skills. Keeping your confidence when you make an error or hit a bad shot is also important to scoring well. You must know that you can recover.

Staying Calm

- When players get excited about their current round, they tend to take themselves out of their normal rhythm. When scoring well, you need to stay calm and keep playing. Players sometimes get too conservative and do not get out of their own way. or they don't let the momentum work for them because they get too excited about shooting a low score.

Make Good Decisions

- Making good decisions on the course includes several ideas. It means picking out the right targets, hitting the correct club

off the tees, and aiming at the correct side of the pin to have the best putting angle. You must also play what the course gives you, knowing when to be aggressive and when to lay off. It also means taking what the course gives you, or being aggressive and attacking when you have the chance and playing smart and conservative when the situation tells you to

If you can master these scoring elements, you are sure to play your best golf and shoot low numbers.

Email you questions to Dr. Cohn at PGA_PACK@aol.com.

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