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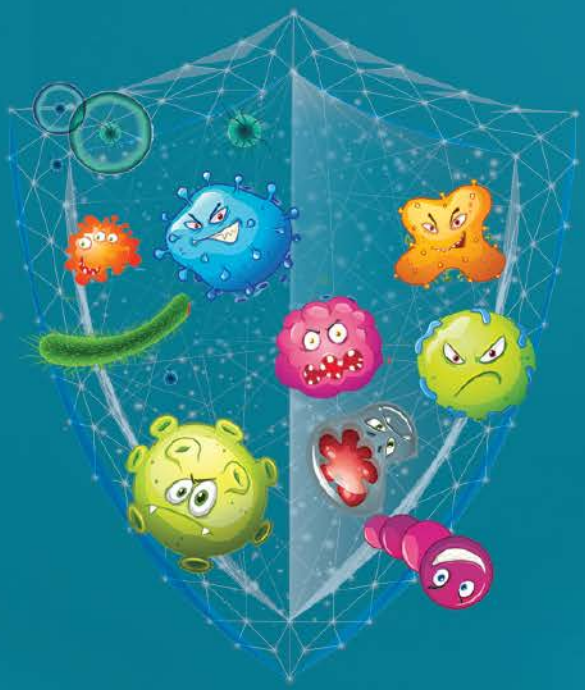

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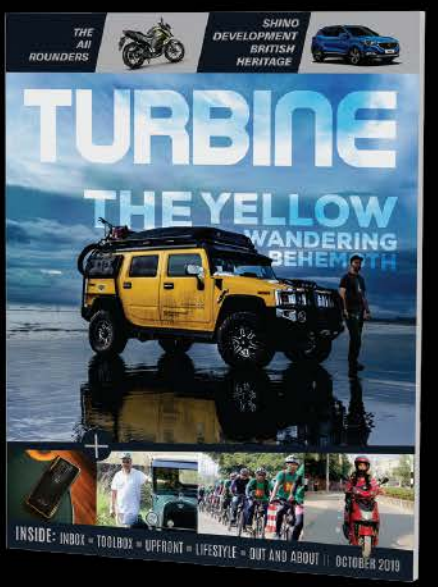

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GOLFER'S LIFE

> These are difficult times for all of us, but by now we all have come to realise that we will have to live with the novel coronavirus for far more than we would have initially hoped to.



EDITOR'S CHOICE



"It feels good to be champion. Even if it's a local tournament, but a title is always a title. It was held after a long layoff, which is why the scored were low. Otherwise my score would have been much better."

Forward

Dear readers,

Good to bring to you another issue of your favourite golf magazine TheGolfHouse in these evolving times.

These are difficult times for all of us, but by now we all have come to realise that we will have to live with the novel coronavirus for far more than we would have initially hoped to.

So the 'new normal' will be part of our life for an unforeseeable future, and golf, too, will be adapting to the new normal and evolving with it too.

As you know, professional golf has already got off in the country through the 5th Paragon Golf Tournament in February at the Army Golf Club. And there have been a few other small-scale tournaments across the country.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our independence and the birth centenary of our Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, we will be having many tournaments in different disciplines.

The first of those tournaments will be the Bangabandhu 9th Bangladesh Games which will feature amateur golf, among other events.

And we hope that following the Bangladesh Games, golfing events will gather more speed and golfers will be back to where they belong.

Stay safe, stay positive.

Nazrul Hosen Ayon
Editor

The GolfHouse
GOLFER'S LIFE

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SIDDIKUR'S WINNING RETURN

Professional golf returned to Bangladesh in February this year after a gap of 11 months due to the coronavirus pandemic and it was none other than Siddikur Rahman, the most high-profile golfer of the country, who triumphed in the 5th Paragon Professional Golf Tournament following a tough three-round battle.

The last tournament held in Bangladesh in pre-Covid era was in March 2020 and most of the golfers did not have any chance to play the game during this long break. A few professional golfers such as Zamal Hossain Mollah, Ali Akbar, Badal Hossain and Mohammad Sayum played in India as PGTI opened resumed its tournaments before Bangladesh.

Siddikur, on the other hand, skipped those tournaments and concentrated on training rather than taking part in overseas events.

Although he showed some rustiness like most of the 82 golfers at the Army Golf Club, the two-time Asian Tour winner eventually came up trumps against the likes of Zamal and Akbar.

Siddikur finished the event with a score of five-under-par (211), two strokes ahead of Zamal (three-under-213) and four ahead of Akbar (one-under-215).

These three players were the only ones to register under-par scores as majority of the 82 competitors showed rustiness following the long layoff. Siddikur was, nevertheless, happy to make a winning return.

"Zamal was really unlucky in the last hole," Siddikur said regarding Zamal's false shot on the final hole.

"It feels good to be champion. Even if it's a local tournament, but a title is always a title. It was held after a long layoff, which is why the scores were low. Otherwise my score would have been much better," Siddikur added.



LEADER BOARD

5TH PARAGON PROFESSIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT 2021

1	Siddikur Rahman	71	71	69	211	-5
2	Zamal Hossain Mollah	74	69	70	213	-3
3	Akbar Hossain	69	74	72	215	-1
4	Sajib Ali	73	73	71	217	1
5	Mohammad Muaj	73	71	73	217	1
6	Mohammad Rasel	72	71	74	217	1
7	Shah Alam	76	72	71	219	3
8	Badal Hossain	73	72	74	219	3
9	Jakiruzzaman	79	70	72	221	5
10	SH Sohel	81	73	68	222	6





FRANK THOMAS, USGA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR FOR A QUARTER CENTURY, DIES AT 81

Thomas, the long-time senior technical director of the United States Golf Association whose carefully measured influence over the game's equipment stretched across half a century, has died. He was 81.

Thomas led the USGA's equipment rules-making efforts from 1974 to 2000 and contributed mightily to the way the game is enjoyed today by developing the graphite shaft in 1969, a component that is part of clubs in the bag of nearly every golfer. Its lighter weight enabled golfers to start the game earlier, play the game longer and swing the club faster than they ever had before.

Prior to coming to the USGA, Thomas earned an engineering degree from Western Michigan University and was working for Shakespeare Sporting Goods. He developed the filament winding technique for graphite fibers around a mandrel to control the demanding torsional bending properties of a golf shaft.

But it was at the USGA where Thomas' influence defined the limits of equipment performance for a generation. It was an era of more equipment upheaval than is likely appreciated today, yet Thomas maintained a respect for tradition with a concerted focus on science for solutions. Under his guidance, there were new methodologies for testing golf-ball flight that came to be the Overall Distance Standard, and he developed the concept that limited the spring-like effect in driver faces.

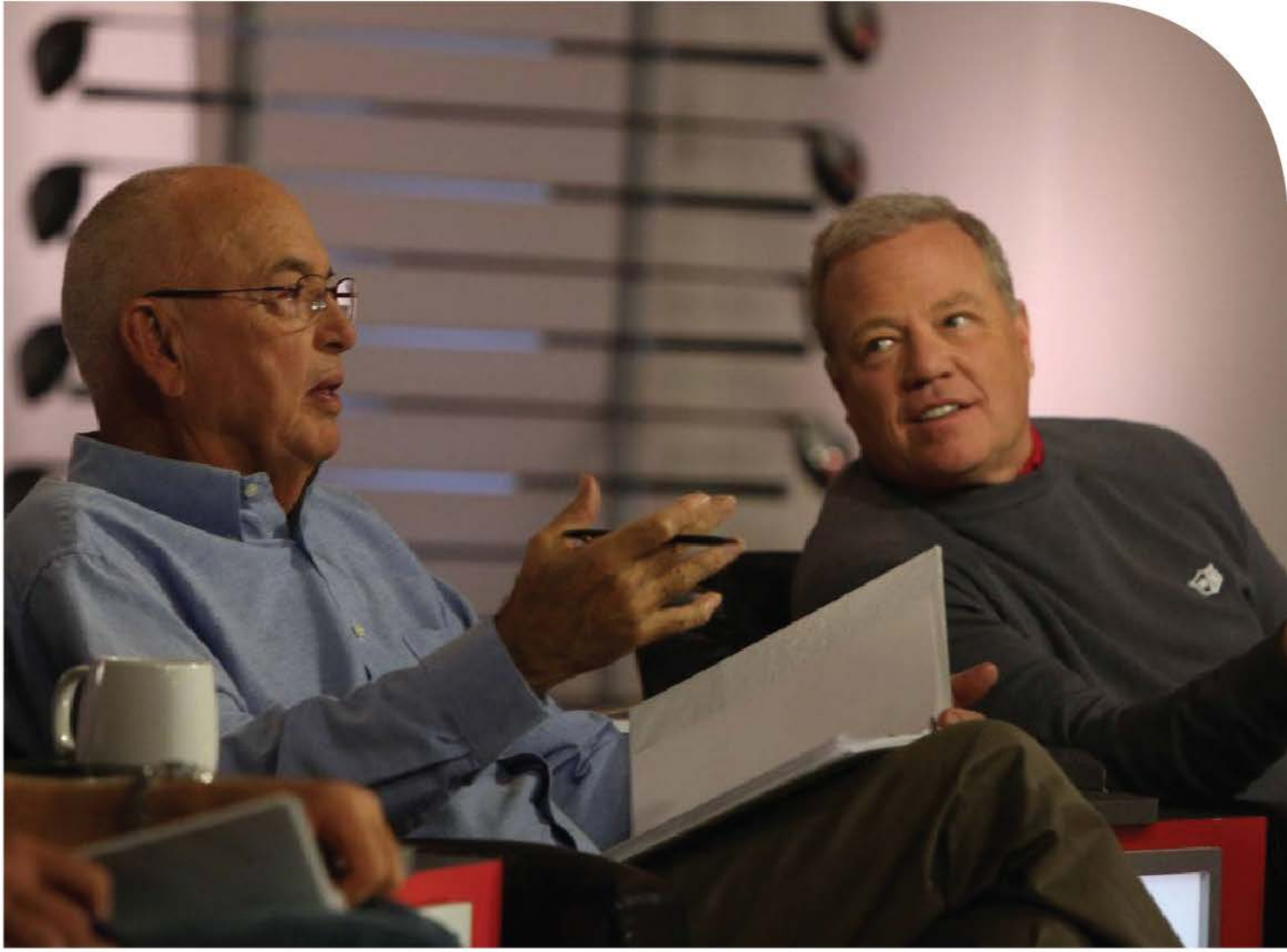
He also wrote rules about the shape of grips, holes in the heads of irons, woods and wedges and made clear the "plain in shape" rule, an interpretation that added broad but clearer limits on what equipment should look like in the interest of keeping the implements of the game of tomorrow recognizable with those of yesterday. He also helped to conceive the USGA's Slope system for rating golf courses so handicaps were tied more directly to the relative difficulty of the course.

Thomas earned the respect of both those who worked with him at the USGA and those whose products he ruled on sometimes negatively. "Frank was such an important part of the USGA and the game," said Mike Davis, CEO of the USGA. "He was an innovator who created golf's first graphite shaft and played an integral role in creating the Slope System for golf course rating, among many of his incredible achievements. Most importantly, he was a friend of so many in our game. He will be sorely missed."

His native South African accent, neatly cropped beard that was equal parts professor and ship captain and 6-foot-3 stature gave his equipment decisions a kind of knowing grandeur, but their worth was in their rigor.

"Frank Thomas was a brilliant mind and tireless contributor to golf's commercial landscape," said Wally Uihlein, former Acushnet Golf CEO, in an email. "His tenure at the USGA was seminal. For more than a quarter of a century, he was the absolute voice regarding conformity to the equipment rules and test procedures.

While one may not have always agreed with Frank, his decisions and explanations were consistent. It was not an easy job, but he was more than equal to the task.



The industry has lost one of the most important figures from maybe the most turbulent period in the 100-plus year history of the commerce of golf.

"Frank was an intellectual and analytical giant. To do what he did and to fulfill that job description, with limited resources, during that period, a period unlikely ever to be repeated, was a Herculean effort."

Thomas, who with his counterpart and friend R&A technical expert Alastair Cochran kept an academic's focus on equipment guidelines, confessed that while he oversaw more than 6,000 equipment decisions in his time at the USGA, he enjoyed it very little because each one involved nettlesome record-keeping, paperwork and occasionally lawyers.

"Fortunately I had good people working with me, which made the task bearable," he wrote in his memoir Just Hit It, "but I knew I had to be excruciatingly thorough because I did not want to do something wrong or make a decision that I couldn't defend later."

With a 'brilliant mind,' the USGA chief equipment regulator walked the line between a love for golf innovation and protecting the game's traditions.

There were notable vexing moments in Thomas's quarter-century steering the equipment ship. Among them was a decision outlawing the Polara ball, which was designed to self-correct hooks and slices with its pattern of six rows of full dimples around the equator of the ball and extremely shallow ones on either end. Thomas disallowed the ball under a broad interpretation of the rules prohibiting artificial devices that might assist the player making a stroke. Thomas also employed a stipulation that reserved the right of the USGA to change club and ball rules at any time, left the Polara off the list of conforming balls and then added a rule about golf ball symmetry. But the USGA later had to settle out of court with the maker for a reported $1.375 million.

Thomas wanted to stay ahead of a future in equipment in innovation he couldn't always clearly see by defending the game's enduring challenge, said Jerry Tarde, Editor-in-Chief of Golf Digest and global head of strategy & content for Discovery Golf/Golf Digest. "Frank symbolized golf equipment innovation for 30 years and gave terms like 'coefficient of restitution' a popular following to the extent that he became known as 'Dr. Strangeclub,' " Tarde said. "The words that I always associate with him are 'We don't want to put a ladder up the Matterhorn,' which perfectly encapsulated his goal to preserve the challenge while promoting the moutain-climbing spirit of the game."

But it was the USGA's knockdown-drag-out fight with Ping and its founder Karsten Solheim over the "square grooves" in his Eye2 irons that was a kind of Cuban Missile



Crisis event for equipment rulemaking. It led to a $300 million antitrust lawsuit in 1985 that named Thomas personally and hinged on the interpretation of the measurement of a groove, a measurement that for all intents and purposes constituted the width of a human hair. Thomas initiated a change in the rules that provided updated and practical guidelines that in essence prevented more than half the irons on the market at the time from being ruled non-conforming.

But the new specifics on groove width and spacing ran into measurement challenges, and the ruling bodies eventually blinked—albeit with no money changing hands and, perhaps most importantly, the USGA's authority to make equipment rules was upheld.

Thomas called Solheim a friend, writing, "His tenacity and stubbornness impressed me and made Karsten one of the most successful innovators in the game," Thomas wrote, remembering fondly how Solheim bought a Thomas self-portrait as part of a Golf Digest charity auction. "I shed more than a few tears at his posthumous—and belated—induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame."

Karsten's son, John A. Solheim, who took over the reins for his father, remembered Thomas fondly.

"I'm very saddened to hear of Frank's passing," said Solheim, Ping chairman and CEO. "He was a respected friend to both myself and my father. We were on opposite sides of the table with Frank during the 'square groove' era and a few other issues over the years, which led to countless disagreements and spirited debates, but in the end, we walked away as friends. We remained close over the years as he continued his passion for golf research and product design. He will be missed."

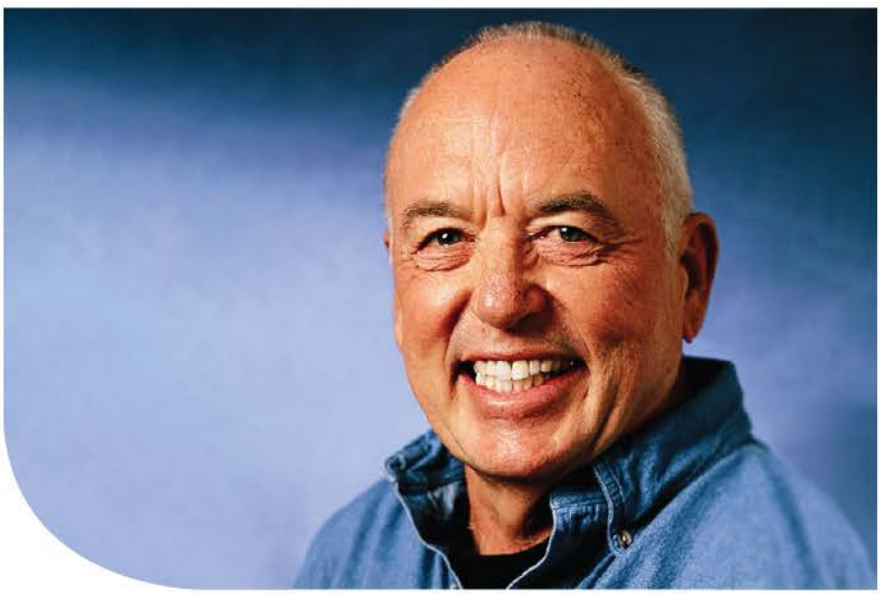
Of course, for a time, the grooves controversy may have tempered the ruling bodies' willingness to aggressively limit equipment companies and their innovations.
At least that's how Thomas saw it. In the mid-1990s, Thomas saw the approach of thin-faced titanium drivers and realized the game was at a kind of crossroads. The thinner faces, Thomas believed, violated the earlier rule he had written to prevent metal drivers from having a spring-like effect. While he said he privately advocated the drivers be disallowed after demonstrating the spring-like effect existed, he helped develop a limit on "coefficient of restitution" in 1998 that was in line with where drivers were at the time. He wrote in Just Hit It, "I was a little upset at being asked to compromise the enforcement of a rule I had written, and especially at being told that I was not really interpreting it correctly. Perhaps I should have just accepted it and kept my mouth shut. This is not my nature."

The new enforcement procedure for the rule required a limit on spring-like effect involved a somewhat complicated air cannon test and a numerical average for coefficient of restitution that carried to the third decimal. He later wrote, "I came to realize that the rules should in most cases express principles that cover intents and purposes rather than trying to anticipate every innovation that may arise someday and specify it out of existence. The rules that do this are effective and tend to remain so; the ones that are overly specific often have unintended consequences."

Thomas stepped down from the USGA less than two years later.







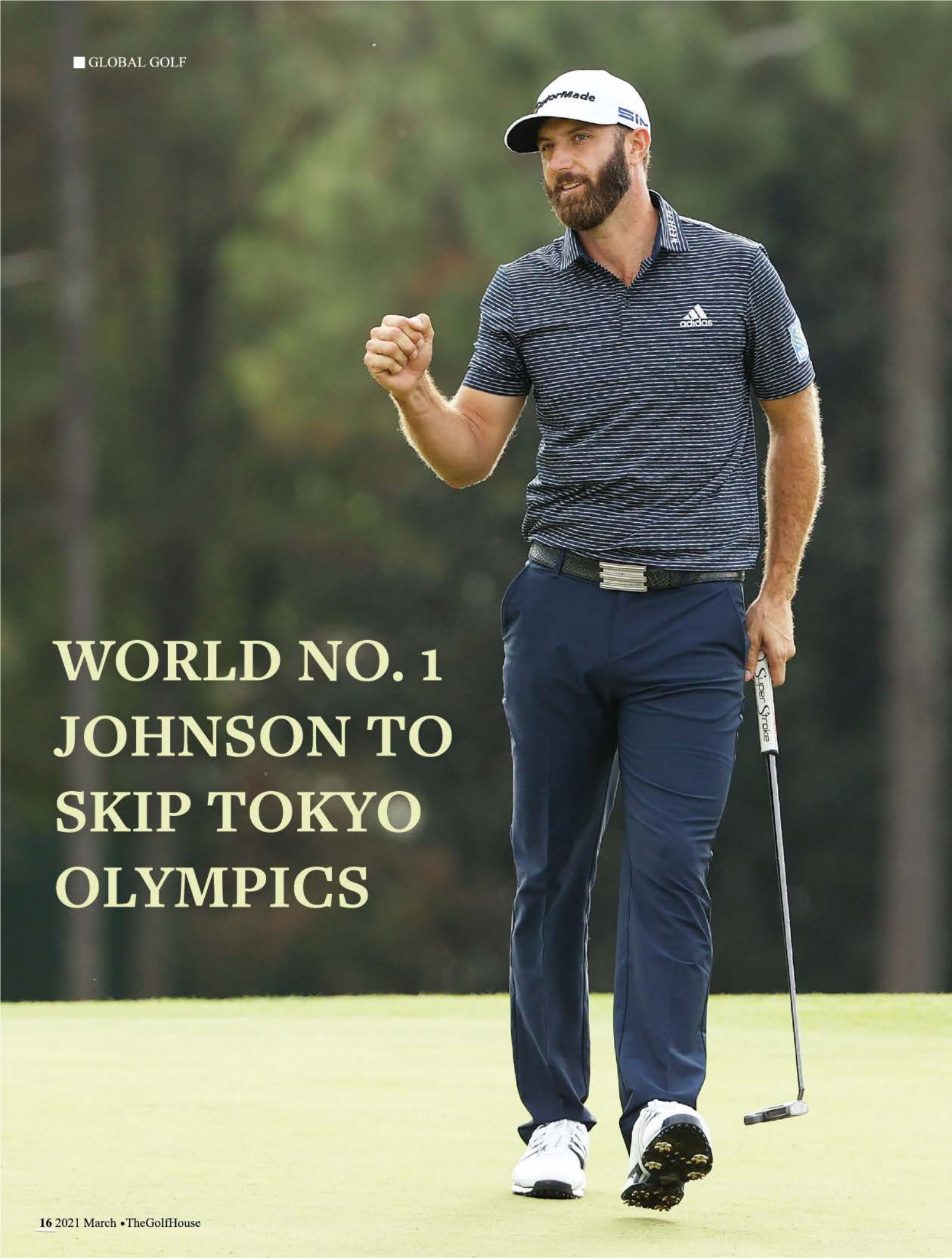


After his tenure at the USGA Thomas served as an equipment expert and analyst for Golf Digest and Golf Channel, including a stint as a judge on the equipment design contest show presented by Wilson Golf, "Driver vs. Driver." He also developed his own distinctive green mallet putter, the Frankly Frog, and spent the last 15 years researching, teaching putting and writing books in Orlando.

One of those books, Banshee, detailed the daring attempt of a young Thomas and his friend Malcolm Maidwell to sail from his native Durban in South Africa to the U.S. on a 25-foot sailboat in 1962.
In a very real way, the fantastic journey both set the course for the rest of Thomas's adventurous life while at the same time showed the man's legendary but practical resolve at problem-solving in the face of chaos.

"My decision was really simple," he writes of the thinking behind the seemingly impossible and ill-advised journey. "I recognized that I needed to take responsibility for my actions and decisions. I must now learn to answer to me alone for the good and bad decisions I make. ... I needed to be me."

Thomas, who passed away on Wednesday a few days after a sudden heart attack on his daily walk, is survived by his wife and Frankly Golf co-founder Valerie Melvin, also his children from his first marriage to Wendy Thomas: Joanne Thomas, Ginny Zimmerman, Will Thomas; and his grandchildren Colin and Jordan Zimmerman and Alli and Ryan White.



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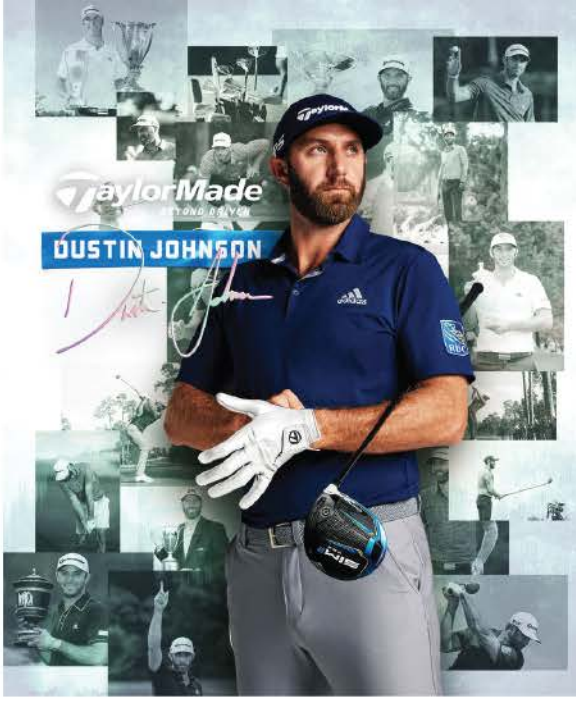


Top-ranked Dustin Johnson has said that travel issues around golf tour events have prompted him to opt out of consideration for the US squad to compete at the Tokyo Olympics.

"It's a lot of travelling at a time where it's important for me to feel like I'm focused playing on the PGA Tour," Johnson said recently.

The reigning Masters champion said last year he would not have played in the Japan Games had they been staged as planned in 2020 because he was making the US PGA's playoffs a priority and those events began two weeks after the Olympics.

The Olympics was postponed to this July and Johnson won last year's FedEx Cup playoff crown to achieve that career goal. But this time, Johnson doesn't like the July 29-August 1 Olympic tournament being so close to the British Open, set for July 15-18 at England's Royal St. George's, and the WGC St. Jude Invitational in Memphis August 5-8.

"I really didn't think much about it," Johnson said. "I actually didn't really ever decide whether I was going to play or not. I just didn't sign up.

"But it's right in the middle of a big stretch of golf for me, so that was the reason I was kind of waffling on it a little bit. "It's a long way to travel."

Johnson qualified for the 2016 US Olympics but dropped out just weeks before the start due to concerns over the Zika virus in Brazil.

Johnson said he would have considered the Olympics more had there been more time between the $10.5 million WGC event and the Tokyo Olympics.



The four top-ranked American players after the US Open in June would qualify for the Olympics, provided all are in the top 15. This week, 11 of the top 15 in the world rankings are US players.

With Johnson out, the four Americans who would qualify currently include third-ranked Justin Thomas, fourth-ranked 2020 PGA Championship winner Collin Morikawa, fifth-ranked Xander Schauffele and sixth-ranked Bryson DeChambeau, the reigning US Open champion.

Leading the chase to overtake them over the next three months to play in Tokyo are eighth-ranked Masters winner and 2016 US Olympian Patrick Reed, world number nine Patrick Cantlay, 10th- ranked Webb Simpson and four-time major winner Brooks Koepka, ranked 12th.

Simpson said Tuesday he wasn't likely to play in Tokyo if he did move up and qualify.

"Nothing against the Olympics, but I'm personally more interested in trying to win majors, The Players Championship, the FedExCup than be a medalist in the Olympics," Simpson said.

"Part of it is exciting for me, but the thought of going halfway around the world for that time frame in that part of our season is really tough for me to swallow."

"It would be a hard one for me to go to, knowing what's at stake here on the PGA Tour.
"I feel like it would really shoot me in the foot for the playoffs and right now in my career playoffs are more important to me than the Olympics."
---AFP

Ask The Rules Guy

My ball rolled through a hard-packed bunker and came to rest outside it. I needed to stand in the bunker to play my next shot, so I took a practice swing, hitting the wet sand, which stayed on the clubface. The sand added spin to my shot, helping to keep it on the green. Is it legal to take a practice swing in a bunker and ground the club? And can you leave sand on the clubface?

–Jim Smith, via email

A: Be forewarned, Jim: Reading this answer is going to make this the last time you can legally put sand on the clubface. The bunker restrictions as set out in Rule 12 apply only when your ball is in a bunker; when your ball is outside it, there's no issue with going into the sand and making a practice swing, grounding the club or not. (Remember to rake when you're done, of course.) That said, Rule 4.1(a)3 prohibits the player from deliberately applying material to the clubface in order to aect its performance characteristics. If you ignore that prohibition and then play a stroke that way, you'll be disqualied at the rst oense. Knowledge isn't just power; it's responsi-bility too. And, no, you can't claim neverto have read this column!

Q: I was watching a Champions Tour event recently, and a player who shall remain nameless using a long (but presumably not anchored) putter missed a short putt. He dropped the atstick in disgust and it came very close to hitting his ball at rest. Had it done so, would there have been a penalty?

–Mark Pozniak, Red Hook, N.Y.



That rare occasion when a rough break can go your way

A: Surely any broom-wielding hold-out has suered enough indignity, no? And, in fact, this disgusted one would have been in the clear regardless, as the rele vant Rule, 13.1(d), turns on the ques-tion of whether the player accidentally caused the ball to move, not on whether he intended to drop the putter. As con-tact clearly would have been acciden-tal, he'd simply move the ball back to its original location with no penalty... and try to hole another shorty with his longy.

Q: I know the latest Rules revision removed the penalty for pulling a T.C. Chen–a double-hit shot now just counts as one stroke. But does that also hold true on the putting surface? Recently, my opponent had a short putt that he "inadvertent-ly" hit twice and holed.

–Mike Stout, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

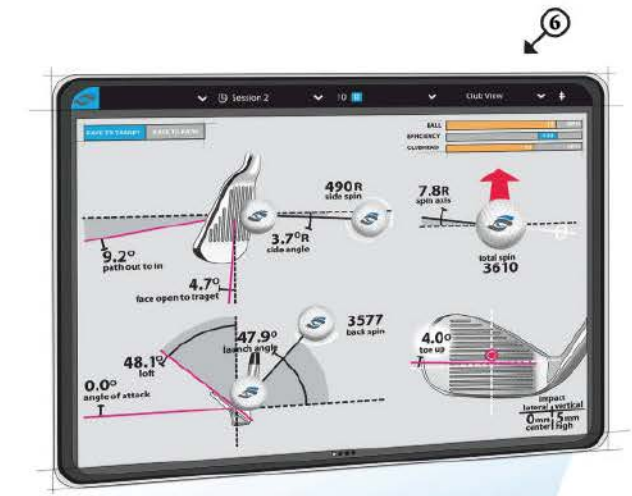
A: First, Mike, let's spare a thought for T.C. "Two Chip" Chen, remem-bered for one cruel twist of fate while leading the 1985 U.S. Open rather than his playo victory over none other than Ben Crenshaw at the 1987 Los Angeles Open or for being the rst Taiwanese player to earn a PGA Tour card. Like Bill Buckner in the 1986 World Series, Scott Norwood in 1991's Super Bowl XXV or Chris Web-ber in the 1993 NCAA Division I Basketball Championship, no one wants his worst moment to be his legacy, nor should it be. Back to the matter at hand: Rule 10.1(a) applies anywhere on the course, from the highest of rough to the shortest of grass. Your air quotes suggest that you believe your opponent's double hit was no accident, however, and if you are convinced that's the case you're free to bring the matter to the committee's attention for adjudication as to whether Timmy Two Times played a moving ball. But that seems almost as sad as inten-tionally double-hitting a putt.

How It Works

Fore the Win

Like the MLB at the start of the Moneyball era, golf is in the midst of an analytics revolution. This one's led by Foresight Sports.

LONG BEFORE Bryson DeChambeau was golf 's distance king, he was golf 's data king. The 2020 U.S. Open champ didn't thrust himself to the center of golf's distance debate because he wanted to. He did so because the numbers told him to. But the "numbers" is an abstract term. For DeChambeau's sake, let's talk in his language: absolutes. DeChambeau began his makeover because his Foresight Sports GCQuad launch monitor ($14,000 to $18,000) told him if he added weight, he would add ball speed. If he added ball speed, he would add distance. And if he added distance, it would be easier to score better. The GCQuad doesn't look all that revolutionary, but that's okay because it does something revolutionary. It speaks in absolutes. Absolutes like pinpoint data about the swing, the ball and the club. The GCQuad is a Tour favourite- mused by names like DeChambeau and McIlroy. But it's also an industry standard, the preferred indoor equipment used by clubfitting experts at True Spec Golf. "We offer all our clients a performance guarantee—that our clubs are going to do what we tell them they do," said Ryan Richardson, president of True Spec. "In our independent testing, we found the GCQuad performed exceptionally well indoors and that the data it produced was exceptionally accurate." We all want to change the world, but the Foresight GCQuad is actually doing it. Here's how it works.
–James Colgan



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Simply, launch monitors seek to capture swings and interpret them. The Quad gets its name from its four super-speed cameras that ensure high-level capture accuracy to the tune of 10,000 frames per second.

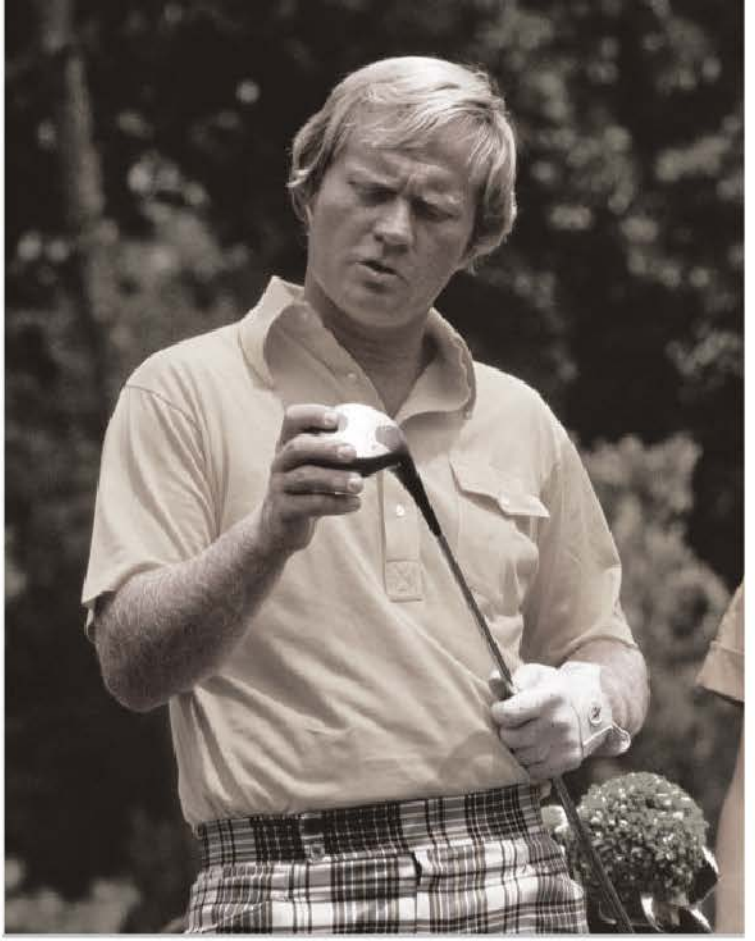
2. PHOTOMETRIC SENSORS
These tiny sensors regulate the flash feature on each camera, which controls the amount of light allowed into the lens for each image. The slower you swing, the more light each camera must produce in order for the machine's onboard computer to collect information.

3. CLUB MARKERS
Four removable stickers allow the cameras to measure movement, tilt, rotation and a number of other important swing attributes as the club moves through impact.

4. ONBOARD COMPUTER
Swing data is parsed by a series of high-powered processors, translating the images into numbers the computer analyzes in a matter of milliseconds. "We design our boards to capture, carry, process and store data at extremely high speed rates—think on the order of gigapixels per second," says Foresight director of sales Rick Cuellar.

5. ALIGNMENT STICK
How does it know whether your shots are straight? Because you tell it which direction you're aiming using an alignment stick.

6. MOBILE APP
Your GCQuad has run its calculations and you've got the data. What now? With the Foresight Sports FSX Pro mobile app, you can access and interpret swing tendencies like path, smash factor, impact position, face at impact, spin rate and ball speed—everything you need to max out your motion.



At the 1975 Masters, I was still hitting my MacGregors on the screws. I won my fifth green jacket that year.

Golden rules from Jack Nicklaus

Perfect Union

I had my first club fitting in '51 (though they didn't call it that back then), and the some principle applies today: You and your clubs should work together, like good marrige

WHEN GOLF TALK TURNS TO EQUIPMENT and this issue of GOLF and its annual ClubTest package will certainly encourage that-I sometimes think of a boyhood trip I made with the encouragement of Jack Grout, the head pro at Scioto CC, in my hometown of Columbus, Ohio. As a 10-year-old starting out in golf, I was using pass-me-downs from my father. But early in 1951, sometime after my 11th birthday, my dad and I made the two- hour drive to Cincinnati,where MacGregor had itsfactory. The concept of a "clubtting ses-sion" didn't really exist then. But working with Bob Rickey, the head of MacGregor, and Leon Nelson, their club liaison, we were probably doing some form of it that day. What I know for sure is that I came home with a set of beautiful MacGregor irons. I was a big kid, and these clubs were standardlength, with standard loft and lie and swingweights. (They were D-2s) They had sti shafts and leather grips. Through the heart of my playing career, I put new irons in my bag on a regular basis, but for the rst 30 years of my professional career—I signed with MacGregor just before my rookie season in '62—they were always MacGregors and they always had the same specs as that 1951 set. I was never one to change much of anything.

Arnold Palmer was the opposite. We used to joke that Arnold would hit one bad shot and change his grip. But not the grip on his putter. Nobody had a thinner grip on his putter than Arnold and he was loyal to it. I liked it so much, I started using it too. I had more feel with a thin grip. Now you see many golfers—amateur and professional—with fatter grips on their putters. If it works for you, that's all that matters. A thin putting grip worked for Arnold. It worked for me. It works for Tiger too.I was particular about my clubs—the t, the grind, the appearance—but I didn't tinker much because I knew what those MacGregors could do. I liked the clubs and I liked the employees. In 1982, I bought MacGregor. I worked with one clubtter there, Jack Wullkotte, for 40-plus years.Today, you can do for yourself what Jack Grout and the MacGregor people did for me that day in 1951. There are so many options now, particularly in shafts, that it makes sense to have a session with a professional clubtter. My business partner, Howard Milstein, owns True Spec Golf, a premium clubtting company. The people there are not selling golf-ers any particular brand; rather, their goal is to make sure you have the right specs, just as Jack Grout did with me

Bettmann Archive

Data Driven with **GOLFTEC**

STICK YOUR APPROACH IN THE BEST SPOT

GOLFTEC VP of Instruction Nick Clearwater offers hard data on where you can pick up strokes by adjusting your aim

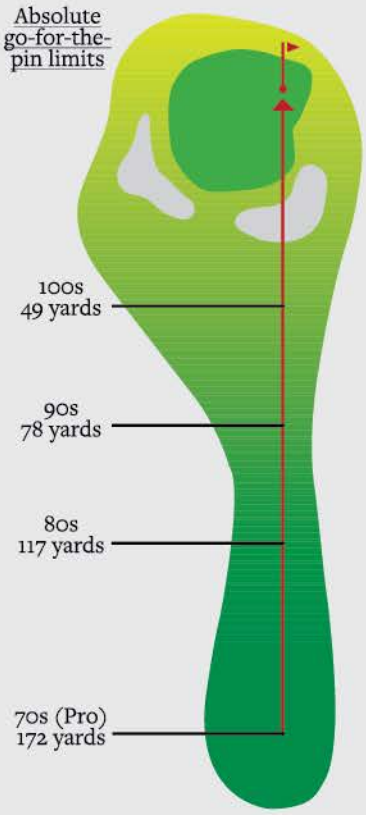
THE LURE OF PIN-HUNTING is strong. I get it—there's nothing better in this game than cozying an approach shot next to the hole for a tap-in birdie. But be honest: How many times does that actually happen during a round? A better question: How many times has taking dead aim at the pin resulted in a missed green (and dropped strokes)? Since opening our doors in 1995, GOLFTEC has measured the swings of tens of thousands of golfers of every skill level. Our massive database grows every day as we continue to help find solutions for our students' games. While technology has made improving swings and scores easier than ever, it's the decisions that you make between shots that continue to be a critical barometer of success. Over the years Tiger Woods has famously admitted that looking away from the pin and instead aiming for the center of the green has led to many of his 82 PGA Tour victories. Hidden in these statements is his belief that playing away from the center of the green is an opportunity rife with unfriendly implications if you don't execute precisely, even for an all-galaxy ball striker like Tiger. In addition to the sage words of arguably the greatest golfer of all time, there are other reasons you should adjust your approach-shot strategy and honestly ask when and where you should aim at the pin. You might not like the answer, but it'll make a lot of sense. The stats department at GOLFTEC recently crunched some numbers, plotting the success rate of approach shots hit in thousands of rounds by thousands of golfers, some better than you and some not. The chart below neatly summarizes this research, outlining your best possibility of hitting the green depending on distance to the pin and, more importantly, the exact yardage when you should consider ignoring the pin and go for the center depending on your hand-icap. Pretty powerful stu.

As the chart shows, if you cannot break 100, your best target is always the middle of the green, unless you're within 25 yards of the agstick. If you typically shoot in the 90s, your best target is the middle of the green until you're within 100 yards of the pin. (Even at 100 yards, however, it's probably still risky to play toward the ag.) If your average score is in the 80s, you can stare down the pin from 135 yards and in but not from anything farther.We arrived at these distance thresh-olds taking into account that the average green width is approximately 25 yards and the dispersion pattern of various handicap groups based on the data we aggregated. As crazy as it may sound, even a PGA Tour pro should take cau-tion when aiming at the pin outside 172 yards. At that point it's time to channel Tiger, think smart and aim for the mid-dle of the green.

Nick Clearwater is based at GOLFTEC's headquarters in Denver, Colo.

Pocket Caddie: When to Take Aim to the Middle

The heat map at right, developed by studying dispersion patterns of four handicap groups and the average green width, shows when (orange squares) to pump the brakes on pin-hunting.

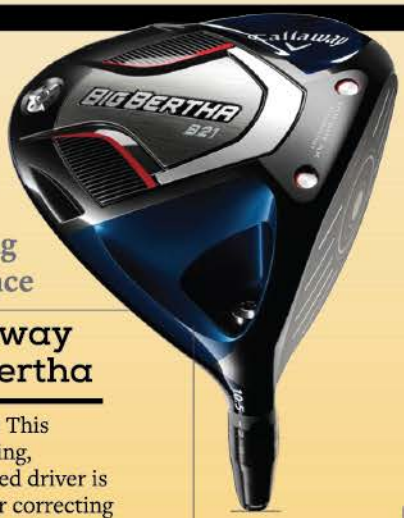


Proximity to pin following approach (yds)

Yardage to pin	Pro	80s Shooter	90s Shooter	100s Shooter
25	3.1	4.0	4.9	5.8
50	5.0	6.8	8.5	10.3
75	5.3	7.4	9.6	11.8
100	6.1	9.0	12.0	14.9
120	6.6	10.2	13.8	17.4
135	7.4	11.5	15.5	19.6
150	8.4	12.9	17.4	21.9
165	9.4	15.6	21.8	28.0
180	10.6	17.4	24.2	30.9
200	12.2	19.7	27.2	34.7
220	15.2	23.4	37.7	39.9

DRIVERS

MANUFACTURERS CONTINUE TO PUSH THE TECHNOLOGY ENVELOPE. THE DIFFERENCE THESE DAYS IS THAT THEY HAVE YOUR SWING IN MIND.



Striking a balance

Callaway Big Bertha

Our take: This eye-catching, draw-biased driver is perfect for correcting a pesky slice, but it's the feel at impact that left a number of our testers asking if they could immediately take the BB B21 home: "Can I give it a triple love? I love the feel, launches high and it's extra forgiving. This was my favorite by far."
The details: To achieve the perfect balance of spin and speed, Callaway chose to freshen up the usual driver recipe, positioning the CG low and forward to drop spin. The thought here is that reducing overall spin will negate the sidespin that causes wayward shots to go out of play. The end result is a spin-killer that doesn't skimp on consistency and forgiveness. It's a package any highhandicap slicer will no doubt appreciate.
9˚, 10.5˚, 12˚;

Hello, ball speed!

Callaway Epic '21

Our take: Golfers have come to expect a lot from the Epic name, specifically more speed, distance, forgiveness and stability. Testers found all three Epic models to be up to the challenge, heaping praise on everything from the feel at impact to the impressive Tourquality sound. "I put it through its paces and it never let me down," said one tester.
The details: The latest game-changing tech from Callaway is a Jailbreak A.I. Speed frame that consists of a red-hot Flash Face SS21 and new internal structure that not only stiffens the head vertically but also provides horizontal stability. It all adds up to eye-popping ball speed gains. Epic Speed's aerodynamic construction reduces drag for more speed, while the Epic Max offers a new level of forgiveness and shotshaping via a 17-gram sliding weight. The fade-biased Epic Max LS features an adjustable perimeter weight to tune flight.
Epic Speed, Max: 9˚, 10.5˚, 12˚; Epic Max LS: 9˚, 10.5˚;





A proven winner Cleveland

Launcher HB Turbo

Our take: No-nonsense aesthetics and clean lines appeal to traditionalists who want nothing more than drives that fly straight and far. Said one of our testers, "It looks shut at address, but it feels great and shots fired flew straight as a needle and plenty far enough. Love that matte finish as well." In addition to Cleveland's ultralight hosel, redesigned HiBore crown, deep-weighting sole pad and a counterbalanced shaft, it's the turbocharged cupface that delivers the knockout punch.
The details: A cupface is as it sounds—the face extends beyond the front in a cup-like shape, making it stronger, resulting in faster ball speeds across more points on the clubface. The retweaked crown lowers the CG for a higher launch and greater forgiveness, and the deep-weight scheme raises the MOI to lessen unwanted twisting.
HB Turbo: 10.5˚, 12˚
HB Turbo Draw: 12˚;



Ben Hogan GS53

Named in honor of Ben Hogan's famed '53 campaign, this driver carries a similar swagger. "It's no nonsense all the way through," said one tester. "It's simple, feels good, goes a long way. It's not a hard choice." Fairways over flash.
GS53: 9˚, 10.5˚;GS53 MAX: 9.0˚, 10.5˚;





A science-based weighting system

Cobra RadSpeed

Our take: With a hammer-like sound and impressive feel, RadSpeed delivered in a big way during GOLF's ClubTest. As one tester raved, "I love the aesthetic. There's some slight carbon fiber you can see in the back, and you can't go wrong with matte black. Feels great, looks great." This was the general consensus with Cobra's latest big stick. In addition to noticing lower spin and a more penetrating flight (thanks to a reimagined adjustable sole weighting system), the CNC-milled face offers sneaky alignment assistance, framing the ball at address. It's easy to see why this neonyellow-and-black beauty is the driver of choice for U.S. Open winner Bryson DeChambeau and Rickie Fowler.

The details: Cobra is known to push the boundaries with game-changing technologies. This year is no different. In addition to a new-age CNC infinity milled face and carbon-fiber crown, Cobra also reimagined its sole weighting system. The OEM used tenets from a popular engineering formula called the Radius of Gyration ("Rad" stands for "radius") to spread the weights in the sole of the drivers farther to the front and the back of the head for desired performance enhancements throughout the lineup. The RadSpeed standard head is lower spinning and lower flying while the RadSpeed XB ("Xtreme Back" weight) is higher launching and more forgiving. And if you need a slicekiller, RadSpeed XD ("Xtreme Draw") has heavy heel weighting to encourage a muchneeded draw-shot shape.
RadSpeed: 9°, 10.5°
RadSpeed XB: 9°, 10.5°, 12°; RadSpeed XD: 10.5°, 12°;

Making a move

Mizuno ST

Our take: Mizuno is making big strides when it comes to metalwoods of late, with the ST drivers proving that the company is equally dedicated to creating high-performing drivers with the same measure of success found in its popular iron iterations. New models not only launch the ball farther with more ball speed, they look and sound better than any Mizuno drivers tested to date.
The details: A forged SAT2041 Beta Ti face delivers impressive ball speeds and, depending on the model, a carefully designed blend of carbon-composite construction and internal weighting to promote either a draw bias (ST-X) or low-spin trajectory (ST-Z). The hosel also offers four degrees of loft adjustability.
ST-X: 10.5°, 12°
ST-Z: 9.5°, 10.5°;

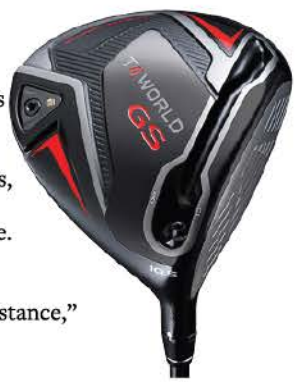


Speed and forgiveness for days

PING G425

Our take: Some drivers offer flashy distance while others provide sturdy stability. PING's G425, however, checked both boxes for our testers. In his first time hitting the Turbulator crowned driver, one GOLF tester called it "wife material" due to its alluring speed and forgiveness. "All my mishits went straight," another said. Players also found the impact sound to sing a deep, booming note.
The details: By combining tech from previous releases, PING says it has designed its most forgiving and highest-launching driver, the G425 Max, with the help of a 26-gram adjustable tungsten weight in the back of the head. For golfers with a slice, PING offers the draw-biased G425 SFT, and for higher-speed players who need reduced spin, the G425 LST is there to lend a hand.
G425 Max: 9°, 10.5°, 12°; G425 SFT: 10.5°; G425 LST: 9°, 10.5°;

Honma T//World GS



Speed is what Honma was looking for with its brand-new T//World GS driver, and that's just what it gave testers, thanks to a new radial face and crank-slot sole. "Even on my misses, I didn't feel like I was giving up very much distance," one tester said.
9°, 10.5°, 11.5°;



Hold on to your hat!

PXG 0211

Our take: The 0211 received high praise from GOLF's stable of testers for an impressive level of forgiveness and stability. "I put some swings on this club that I know were not great," said one tester. "But the 0211 held steady, and my ball managed to stay on line longer than it deserved to." Thanks to a titanium-alloy face and substantial back weighting, golfers don't have to worry about the head twisting at impact.
The details: The 0211 is designed to feel and sound as good as it performs, thanks to a vibration dampening TPE insert in the rear sole. That's also where they've placed the single weight port designed to max out MOI and create a deeper, launch optimizing center of gravity.
9°, 10.5°, 12°;



Meaner, leaner and friendlier on your pocketbook

PXG 0811 X Proto

Our take: Thanks to the warm hearts at PXG, they've made a Tour-only driver available to us mortals. The 0811 X Proto and 0811 X+ Proto both feature four adjustable weight ports and adjustable hosels for total customization and have a matteblack finish that, if you pay any attention to hightech gadgetry these days, is the color and finish du jour. Our testers agreed, with one claiming, "I love the matte black," and another saying, "The flight with these drivers is awesome, and I love the sound and feel."

The details: Both 0811 X Proto drivers come with the aforementioned adjustable weight ports and hosels, and both feature a high-performance anti-glare finish. Additional features include a hybrid crown construction, a honeycomb TPE sole insert and a highspeed face—tons of tech, we assure you.
The **0811 X** is tuned for golfers with downward attack angles, and the **0811 X+** is geared for players with ascending attack angles.
0811 X Proto: 9°
0811 X+ Proto: 10.5°, 12°;

Honma TR20 460



Pardon his language, but "badass" is what one tester blurted out when he picked up the TR20. "It has spoiled me with speed." With extra weights added for even more adjustability, testers came away gushing about Honma's smart titanium frame and carbon body design.
8.5°, 9.5°, 10.5°;

"THE TRADITIONAL SHAPING AND RED LINE ON THE BACK LOOK GREAT. THE BALL FEELS REALLY FAST OFF THE FACE. IT'S THE BEST DRIVER I'VE HIT TODAY."

Srixon ZX



A big-time dual threat

Srixon ZX

Our take: The ZX packs a twofisted punch of added distance and forgiveness. One tester chimed in by saying, "The traditional shaping and the red line on the back look great. The ball feels really fast off the face. It's the best driver I've hit today." Speaking of hits, the two models offer golfers a choice between a higher trajectory with the ZX5 or a more penetrating flight courtesy the ZX7.
The details: A carbon crown and rebound frame combine to increase distance and forgiveness on off-center strikes. Additionally, an adjustable hosel and two rear and low weight ports enable golfers to fine-tune the CG placement and face angle for a draw or fade shot shape. The more triangular **ZX5** has a higher MOI and produces a higher ballflight, whereas the rounder **ZX7** affords more shotmaking playability and produces a flatter launch.
ZX5: 9.5°, 10.5°;
ZX7: 9.5°, 10.5°;

FAIRWAY WOODS

NEED A SOLID OPTION OFF THE TEE OR A RELIABLE CLUB TO REACH PAR 5S IN TWO? THESE HIGH-TECH BEAUTIES HAVE YOU COVERED.



So long, slice

Callaway Big Bertha B21

Our take: Testers found it easy to work the ball in both directions with the Big Bertha B21. "I'm hitting a draw on command," said one tester. "I can't tell you when I even considered using the other side of the course with a fairway wood."
The details: The Big Bertha B21 fairway woods are made to reduce a slice, with additional technology to help golfers get the ball off the turf more easily. The shallower face and increased offset promote high launch and draw spin. Callaway's Flash Face and Jailbreak technology ensure you'll generate more than enough speed.
15°, 18°, 21°, 24°;



Worthy options

Callaway Epic

Our take: It's good to have options. With Callaway's new-look Epic Max and Epic Speed, testers found two equally appealing packages: one geared for those who need a bit more forgiveness and another for the better player craving a penetrating launch. "I could put both in the bag," said a tester. "Both were fantastic on misses, and the flatter flight of the Speed was very consistent. I could totally see myself throwing in a strong-lofted Speed and Max 5-wood to launch it high. That sounds really appealing." Don't be surprised if other golfers follow suit.

The details: The fairways feature Jailbreak A.I. Velocity Blades that are spread wider apart to stiffen the structure for improved face flex. The forward CG location on Epic Speed, combined with a new leadingedge design, promotes a strong ballflight. An oversize head and shallow face make Epic Max an ideal option for a wider handicap range. Launch and spin can be altered depending on where two sole weights are positioned.
Epic Speed: 13.5°, 15°, 16.5°, 18°, 21°
Epic Max: 13.5°, 15°, 18°, 20°, 21°, 23°, 25°;



Driver-like power in a fairway wood

Cleveland Launcher HB Turbo

Our take: If you're a fan of the Launcher HB Turbo driver, you'll surely love the fairway woods since they pack much of the same technology, albeit in a slightly more diminutive size. They're made for speed, which means if you're looking for a solid driver alternative off the tee and/or really want a fairway wood that will help you get after those par 5s, the HB Turbo is an excellent choice.
The details: The fairways have a cupface design for a hotter clubface and increased ball speed, even if you miss the sweet spot on occasion. It also comes with deep weighting for a raised MOI and a retooled HiBore crown that lowers the center of gravity to help the ball get airborne quickly. Tack on the high balance point on the Miyazaki C. Kua shaft and you have a club just as practical for hitting bombs off the tee as it is for launching shots off the fairway.
13°, 15°;



Beauty and brawn

Cobra RadSpeed

Our take: Club designers know they have a winner when golfers are raving about the head shape. "It's amazing," said one tester. "I'm obsessed with the clean look," said another. You get the point. If a fairway wood looks clunky, it's going to get the Heisman. In this case, testers couldn't get enough of RadSpeed's sleek profile. Praise was also heaped on Cobra's Baffler Hollow Split Rail sole design, which is made to keep the club from digging into the turf at impact.
The details: The radial weighting system found on the RadSpeed driver is prominently positioned on the fairway wood but with a twist. The weights are placed in smart locations on all three models to produce different ballflights, shot shapes and spin rates. With 16 grams of weight near the face and seven grams situated in the back, RadSpeed is geared for low spin. The oversize Big Tour (designed to be used off the tee) and compact Tour feature 23 grams near the face to reduce spin and flatten launch. And the draw-biased RadSpeed Draw lives up to its name with 16 grams situated in the heel (along with seven grams in the back) to launch it high and get rid of that nagging slice for good.
RadSpeed, RadSpeed Draw: 14.5°, 18.5°, 22.5°
RadSpeed Big Tour: 13.5°
RadSpeed Tour: 17.5°;

Precision performance from the fairway

Mizuno ST-Z

Our take: Like the new drivers, the ST-Z fairway packs more punch than we've ever seen in a Mizuno wood, further proving the brand is taking its metalwood design philosophy very seriously. This time, though, the technology is hidden within a throwback shape, appealing to golfers who want a traditional-looking fairway that they can use to hit a variety of shots
The details: An ultralight weight carbon crown lowers the CG for better spin and an improved MOI performance, while the reengineered Wave technology positions more mass in the sole. The net effect is a fairway that's super stable and produces a lowspin launch for added control. Each head offers an adjustable hosel with 4 degrees of loft and face angle tuning.
15°, 18°;





A great new look

PING G425

Our take: This year, PING loses its familiar Turbulators from the crowns of its fairway woods and hybrids, replacing them with three alignment dots. How did our testers like the new look? "This alignment aid is so much better," one tester declared. Testers also found that the low-profile designs made getting the ball in the air much easier than with other clubs.
The details: Fittingly called Facewrap technology, the new face now wraps around the crown and sole to provide more ball speed and launch. PING also increased curvature on the face to especially help with the low miss. For golfers with differing needs, such as lower spin or draw-bias, PING placed tungsten weights in strategic spots on the soles of the three options.
G425 Max: 14.5°, 17.5°, 20.5°, 23°
G425 LST: 14.5°
G425 SFT: 16°, 19°, 22°;

Long and strong isn't just for drivers anymore

PXG 0211

Our take: The PXG 0211 fairway woods prove that hitting bombs isn't exclusive to the tee box anymore. According to a pleased tester, "These woods feel incredibly solid, and the ball jumps off the face in a hurry. They look good, feel good and perform great." We concur, having experienced these woods to be among the leading candidates for the best driver alternative out there.
The details: With features including a high-strength stainless-steel clubface, a hybrid crown, honeycomb TPE insert, an adjustable hosel and railed sole geometry, you'd think we were describing a driver, but we're not. The weight-forward design of each wood helps create a lowspin ballflight for a boost in ball speed and overall distance.
15°, 18°, 21°;







Impressive distance and forgiveness from the fairway

PXG 0341 X Proto

Our take: When a manufacturer uses the word "Proto" in a product category, we take immediate notice. Enter the 0341 X, which includes a slew of newfound technology including a lowprofile sole design, a carbon-fiber crown and customizable weights for the finely tuned trajectory of your choice. Said a tester, "Once again, I love the matte finish, and the ball flew low and with a piercing trajectory. These feel great."

The details: The 0341 X Proto comes with PXG's adjustable Precision Weighting technology, an adjustable hosel, a low CG configuration, a high-strength maraging-steel face with variable face thickness, a multilevel and variable thickness carbonfiber crown and a honeycomb TPE insert. Combined, all this new-age tech yields faster ball speeds and distance levels previously reserved for longhitting drivers.
15°, 18°, 21°;

Get some "pop"

Srixon ZX

Our take: The ZX woods are made to be just as at home off the tee as they are on the fairway, as they tout big distance and forgiveness. According to one tester, "These woods have a great pop sound and make it easy to get the ball airborne. The ball jumps off the face in a hurry." The stepped crown may take some getting used to if you prefer sleekly shaped woods, but you'll soon dismiss it when you see the ball fly long and straight.

The details: Like the driver bearing the same name, the ZX fairways have a carbon crown and rebound frame for both added power and a raised MOI for more forgiveness. That said, these woods are designed to be workable off the tee and fairway, hence the low-spin, penetrating launch angle. Underneath, the Cannon sole has a forward-facing weight pad, further enhancing launch conditions and bolstering ball speed.
13.5°, 15°, 18°, 21°;



Lower weight, higher flight

TaylorMade SIM2

Our take: "I love the high launch." With that simple statement, one of our testers summed up exactly what TaylorMade was striving for with its SIM2 fairways. While the overall look is comparable to the original SIM heads, our GOLF testers repeatedly commented on the higher trajectories they were seeing. "Even my mishits are towering—the ball just flies," another tester said. "It feels lively and easy to hit off the ground."

The details: It's no accident our testers saw noticeable height increases with the SIM2 fairways. That was by design. While continuing to evolve its versatile V-steel soles of last year, TaylorMade has redesigned the SIM2 heads to move weight lower to the ground for higher launch and more forgiveness. TaylorMade's smaller and more workable SIM2 Titanium heads utilize 80-gram sole plates and ZATECH titanium faces, whereas the SIM2 Max fairways are designed with C300-steel faces and have bigger heads for increased accuracy and distance.
SIM2 Titanium: 14°, 15°, 19°; $400
SIM2 Max, SIM2 Max D: 15°, 16.5°, 18°, 21°, 24°;



Honma T//World GS

Honma looked to give players an easy way to increase distance just by changing clubs. It seems as though they did just that. "It feels like I added speed without even changing my swing," one tester told us.
15°, 16.5°, 18°, 21°;

HYBRIDS

WE ONCE VALUED HYBRIDS FOR THEIR RESCUE ABILITY. NOW WE CAN MARVEL AT THEIR POWER. THE 2021 CROP CAN REALLY SEND IT.

Quietly brilliant

Ben Hogan VKTR



Our take: Hogan's VKTR hybrids have been on the market for nearly a halfdecade now, and while the manufacturer has made major strides to increase forgiveness and playability they've managed to do so while remaining true to their initial goal: versatility. The newest VKTR (a new design reimagined for 2021) was an absolute favorite in the hybrids category during ClubTest, particularly for its design. "Doesn't feel like a hybrid, just a bigger iron," said one tester. "Nice thin look. Surprisingly amazing!" In a lot of ways, the VKTR hybrid is a perfect metaphor for Hogan himself: quietly brilliant.

The details: The VKTR hybrid is built from two pieces of steel with minimal offset and a slightly larger clubhead size for added forgiveness. A bulge club-face with variable face thickness works in concert with the above to improve the launch characteristics of each shot. The face is forged for a purer feel while the high toe position gives the appearance of a club that's more iron than wood. The crown aesthetics are simple and muted, a favorite among testers, and fixed weight in the rear helps to lower the CG and improve the club's overall playability.
18°, 22°, 26°;

Better player power

Callaway Apex

Our take: "It has an iron look, but the ball flat out goes," a tester commented while taking a few cuts with Callaway's Apex Pro hybrid. Testers gave high marks to the consistency of the standard Apex (shown below) and the slim profile of the Apex Pro.

The details: Callaway's newest Apex hybrid blends an A.I.-designed cupface and internal Jailbreak blades, connecting the crown and sole to produce greater face flexing on misses catching the upper and lower portion of the face—otherwise known as the common misses for most golfers. The standard Apex has a larger profile, includes an adjustable hosel to alter launch and features tungsten in back for forgiveness and launch purposes. The iron-like profile and low-launch characteristics of the Pro should appeal to better players.
Apex: 19°, 21°, 24°, 27°
Apex Pro: 18°, 20°, 23°, 26°;





An easy, high launch

Callaway Big Bertha B21

Our take: The return of Big Bertha to its super game-improvement roots turned into a boon for 20-plus-handicap golfers who might want to throw two or three hybrids in the bag. The oversize profile and noticeable offset kept the ball in play, even when testers caught the extreme heel or toe. One tester summed it up best: "Solid and straight. I don't feel like I need my best to have fun with this club."

The details: Like the Big Bertha B21 drivers and fairway woods, the hybrids are made to launch it high, reduce a slice and unlock more distance for those who need it near the top of the set. Each hybrid was smartly designed with dual metal-injection-molded tungsten weights in the sole to generate a towering launch. For those who struggle to hit and hold the green from longer distances on their approach shot, this addition is a welcomed sight.
19°, 21°, 24°, 27°, 30°, 33°;



A do-it-all club from all lies

Cleveland HALO 4

Our take: Hybrid clubs are golf's version of a Swiss Army knife: You can use them many ways and to hit a myriad of shots from a variety of lies. The HALO 4 makes this a cinch. The Gliderail tech underneath holds the clubhead stable as it interacts with the turf, and the sleek HiBore crown makes it easy to launch the ball higher and with optimal spin.
The details: The HiBore crown pushes the CG down for a higher launch, the triple-fin Gliderail design improves stability as the club makes contact with the ground and the high-strength steel clubface produces an elevated COR for an added dose of distance across more of the clubface. Top it off with one of the best paint jobs we've seen and you have a hybrid destined for players who want reliability and consistency from any type of lie. 16°, 19°, 22°;

Tons of pop

Cobra RadSpeed

Our take: The beauty of a hybrid is in the versatility it provides. It can be used from the fairway or tee and offers a level of forgiveness that most long irons can't sniff. Oh yeah, it brings the ball speed too. "Love the pop off the club. It's humming," commented one tester. The uptick in speed is derived from a forged high-strength face insert and forward weighting that lowers spin and optimizes launch for more distance. If you're in need of some pop, RadSpeed is your new go-to.
The details: The RadSpeed is one of the few hybrids offered in two lengths. You can purchase a standard length or go full Bryson DeChambeau and opt for a shorter variant (37.5 inches) that complements Cobra's Rad-Speed One Length irons. Hollow speed rails enhance turf interaction, especially if you're constantly catching it heavy. And if you're big on crown finishes and aesthetics, you can rest easy knowing there's a matte and high-gloss option.
17°, 19°, 21°, 24°;



Clean-looking high performance

PING G425

Our take: PING's new G425 hybrids have a smoothed-out crown, and our testers appreciated the clean matte look with subtle dots for aiming. "I love the new alignment aid," one tester said (and something that was repeated for all clubs in PING's new flagship wood lineup). "These are extremely sleek looking." Players also found the G425 hybrids to launch high and go where they're aimed, even on misfires. Isn't that the point of rescue/utility clubs?
The details: Hybrids are called upon for varied reasons and often from precarious lies. For those who need help finding the sweet spot, PING stretched it out on the G425 clubface for extra forgiveness, especially on pesky thin shots hit low on the face. Also, to achieve the consistency our testers spoke of, a tungsten weight sits in the sole of the hybrids, driving weight down and launch up.
17°, 19°, 22°, 26°, 30°, 34°;

Ready for takeoff !

PXG 2021 0211

Our take: Your ball can end up in some challenging spots. Maybe it's sitting down in the long grass or on top of hardpan. Perhaps you even kept your ball in the fairway only to see it roll into someone else's divot. Frustrating, yes. But PXG's 2021 0211 hybrids are here to help you escape consistently and with confidence. "The black matte finish looks great, and the club delivers a soft, solid strike on contact," said a tester. "But for me, a hybrid shows its true mettle when you're in trouble. I purposely played from some hairy lies, and the 0211 came through like a champ."
The details: The distinguishing feature of these long-iron alternatives is the can't-miss, oversize square face design, which not only promotes consistently clean contact but also rockets the ball down the fairway with incredible speed. The 0211s are versatile and forgiving, and while the hybrid crown construction (carbon-fiber center, stainless-steel perimeter) is designed for durability and mass reduction, it must be said that it also results in an aesthetically striking, modern appearance.



You can kiss your long irons goodbye

PXG 0317 X Proto

Our take: Hybrids often carry fewer bells and whistles than fairway woods and drivers do, but that's not the case with PXG's 0317 X Proto. These hybrids are chock-full of tech, helping to make them easy to hit and providing plenty of distance. "These hybrids make me feel confident," opined one of our testers. "The smaller head looks great, and it's easy to get the ball airborne with a solid launch. It also has great acoustics."
The details: The 0317 X Proto features a variable high-strength maraging steel face, steel heel and toe with a carbon-fiber crown, a honeycomb TPE insert and adjustable Precision Weighting technology to fine-tune your desired launch characteristics whether it be a draw, fade or neutral. The low-profile sole design helps lower the CG for faster and higher initial launch angles. 17˚, 19˚, 22˚, 25˚, 28˚;





Very pretty, even more potent

Srixon ZX

Our take: When it comes to hybrid design, we strongly feel that less is more. Or, at the very least, if it's going to be packed with tech, we want to see it hidden in a sleek and classic design. So goes the ZX model, which is packed with design features that make it a cinch to hit while being easy on the eyes. If we were to gripe about anything, we hate to see it get dirty. Seriously.
The details: A Tour-inspired shaping for added shotmaking versatility, the ZX hybrid has a stepped crown design and rebound frame for added power and stability. It's a player's hybrid if there ever was one, with each loft promoting a penetrating launch with low spin—ideal for players who want to shape shots on command from the fairway, rough, wherever. Oh, and did we mention how we don't like to get a speck of dirt on it?
16˚, 19˚, 22˚, 28˚;

IRONS

SIMPLY PUT, TODAY'S IRONS CAN DO IT ALL WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY MEETING THE NEEDS OF ANY PLAYER, FROM NEWBIE TO DISCERNING VET



Back in business

Ben Hogan Icon

Our take: If you've seen Ben Hogan irons before, you won't be surprised by the Icon's look; if you've ever played Hogan irons, you'll recognize that their design hasn't changed much either over the years. "It's classic Hogan through and through," one tester said. "Old-school look with a validating feel at impact. Could play these all day." These clean-cut musclebacks are designed to bridge the gap between gorgeous design and top-tier performance—a better player's iron for sure.
The details: If you were to search the dictionary for the definition of "forged blade," you just might find a photo of the Icon. Progressive weighting keeps the CG low in long irons (for control) and high in the scoring irons (for maximum precision). With minimal offset, a compact head and thin topline, the Icon has all the trappings you'd expect from a traditional blade. The Icon comes in two finishes—chromenickel and black metal—for a simple look (as in simply brilliant).
4-PW;



Another winner

Callaway Apex

Our take: Apex led the way as one of the most requested irons during testing. The new-look Apex Pro had testers gushing over the blade profile and game-improvement forgiveness while Apex and Apex DCB earned high marks for their clean aesthetics and solid feel.
The details: In addition to the standard Apex, a larger profile Apex DCB offers a wider sole, more offset and deeper cavity. The hollowcavity Apex Pro is made for speed and forgiveness while still allowing better players to reap the benefits of a compact profile.
3-PW;



Classic looks and performance

Callaway Apex MB21

Our take: This should be where we offer our take on Callaway's shiny Apex MB21, but one tester took the words right out of our mouth: "Best turf interaction of the bunch I tested," he stated. "Sole slices through the ground with impressive precision, and the lack of offset is going to appeal to the guy who likes to work the ball." Enough said.
The details: Forged from 1025 carbon steel, Apex MB is built for superior ball strikers who crave the look and feel of a classic blade. There's little in the way of mishit protection with this compact head, but the musclepad does include a removable weight that allows swingweight changes to be made without altering the center of gravity location. It's a feature the better player will surely appreciate.
3-PW;



Honma T//World GS

The main purpose behind these clubs is right there in the name: GS. It stands for "Gain Speed," or, in other words, the thing everyone is trying to do these days. From the L-cupface to the flexible pieces built into the sole, each part of this club is about creating extra ball speed.
7 clubs;



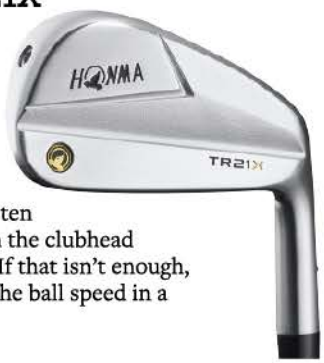


An iron that does it all

Callaway Big Bertha B21

Our take: Owning an iron that keeps mishits on the map is critically important when you're a 20-plus handicapper because, well, you know bad shots are going to happen. The goal, then, becomes finding ways to mitigate the big miss and helping you even break into the 80s. For our mid- and high-handicapped testers, Big Bertha B21 fit the bill—a smart-looking iron that can help keep the ball in play. The pronounced offset allowed some testers to draw the ball on command (for the first time!) and generate comparable distances on offcenter misses.
The details: With a look reminiscent of the original Big Bertha, the new B21 is designed around a Flash Face cup design that received Callaway's A.I. treatment, finetuning the thickness of the structure in specific areas to benefit golfers who don't consistently find the center of the face. A visible tungsten energy core adds another layer of forgiveness, targeting more mass behind the lower portion of the hitting area to launch the ball high, regardless of where it impacts the face. Proprietary urethane microspheres are also strategically positioned to soak up unwanted vibrations and improve the overall feel at impact, without impacting ball speed.
7 clubs;

Honma TR21X



Honma's newest line of irons takes various cues from past iterations and combines them into one. A whopping 73 grams of dense tungsten is tucked deep within the clubhead to aid those mishits. If that isn't enough, an L-cupface brings the ball speed in a big way.
7 clubs;

Efficient power

Callaway X Forged CB 21

Our take: Better players will nitpick the way an iron goes through the ground. If it sticks or impacts the turf in an inefficient manner, a hook is imminent. Based on tester feedback, golfers needn't worry about this issue with X Forged CB. The subtle sole camber, in particular, received high marks from several eagle-eyed testers who claimed it produced the best turf interaction of any iron they tested. "It's poetry when club meets golf ball," said one tester.
The details: The X Forged CB utilizes a multi-material construction rather than a one-piece design to help players achieve distance and consistency. In classic X Forged fashion, though, the new CB still comes in an appealing better player shape with a head forged from 1025 carbon steel and a back weight to tune swingweight.
3-AW;

"EVEN THOUGH THEY LOOK LIKE BLADES AT ADDRESS, THEY COME WITH AS MUCH FORGIVENESS AS ANY GOLFER COULD WANT."

Cleveland Launcher



Shotmaking capabilities with a high launch

Cleveland Launcher

Our take: The Launcher irons come in two forms: the ultra-forgiving, hollow-bodied Launcher HB Turbo irons and the versatile Launcher UHX that mix hollow and cavity-back forms in a single set. Said one of our testers about the HB Turbo irons, "You don't have to do much to get the ball high in the air." And of the HB UHX irons, "Even though they look like blades at address, they come with as much forgiveness as any golfer could want."
The details: The HB Turbo irons have a progressively shaped hollow-body construction that includes a HiBore crown for supreme forgiveness, added distance and towering ballflight. The UHX feature a contemporary cavity-back design in the short irons and the mid/long irons, which also feature a hollow-body, blade-like construction. This yields the ideal blend of forgiveness in longer clubs and shotmaking playability in the shorter ones.
4-PW;



Smooth operator

Cobra King Forged Tec

Our take: Cobra's King Forged Tec knows how to wow the masses. The compact profile is appealing to a wide range of handicaps but so is the feel. "Smooth as can be at impact," a tester exclaimed. The otherworldly feel comes from the foam microspheres residing inside a hollow cavity designed to fine-tune sound and soften feel.

The details: It's a game-improvement iron stuck inside the body of a muscleback blade. That's the best way to describe King Forged Tec. A PWR Shell face and tungsten toe weights enlarge the sweet spot for enhanced distance and heel-toe mishit protection. There's a One Length version as well, if you want to be like Bryson.
4-PW;



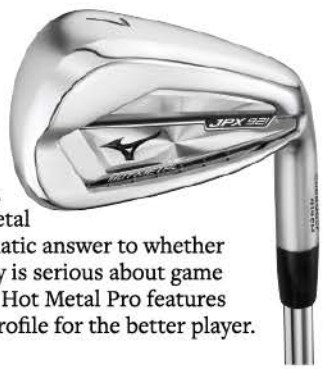
A high-tech marvel

Cobra King Tour MIM

Our take: Knowing where the ball impacts the face can tell you a lot about the quality and consistency of your swing. Missing it off the heel or toe could be a sign that your clubs aren't fit properly (or if a lesson is in your future). Our testers never once had to wonder where the ball was impacting the face on the King Tour MIM. "My favorite by far," one tester proclaimed. "I'm getting a responsive feel that tells me exactly what's going on at impact." A new manufacturing process plays a role in the superior feel. So, too, does a thermoplastic polyurethane insert situated in the cavity that's built to mitigate vibration.

The details: Using a mixture of 304 stainless-steel metal powder, Cobra designers were able to create an iron using a metal injection molding process typically reserved for finely shaped weights housed inside confined spaces. (Think tungsten weights crammed into a hollow-cavity iron.) The end result is a softer feel at impact that's comparable to many carbon-steel forgings. A tungsten toe weight also helps reposition the center of gravity behind the sweet spot to deliver a tighter dispersion with rock-solid stability.
4-PW;

Mizuno JPX 921 Hot Metal



Made for players who want irons that pack distance and forgiveness in a traditional shape, the JPX 921 Hot Metal are Mizuno's emphatic answer to whether or not the company is serious about game improvement. The Hot Metal Pro features a slightly smaller profile for the better player.
4-GW;

"THEY LOOK SO CLEAN. FOR SOMEONE WHO PLAYS A BLADE, IT FITS THAT HANDICAP RANGE. EASILY THE PRETTIEST IRONS I'VE TESTED."

Cobra King RF Proto



Fowler's favorite

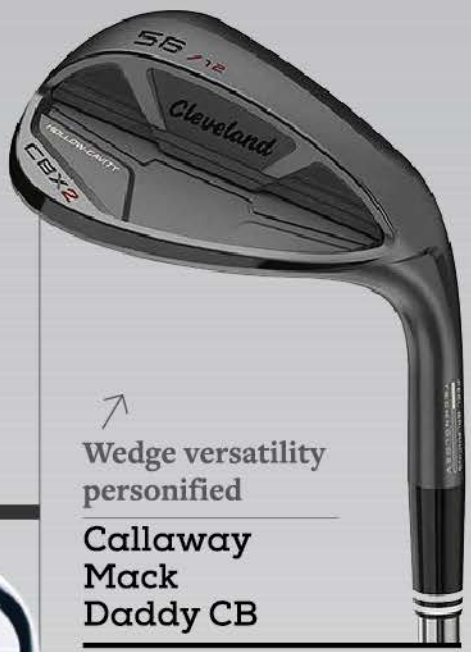
Cobra King RF Proto

Our take: The RF stamped on the toe lets you know these irons were designed for a certain Cobra staffer. "I can see why Rickie Fowler likes these irons," commented a tester. "They look so clean. For someone who plays a blade, it fits that handicap range. Easily the prettiest irons I've tested." With sharper edges, a razor-thin topline and almost no offset, the MB RF is built for elite ball strikers, like Fowler, who want to work the ball both ways and demand precise turf interaction.

The details: Codesigned with Fowler, the traditional blade is forged from soft 1025 carbon steel and then machined using a 100 percent CN Cmilling process. From start to finish, it takes 155 minutes to produce a single head that lives up to Fowler's exacting standards. The lack of offset and ultra-compact profile scream scratch golfer, but thanks to a slug of tungsten in the toe, the stability and feel at impact is kicked up a notch.
4-PW;

WEDGES

CLASSIC LOOKS AND PROFILES ARE GIVING WAY TO MORE FORGIVING AND HIGHER-SPINNING HEAD DESIGNS. TIME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE.



Tour looks and spin for the masses

Callaway MD5 Jaws

Our take: Roger Cleveland's latest wedge creation for Callaway was a massive hit with testers who admitted to normally having trouble producing enough spin on short-game shots. "I sometimes 'skid' shots into the green, but these wedges make me feel like I'm a competent player again. Even when I didn't catch it perfectly clean, I still saw the ball check and settle." Testers also gave high marks to the low-bounce W grind and its ability to help the club glide through the turf.

The details: Callaway's MD5 Jaws remains one of the most popular wedges in the professional and recreational ranks. With a multitude of loft and bounce combinations, three finishes (including a raw offering) and five grinds, the family is capable of fitting a wide range of handicaps and preferences. Callaway's groovein-groove technology delivers all the bite you can handle through sharper groove radiuses designed to impart greater shotstopping spin.
23 loft/bounce combinations;





Here to help

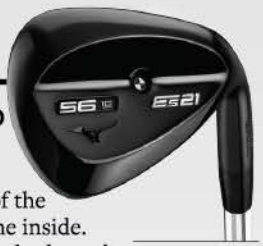
Callaway Mack Daddy CB

Our take: As some higher-handicap testers found out, a cavity-back profile can reinvigorate your short game. "With the subtle offset and slightly larger head, I got the feeling that I couldn't miss," said a tester. "The grooves deliver consistent feel too."
The details: With a slightly more forgiving profile and generous sole width, this wedge is a worthy option for those who struggle with consistency. And if you're worried about sacrificing greenside spin with a cavityback design, you can rest easy knowing that the CB comes with the same groove technology as the Tour-level MD5 Jaws.
46°, 48°, 50°, 52°, 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°;

Wedge versatility personified

Callaway Mack Daddy CB

Our take: The CBX Full-Face wedge sports a design that makes it easy to play a variety of open-faced shots. You're sure to impress your buddies while popping the ball up high and tight with this one. According to a seasoned tester, "I like the way the ball feels coming off the face, and the milling marks on the toe give it a high-end look." Bonus: This wedge delivers all the spin you can handle.
The details: Cleveland's Rotex face milling and Zip grooves can be found across the entire face of the CBX wedge for big-time rpm. Additionally, the half-cavity design places the CG in an optimal position, and the low C-shaped sole grind make these easy to hit when laid open like a pancake. Contrasting the CBX is the traditionally shaped CBX2. Don't be fooled by its clean looks—beneath it hides a healthy dose of forgiveness in a hollow-body design.
CBX: 56°, 58°, 60°, 64°
CBX2: 46°, 48°, 50°, 52°, 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°;



Mizuno ES21

Here, most of the magicis on the inside. Sure, ahollow-body wedge is not the type of scoring club we've come to expect from Mizuno, but consider us among the true believers of the ES21's awe-inspiring technology and surprisingly efficient performance.
54°, 56°, 58°, 60°;

Mizuno T20

Strength and versatility in a no-nonsense design, and Mizuno's use of boron looks as though it's here to stay. According to the manufacturer, boron is great for adding strength and ensuring consistency in a wedge design.
46˚, 50˚, 52˚, 54˚, 56˚, 58˚, 60˚;



A lifetime of extra shortgame spin

Cleveland RTX ZipCore



Our take: Cleveland takes its wedges very seriously, as it should, having made some of the most influential designs in the last several decades. The all-new RTX ZipCore wedge rewrites the way Cleveland interprets wedge design with a slew of new innovations intended to help players gain consistency while also enabling more versatility. Which, in case you haven't noticed, is a damn hard thing to do. (Well, maybe for Cleveland it's not.)
The details: The RTX ZipCore wedges feature a low-density material in the heel region that optimizes the CG for better control. It also raises the MOI for improved trajectory control and shotmaking consistency. Testers especially liked the new Ultizip grooves for added spin and an all-new heattreatment process that makes these wedges exceptionally durable. Comes in three finishes and three grinds in a variety of lofts, making it easy to choose the ideal setup.
46˚, 50˚, 54˚, 56˚, 58˚, 60˚, 62˚;



Finding forgiveness from around the green

Cleveland Smart Sole 4

Our take: "The wide sole is a genius design," said one tester. "It should be embraced by more golfers—including me. It's the epitome of an anti-chunk wedge." More golfers should take this tester's feedback to heart. Getting up-and-down from around the green isn't easy, particularly if you struggle with consistent contact and turf interaction. Smart Sole 4's futuristic profile differs greatly from a traditional blade wedge, but that's by design. The generous sole and deep cavity add an impressive level of forgiveness and stability to the head. The entire package will make the chunk a thing of the past.
The details: The Smart Sole wedge comes with a wide, threetiered sole and added leading-edge bounce. That feature heaps on tremendous forgiveness from the fairway, rough or out of the bunker—especially if you're a golfer who tends to swing a little on the steep side. Milled grooves and an optimized CG deliver the perfect combo of spin and accuracy that's sure to help you shed shots off your scorecard.
42˚, 50˚, 58˚;

"THE WIDE SOLE IS A GENIUS DESIGN. IT SHOULD BE EMBRACED BY MORE GOLFERS—INCLUDING ME. IT'S THE EPITOME OF AN ANTI-CHUNK WEDGE."

Cleveland Smart Sole 4

Bite for days

Cobra King Cobra

Our take: "Am I seeing that right?" one tester inquired after watching the ball check and stop on a dime from 30 yards out. "I don't normally get that kind of sauce!" Cobra's new Snakebite groove design impressed more than a few testers. This new groove-cutting method allowed designers to tighten the tolerances and sharpen the edges for maximum zip. The details: In addition to Snakebite grooves, there's progressive groove and face technology to dial in spin and launch. Stronger lofts feature tighter grooves for more control on approach shots; shallow grooves in the weaker lofts deliver maximum spin. Three specialized grinds also ensure you'll never have any issues with turf interaction. Single-length is also available.
50°, 52°, 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°;





A do-it-all design

Honma T//World W4

Our take: Honma went to great lengths to up the feel and spin control found inside the T// World W4. Testers were keen to the improvements, with one proclaiming, "I'm getting the touch and spin I expect around the greens. It feels as if the grooves are grabbing the ball and then placing it softly on the green. It's a feeling I've rarely felt with my wedges." With two sole grinds delivering versatility and superior turf interaction, it's easy to see why testers gave Honma's latest creation high marks. The details: The T// World W4 looks like your traditional blade offering, boasting elegant curves and a hand-shaped profile. Flip the wedge over and you're greeted with an eye-catching sculpted back that serves a practical purpose. In the lower lofts, mass is positioned low in the head for a solid feel on full shots. Additional mass is situated higher in the head on the higher lofts for trajectory control.
48°, 50°, 52°, 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°;

"AM I SEEING THAT RIGHT?" ONE TESTER INQUIRED AFTER WATCHING THE BALL CHECK AND STOP ON A DIME FROM 30 YARDS. "I DON'T NORMALLY GET THAT KIND OF SAUCE!"

Cobra King Cobra



Tour Edge Hot Launch

The Tour Edge E521 wedges, like the E521 irons, feature the Houdini sole, which, according to one tester during GOLF's ClubTest, worked "like magic."
52°, 56°, 60°;



Spin from any lie

PING Glide 3.0

Our take: It's a harsh reality: Most golfers miss more greens than they hit. To deal with the consequences of all those wayward approaches, golfers are constantly on the lookout for more spin. PING's Glide 3.0 wedges, with machine-milled grooves and redesigned cavities, delivered it in spades throughout our testing process. Said one tester, "I expect to lose some zip on the ball from thick lies, but it came off hot and spinning."
The details: PING completely overhauled its previous wedges to craft the new Glide 3.0 versions, which are made to spin more, feel softer and forgive like never before. They feature milled grooves with razor-sharp edges. Larger CTP (Custom Tuning Port) inserts behind the head deliver the softness; credit the back cavities for the extra spin and Tour-like lower shot trajectory. The Glide 3.0 lineup has a number of head options for different players, but the return of PING's classic Eye2 shape is certainly the most nostalgic.
Eye2 grind: 54°, 56°, 58°, 60° Standard: 46°, 50°, 52°, 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°; Wide Sole: 54°, 56°, 58°, 60°; Thin Sole: 58°, 60°;

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PUTTERS

MODERN UPDATES TO PROVEN CLASSICS AND A GLUT OF FORGIVING MALLETS THAT FEEL LIKE BLADES MAKE THIS THE GREATEST FLATSTICK MARKET EVER



Forward weighting for straighter putts

Cleveland Frontline

Our take: Many putter manufacturers look backward when distributing weight. Cleveland, in its new Frontline, is looking forward, with a front-facing weighting scheme that pulls mass closer to the face for better stability. "The face lends instant feedback and really helps with distance control," said a tester. Of the streamlined appearance, another tester cheered the putters' subdued look, saying, "Matte black is a really good look on the eyes."
The details: A tungsten forwardweighting plan sets the CG closer to the front of the putterface, resulting in a purer end-overend roll with added stability—key factors in getting the ball started on line. The proprietary Speed Optimized Face technology pattern promotes consistent ball speed while a 2135 alignment system gives you a perfect look no matter where you set your eyes at address. Offered in four primary styles with multiple hosel connections, all in matte black.
4.0, Elevado (shown), Iso, Cero;

Classic shapes with a soft feel

Cleveland Huntington Beach Soft

Our take: The HB Soft putters proved popular for their buttery-soft feel, which, for one tester, meant "it was easy to know how the ball would respond off the face with every stroke, no matter how long the putt." Testers also appreciated the deep face milling: "It makes for a premium, Tour-worthy look and really helps with distance control."
The details: The HB Soft features the same proprietary face technology as the Frontline (see left) and a precise, CNC-milling pattern that feels soft without getting mushy. Multiple head styles are available.
3, 4, 8, 10.5, 10.5C, 11 (shown);



Ben Hogan Precision Milled



Forged and CNC milled to elicit a consistent feel and roll, Hogan's extensive putter line features blade and mallet offerings with an impressive uniform mill pattern from heel to toe.



High performance, eye-catching looks

Cleveland Huntington Beach Soft Premier

Our take: How a putter looks to the eye matters almost as much as how it performs. If it doesn't look right, it just won't feel comfortable to putt with. The new Huntington Beach Soft Premier putters feature all that makes stock HB Soft putters so great and coats them with a gray satin PVD finish for reduced glare. Put it this way: They look so soothing and smooth, you can't help but feel relaxed.
The details: HB Soft Premier putters feature a precision CNC-milled face pattern that's unique to each model and Cleveland's Speed Optimized Face technology for a silky-soft feel and smooth end-over-end roll. Specific to the Premier line is not only the PVD finish but also a black putter shaft and Lamkin Sinkfit pistol grips. As with the standard line, multiple head styles are available.
3 (shown), 4, 8, 10.5, 10.5C, 11, 11S, 14;



Rave reviews

Odyssey 2-Ball Ten

Our take: Odyssey's decision to combine its now-legendary 2-Ball design with its innovative Triple Track alignment system in a new head shape resulted in one of the most popular putters at GOLF's player testing. "This feels like cheating," raved one tester. "Get set, aim, fire—that's it!" The putter also comes with a redesigned Stroke Lab shaft that helps keep putts on line.
The details: Beyond the alignment tech, the 2-Ball Ten showcases a sleek mallet shape that's gaining traction among the pro ranks. It's all part of Odyssey's plan to help all golfers better "frame" at setup and ensure everything's lined up correctly.
Bonus: Each head features the highperformance and Tour-proven White Hot Microhinge face insert. Also available sans Triple Track.

Proven performance

Odyssey White Hot OG

Our take: Ask and you shall receive. After years of clamoring for a putter with the iconic White Hot insert, Odyssey delivered in a big way with the OG. One tester summed it up best: "I can't tell you how happy it makes me that Odyssey brought back the original White Hot insert. I can make the same stroke and know how the ball is going to come off every time." Two decades after it was first introduced, White Hot remains the standard for putter inserts. No need to mess with success.
The details: Outside of the adjustable heel-toe sole weights, the White OG line is a nod to the cult classic with a rich and milling marks surrounding the two-part urethane insert. For those who are wondering, the insert formulation is identical to the original urethane creation, so you can rest easy knowing it'll feel identical to your trusty gamer. Each putter is outfitted with a classic gray DFX rubber grip and either a stepless steel or multi-material Stroke Lab in candyapple red. Eight proven head styles are available. #1, #1WS (shown), 2-Ball, Rossie, Rossie S, #5, #7, #7s;



"I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW HAPPY IT MAKES ME THAT ODYSSEY BROUGHT BACK THE ORIGINAL WHITE HOT INSERT."

Odyssey White Hot OG



Soft feel, Tour-player input

PING 2021

Our take: PING's new 2021 putters are packed with tech on the face to help golfers roll the ball better, but from address "they're clean and sharp looking," as a GOLF tester described. White toplines against black chrome finishes proved to be decipherable alignment aids as well. On the feel scale, PING's new face designs registered "marshmallow soft, in a good way," according to one tester.
The details: To deliver the soft feel our tester enjoyed, the 2021 line is built using dual-durometer Pebax face inserts. The putters also feature weights in the toe and heel sections that increase forgiveness, and they have face grooves to help with speed consistency. While there's a whopping 11 head models in the lineup, two notable designs stick out: the Cameron Champ–inspired Tyne 4 and the Viktor Hovland–inspired DS 72—each developed through PING's impressive Putting Lab Design (PLD) program. Anser, Anser 2, Anser 4, Harwood, Kushin 4, CA 70 (shown), DS 72, Tyne 4, Fetch, Oslo H, Tyne C;



Mizuno M.Craft

Mizuno's commitment to precision clubmaking is evident in the M.Craft putter line, which combines precision forging, CNC milling, traditional stylings, cool color options and removable weights. I, II, III, IV (shown), V, VI;



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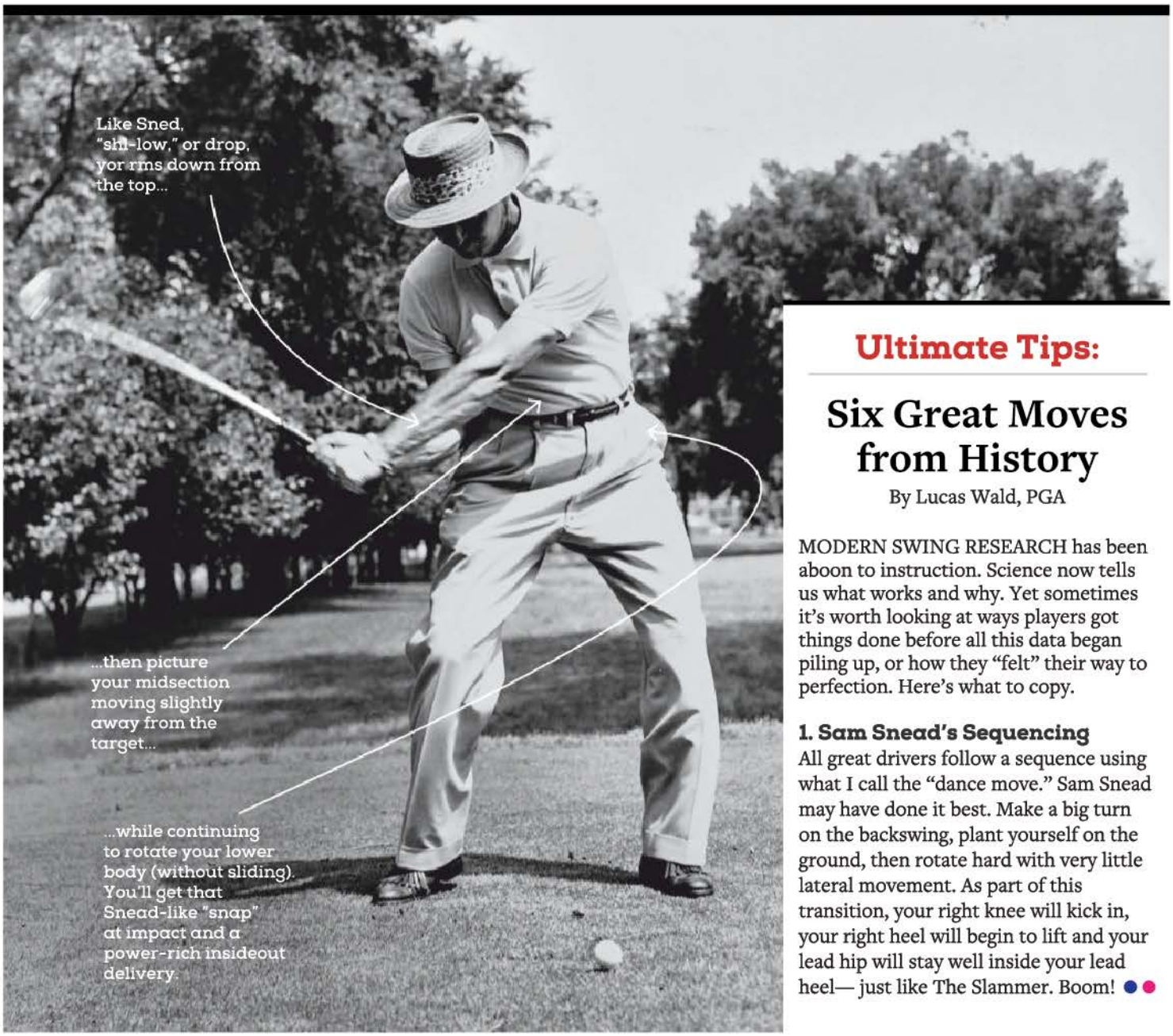
LESSON



PGA of America via Getty Images

Ultimate Tips:

Six Great Moves from History

By Lucas Wald, PGA

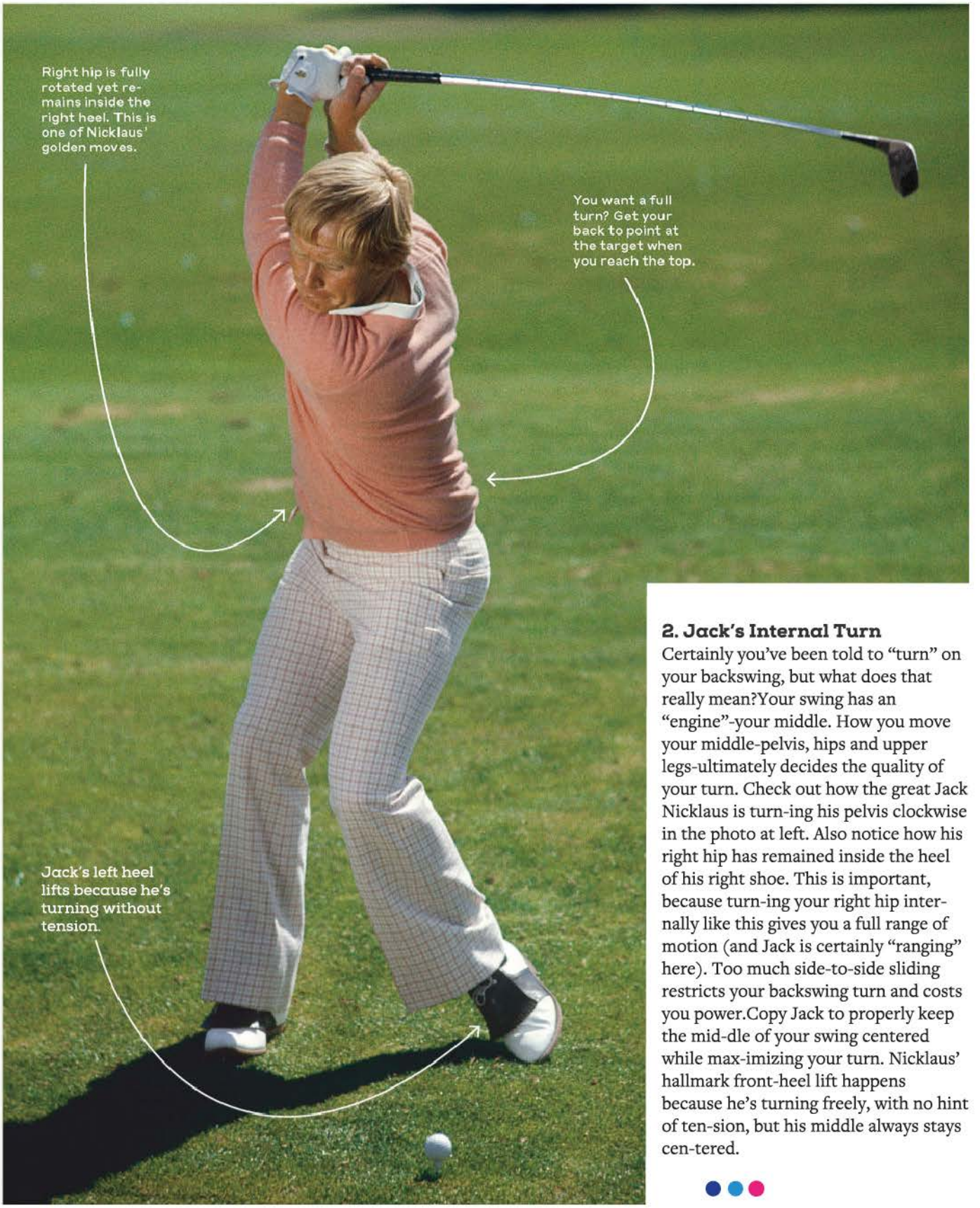
MODERN SWING RESEARCH has been aboon to instruction. Science now tells us what works and why. Yet sometimes it's worth looking at ways players got things done before all this data began piling up, or how they "felt" their way to perfection. Here's what to copy.

1. Sam Snead's Sequencing

All great drivers follow a sequence using what I call the "dance move." Sam Snead may have done it best. Make a big turn on the backswing, plant yourself on the ground, then rotate hard with very little lateral movement. As part of this transition, your right knee will kick in, your right heel will begin to lift and your lead hip will stay well inside your lead heel— just like The Slammer. Boom!

LOOK FOR THE DOTS: Ech tip throghot this section fetres corresponding color code to help yo nderstnd which prt of yor gme it will improve the most.

Shaky putter	Slicer	Low handicapper	Short-game sufferer	Short hitter	Swing student	High handicapper



2. Jack's Internal Turn

Certainly you've been told to "turn" on your backswing, but what does that really mean?Your swing has an "engine"-your middle. How you move your middle-pelvis, hips and upper legs-ultimately decides the quality of your turn. Check out how the great Jack Nicklaus is turn-ing his pelvis clockwise in the photo at left. Also notice how his right hip has remained inside the heel of his right shoe. This is important, because turn-ing your right hip internally like this gives you a full range of motion (and Jack is certainly "ranging" here). Too much side-to-side sliding restricts your backswing turn and costs you power.Copy Jack to properly keep the mid-dle of your swing centered while max-imizing your turn. Nicklaus' hallmark front-heel lift happens because he's turning freely, with no hint of ten-sion, but his middle always stays cen-tered.

Shaky putter	Slicer	Low handicapper	Short-game sufferer	Short hitter	Swing student	High handicapper



Make as long a backswing as your body can muster. Not only does it boost swing speed, it avoids injury that often comes from swinging fast from a shorter top position.

3. Daly's Long, Free-Flowing Backswing

Just like a plane uses a lengthy runway to build speed before taking o, a longer backswing increases swing speed and adds power to your drives. It's really that simple. Here we see a young John Daly, one of the longest hitters in his-tory, ready to let one loose. Not only is his backswing long, it's way past parallel, something that even Ben Hogan proved was perfectly suited for the power game a generation prior.

The idea that a shorter, more "con-trolled" backswing is better isn't what we see from the world's best- not in this generation or the past. Some say it may improve your accuracy in the short term, but it robs you of distance. And if you swing hard from a shortened backswing, you'll risk an injury. A full, unrestricted turn with a long backswing is better for your drives-and for your body.



From left: Stephen Dunn/Getty Images; Alan Smith/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

4. Bubba's "No-Slide" Transition

Just as in the backswing, sliding too much on the downswing limits your ability to rotate through the ball and create enough clubhead speed. If you look at long drivers throughout history, such as Sam Snead, Justin Thomas or Bubba Watson (left), you'll see how their front hip remains well inside their front foot as they swing through impact. If you slide and move your front hip over or outside your front foot, your turn will stall—and your swing speed will plummet.

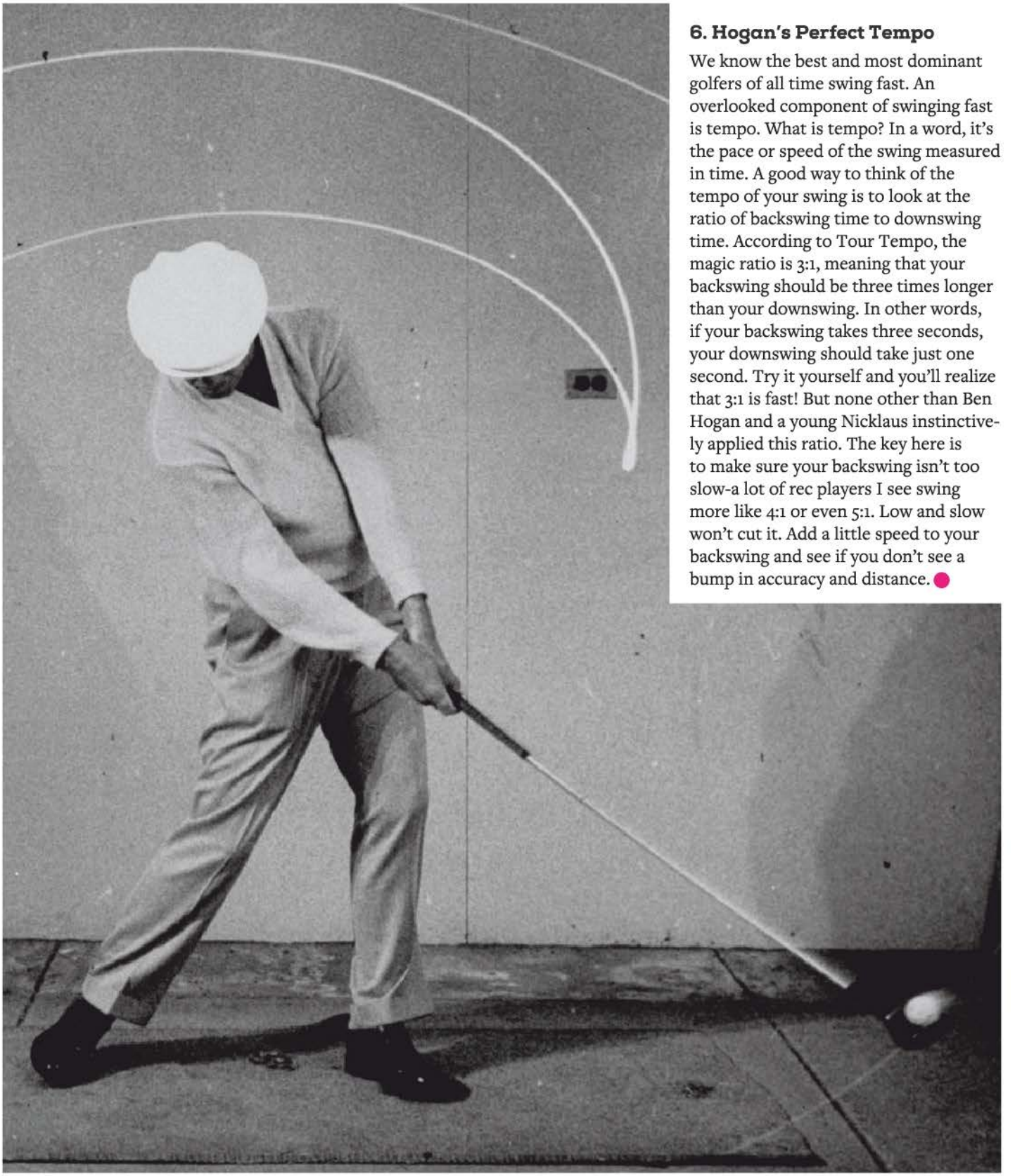
Do this: As you start your down-swing, shift your weight slightly for-ward, but as you near impact, favor your rear side as Bubba's doing here. It's this "backward" shift near the moment of impact that allows you to continue to rotate and hit up on the ball with max-imum velocity.



5. Tiger's AOA

Most of today's big bombers-McIlroy, DeChambeau, Rahm and even Tiger Woods (left)-optimize launch angle off the tee. One of the ways to do this is to purposely hit up on the ball, or increase your AOA (angle of attack). Modern drivers are built to encourage an increase in AOA without adding too much spin, producing a high launch that maxes out carry. For decades the goal for any elite player was to get the ball on the ground and running quickly. Not any more. Some pros swing up as much as 4 degrees. That's taking serious advantage of the modern driver design. Tee it high, picture the clubhead moving up on the ball and watch it fly!

Shaky putter | Slicer | Low handicapper | Short-game sufferer | Short hitter | Swing student | High handicapper



6. Hogan's Perfect Tempo

We know the best and most dominant golfers of all time swing fast. An overlooked component of swinging fast is tempo. What is tempo? In a word, it's the pace or speed of the swing measured in time. A good way to think of the tempo of your swing is to look at the ratio of backswing time to downswing time. According to Tour Tempo, the magic ratio is 3:1, meaning that your backswing should be three times longer than your downswing. In other words, if your backswing takes three seconds, your downswing should take just one second. Try it yourself and you'll realize that 3:1 is fast! But none other than Ben Hogan and a young Nicklaus instinctively applied this ratio. The key here is to make sure your backswing isn't too slow-a lot of rec players I see swing more like 4:1 or even 5:1. Low and slow won't cut it. Add a little speed to your backswing and see if you don't see a bump in accuracy and distance.

DRILL SKILLS: HOW TO CHECK THAT YOUR SWING IS ON TRACK

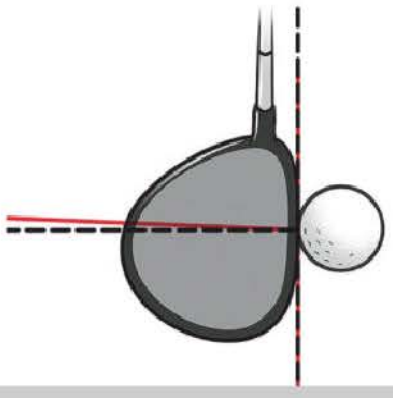
By Top 100 Teacher Mark Hackett

Getting your backswing moving in the right direction is an important part of getting your drives moving in the right direction too. Here's a way to work on it. Place a foam roller (or alignment stick) parallel to your target line. Put a ball an inch from the roller, then address it, aiming your club toward the target and setting your stance line parallel to the roller. You're set to get all-important feedback on your aim, alignment and swing direction. Now swing. If your motion is too much from in-to-out, you will hit the inside part of the foam roller. If it moves too much from out-to-in, you'll strike the outer portion of the roller. Both of those moves can cause inconsistent contact and directional issues.

Keep in mind that the roller is a visual cue positioned to help you, not scare you. Use it as a guide for your swing. The goal here is to keep the clubhead flush with the roller or alignment stick as you take back the club. Keep your hands in while moving the club along the foam roller (representing your target line) throughout your takeaway. You're doing it right if you feel your left arm swing across your chest with the club more in front of you. Coming through, smoothly rotate your body into a full finish. When you miss the roller or rod, you know your swing is back on track. Mark Hackett is the director of instruction at Old Palm GC in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.



Shaky putter | Slicer | Low handicapper | Short-game sufferer | Short hitter | Swing student | High handicapper



PERFECT PRACTICE

UNDERSTAND YOUR MISSES

By Luke Kerr-Dineen

The clubface sends it and the path bends it. It's a simple phrase that you'd do well to keep in mind, because it helps diagnose the issues facing your game. All you need to know is your club path (which is the direction your club is traveling into impact) and your face angle (the direction your face is pointing at impact). The way those two elements combine determines the type of shot you'll hit.

Straight: When the club path is traveling down the target line and your face angle is zero at impact, the ball will go straight. Ideal combo.

Push/Pull: A push or pull happens when your clubface is square to your path, but your path is moving either left or right to your target. So a pull is when your club path is moving left of your target (out-to-in for right-handed golfers) with a closed clubface; a push is when your club is moving to the right of your target (from in-to-out) with an open clubface.

Hook/Slice: Hooks and slices happen when the clubface and path are moving in different directions. If your clubface is open but your club path is moving out-to-in: slice. If your clubface is closed and your path is in-to-out: hook.

From left: Josh Ritchie; Illustration by Ben Mounsey-Wood; Mike Ehrmann/Getty Images



PLAY SMART

HOW TO RAISE A MAJOR CHAMP

By Luke Kerr-Dineen, GOLF's Game Improvement Editor

TIGER WOODS and his 11-year-old son, Charlie, made their much-anticipated debut at the PNC Father/ Son Challenge late last year. It was a heartwarming display but also an informative one. What can you learn from how one of the greatest players in nhistory teaches his own son? For that, we consulted the director of instruction at the International Junior Golf Academy and GOLF Top 100 Teacher Jonathan Yarwood. "The first and most important rule of teaching your kids to play golf is to make sure it's fun. Don't layer them with expectations and pressure," Yarwood says. "The early years are about establishing confidence, creativity and a love for the game. "Part of this means not getting overly concerned with technique." Yarwood points out that Charlie's swing is a little "steep" from the top. "That's okay," he says. "A young golfer's swing will change as their body continues to develop. "Like a lot of kids, Charlie's body will outrace his arms on the downswing," he says. "He's probably not strong in his core just yet, but it's something he'll develop over time." A final note: Train your young golfer to swing hard. Training for speed in the early years will last a lifetime. "It's a skill that becomes harder to develop as you grow older," Yarwood says.

Professional golfer Khandaker Rahat Tahsin Porosh recently tied the knot with Marshiat Fariha Alam at the Sena Kunja in Dhaka Cantonment.

The members of the two families and their friends were present at the occasion.



Our best wishes to the newly-wed couple.

Photo: Courtesy









COLONEL SIDDHARTH WINS RUNNER PRESIDENT CUP



Colonel Siddharth Malik won the title of the 4th Runner President Cup Golf Tournament, which was held at the Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka recently.

Malik beat Faruk Mohsin, who finished as the runner-up in the three-day tournament. Zaima Binte Hossain Ahona won the ladies' title.

General Aziz Ahmed, Chief of Army Staff, Bangladesh Army and President of Kurmitola Golf Club, gave away the prizes to the winners of the tournament. Other high officials of the club and Runner Group were present at the event.

---TGH Desk





30TH CAPTAIN CUP GOLF HELD

Saifuddin Mamun and Dorothy Moon won the overall and ladies titles respectively in the 30th Captain Cup Golf Tournament, held at the Bhatiary Golf and Country Club in Chattogram recently.

A total of 140 golfers including nine female golfers and five junior golfers participated in the daylong event.

Bhatiary Golf and Country Club's president Major General Mohmmad Saiful Abedin witnessed the event as the chief guest and later distributed prizes among the winners.

---TGH Desk















BHATIARY HOSTS KSRM GOLF

The 6th KSRM Golf Tournament was held at the Bhatiary Golf and Country Club in Chattogram recently. Air Vice Marshal ASM Fakhrul Islam, Air Officer Commanding of BAF Jahurul Haque Base and President of Shaheen Golf and Country Club, was present at the chief guest of the occasion.

The chief guest said they were happy that the event has been held for the six consecutive time and that this type of event will help local and international golf prosper. He also thanked KSRM Group for their effort and hoped that such partnership will continue in future.

The event came to a close through a raffle draw, lunch and a prize distribution ceremony.

---TGH Desk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