

[ABOUT DANA](#)[SCHOOL PROGRAMS](#)[PRIVATE INSTRUCTION](#)[STAY & PLAY](#)[NEWS & EVENTS](#)[GIFT CARDS](#)[FAQ](#)[CONTACT US](#)[NEWS](#)[SPECIAL EVENTS](#)[GOLF TIPS](#)[PRINT PAGE](#)

## GOLF TIPS

### SAND SAVES WEEK #4

by Julie Cole

#### Fairway bunker shots

When faced with any bunker shot I think through what I call the three "L's". Lip, Lie, Loft. First determine how high the "lip" of the bunker is to carry, determine if the "lie" is buried, sitting up, hard packed sand, soft sand and then what "loft" do I need to meet those conditions to get it out. Generally, in a fairway bunker the ball is sitting up on some fairly firm sand. If you can use a hybrid club or a high lofted fairway metal wood this is generally easier to hit than a long iron out of fairway bunkers, and the ball will even come out if it is sitting a little into the sand..

Ideally you will hit the ball before the sand, catching the ball toward the bottom of the clubface. With a hybrid or metal wood you can hit a little sand and still get out.

#### I use the following technique to escape:

Dig my feet into the sand and move my hands down the grip slightly. Then I set my weight about 60% on my left foot to hit slightly down on the ball. I like to keep my weight firmly on my left leg to ensure my feet don't slip in the sand. This usually is a ¾ feeling swing with about 70% effort. My goal is to get the ball in play on the fairway for an easy shot into the green.

### SAND SAVES WEEK #3

by Julie Cole

#### Extremely wet sand

In the Carolinas after a good deal of rain, some types of sand will turn hard almost like clay. In this case the bounce on a sand wedge will skip or skid off the surface of the sand and cause you to hit the ball thin. I usually choose between two different options. If the lip is low I will putt or chip it out, just like a regular fringe shot; or play a mini-explosion shot with a 52 degree wedge or pitching wedge. Set-up like an explosion shot, with the club face well open.

With a smooth, gentle swing, take out about an inch behind the ball and skim the shot out. It will come out low, with a lot of spin.

#### Long Explosion Bunker Shots

This shot can be difficult for even professionals to get up and down. You may be faced with a shot that is 30 yards or more and you can't blast it out with a sand wedge. I like to switch to a pitching wedge or even a 9 iron depending on how far away I am from the pin. Play the ball forward, with a slightly open stance. Open the clubface to create a little bounce, and swing hitting an inch or so behind the ball. The longer shaft and lower loft will give you the added distance you need, plus some spin for the ball to stop.

### SAND SAVES WEEK #2

By Julie Cole

Golf courses can be tough enough and then they add bunkers on every hole. Some are deep, some

are level and then the texture and depth of sand varies from course to course. I haven't met to many players of the game who like to practice out of the sand, usually there isn't a place to practice, so you are faced with figuring it out as you are playing. The following techniques and ideas will assist you in a variety of bunkers you find yourself in.

### **Alternative Sand Saves**

#### **No Lip**

If the lip of the bunker is low and the sand is somewhat firm putt it or chip it out. The key here is to contact the ball first and eliminate hitting any sand. Remember you may not ground the club in the sand before hitting the shot.

For both a putt and a chip from the sand, I play the ball more centered, hands slightly ahead of the ball and use a firm wristed stroke. If your wrists become flippy, trying to help the ball up, you will contact to much sand. So lock down those wrists and pick the ball off the surface of the sand.

---

## **SAND SAVES WEEK #1**

By Julie Cole

### **High Flying Sand Saves**

Sand shots are unique in that you do not hit the ball first but eliminate sand first. In order to take out the appropriate amount of sand you need the right wedge. Sand wedges have bounce, which means the trailing edge of the sole drops below the leading edge. This allows the bottom of the club to slide through the sand without digging. For most amateur players I recommend a 60 degree wedge with 10 degrees or more of bounce. This insures against letting the leading edge stick into the sand. However, the more bounce the 60 degree club has, the harder it is to hit from tight lies on the fairway.

The trade-off is worth it!

With the right equipment coupled with the following technique, and practice, you will be free to hit fearless sand shots.

Tempo is a key to good bunker shots and I control tempo with a long, flowing swing with my hands and arms swinging in conjunction with a good pivot with my shoulders. The more loft, the bigger I swing to move the ball, and the 60 degree wedge allows me to be aggressive. A firm swing means more friction is created between the sand and ball, which produces more spin.

The set-up and ball position for a high flying sand save are essential to making contact with the right amount of sand and contacting the sand about 1-2 inches behind the ball. I place the ball position forward of center and accentuate the spin by slightly opening the blade which makes the wedge more like a 65 degree loft. Allow the club to set earlier with your hands and arms and then focus on taking out a "dollar bill" amount of sand where the ball sits. Swing to a full finish, with your body facing the target, and weight off your back foot. The club is left of my body, and pointing to the sky which means I kept my body rotating through to the finish.

---

Dana Rader Golf School © All Rights Reserved 2005  
10000 Ballantyne Commons Parkway • Charlotte, NC 28277 • Phone: 704.542.7635 • Toll Free 1-877-99-RADER

[About Dana](#) | [School Programs](#) | [Private Instruction](#) | [Stay & Play](#) | [News & Events](#) | [Gift Cards](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Home](#)

Designed & Hosted by

**REC**COMMUNICATIONS