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The downward motion of the swing should start with your shoulder, move through the elbow (which should remain as straight as possible) and down through the wrist. The wrist will start in a bent position in the wind-up stance but, as the mallet comes down, the wrist should straighten out in one fluid motion, creating almost a flicking motion as the head of the mallet contacts the ball. The movement should be as fluid, relaxed and as controlled as possible. To perfect this, breathe in during the wind-up and out during the drop.
3. Contact

The moment of impact with the ball is crucial. The sweet spot on the ball is just below its centre of gravity, or just below the mid-point of the ball. Lofting the ball, even a little, will increase its travelling distance because of the lack of friction it would encounter rolling along the ground. Ideally, a spectator should be able to draw a straight line from your head, over your elbow and wrist, and straight down to the ball. If your arm is a pendulum, it is crucially important that it is straight at the moment of contact. Some recommend holding the mallet loosely in your hand.

Contact.
throughout the first half of the swing, and just squeezing your hand shut at the moment of contact with the ball. This, combined with the whippiness of the mallet, increases the speed of the mallet head.

4. Follow-through

As mentioned earlier, the follow-through is probably the single biggest game-changer between a player who merely hits the ball down the field and one who can place it strategically where intended. The speed that the mallet picks up during the first half of the swing will carry momentum with it, which will be your follow-through. If your swing stops right after contact with the ball, it was losing momentum the entire time, and the ball will not travel as far as it should. Always keep in mind your follow-through and you will guide the ball further and more accurately than if you don’t. During the follow-through, your head should

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remain still and in place, but your eyes must follow the direction of the cane through the follow-through. If you move your head at all during the contact or the beginning of the follow-through it will throw off the entire swing.

**NEARSIDE FORE SHOT – STAGES OF THE SWING**

1. **Wind-up**

To begin the nearside fore shot, stand up in the two-point position and rotate your hips and your shoulders as far to the left as possible. Many players find that, by digging their right knees and swinging their right foot out away from the pony, they’re able to twist further while giving themselves a balancing weight. I tend to straighten my left leg, stand up on it and rotate the rest of my body around it. Bring your mallet hand across your chest and as close to your left shoulder as possible, while maintaining contact on the reins. Be sure not to pull your rein hand to the left as you turn because your pony will end up moving left and running over top of the ball.

2. **The drop**

The nearside fore shot is actually hit with the back of the mallet head. Many beginners will try to rotate their hands to hit it on the front of the mallet (where they would hit the offside fore shot), but they soon find out that their follow-through is impossible. Again, to maximise the distance the mallet head has to travel, and hence to give you more strength to your swing, straighten your arm as soon as possible during the drop. Throughout the drop, you will keep your head over the ball, maintain eye contact, and twist with your navel and shoulders. You won’t be able to utilise your hips so much as you would in the offside fore shot because your follow-through will still be on the left side of the pony.