

Participatory: NARP plays golf

Walking into the Bubble, I was hoping my expert mini golf skills would help me as I attempt to play golf with some of the FPU women's team. Turns out those skills did nothing for me.

We started out easy: putting. I managed to make my first three putts, but was told I was hitting the ball too hard. For the next couple of tries, we worked on my stance, "take more of an athletic stance and bend your knees," said sophomore Shannon Slater.



After about an hour of procrastinating, Shannon insisted I had "mastered putting," and it was time to move over to the net to practice my swing. We started easy by working up to a full swing.

First we had to correct my stance and my form. "You like standing really close, huh?" said Shannon as I stood with the ball two inches in front of my shoe.

I took a step back, "look at the ball and keep your as straight as possible", I thought as I prepared to take my first swing.

To my surprise, I actually hit the ball. It didn't go exactly where I wanted to go, but at least I hit. With each swing, we took a minute to talk about what I did wrong.

"The biggest thing you need to work on is keeping your head down," said Shannon. On most of my swings, I ended up not looking at the ball as I hit it, but looking at Shannon for confirmation that I was doing it right. Spoiler: Looking at your instructor instead of the ball as you swing is not right.

A couple of my swings didn't end too well, with the ball ending up so in the corner of the net, it almost didn't make it in. I looked back at Shannon with my signature mess up face.



(photo: Shannon Slater)

In our last minutes at the net, it was time for me to try a full swing. My first attempt didn't go well, as I stopped mid swing to look at Shannon and ask, "is this right?"



(photo: Shannon Slater)

That ball didn't go far. However, my second attempt went better than I could have imagined. The ball went right into the middle of the net. We decided it was best to end on a positive note.

"Meg actually did really well," claims Shannon. I, a perfectionist, wasn't so sure about that. Shannon tried cheering me up, "golf is a hard sport to learn at any age, but it's especially hard when you're not used to the way you need to bend and twist and turn. But you did rather well."

While you won't see me on any PGA tours any time soon, I challenge anyone who's up to it for a round of mini golf. When I asked Shannon what I was best at throughout our sessions, she gave me one word, "putting."