As the season is now underway and all of you have had a chance to knock the dust off of the clubs a little bit, I think it is very important to discuss one of the simplest, yet most vital elements to getting better that I see overlooked almost every day. Now before I get into this mind blowing practice element that every one of you can benefit from, let me ask a question. Why do we practice? I think we can all agree that somewhere in your answer would be the words, “to get better”! Now, if you were to walk up and down the range at any major Tour event which features the best players in the world, what is something they all have in common? The answer? They all have something lying on the ground to help them with alignment to their intended target. But these are the best players in the world: why on earth would they need to line themselves when they practice? The answer is to make sure nothing gets out of whack! Almost every problem I see on the lesson tee is a direct cause of improper alignment. When we line up incorrectly to our target, be it full swing, chipping or putting, we are forced to make a compensating move to get back to our target. Over an extended period of time, this creates bad habits that can be very difficult to break out of, as many of you are aware! Now I am not saying that by simply lining yourselves up will magically cure your golf swing, but let me leave you with a question to ponder. If the golf swings tend to morph into a string of compensating moves, in most cases due to something as silly as improper alignment, would correct alignment begin to teach the body to correct the motion and maybe teach us how to deliver the club on the correct path, square to the intended target? Run to your local hardware store and pick up some alignment rods. If you need some help lining yourself up correctly or are not sure what square actually is, come look me up, or any one of the UMCC professionals. We can’t all play like the pros, but it doesn’t mean we can benefit from practicing like the pros! Remember that training smarter is training harder! Best of luck!!