

The Plainsman's News

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Do you know 1
the key playing
specifications of
your clubs and
how they effect
your ball flight?

Does your bag 2
contain the best
clubs for your
short game?

A little review of 3
the basics of a
good swing set
up can help us
all!

Are your clubs correct for your game?

It is difficult for any ardent golfer to ignore the endless stream of advertising that promotes the miraculous play improvements that can be achieved with the purchase of the latest breakthrough club designs. Every seller of pre assembled clubs is shouting "Buy Me" because of my new steel or titanium alloy, variable face thickness, computer modeled face, spring face, extra hard face, huge head size, special weighting, multi metals, low profile, high profile, unique shaft composition, better grip, etc. It goes on and on until our heads are swimming with possibilities.

We then become further confused by club manufactures that concentrate on one club specification and then promote this feature as the new cure all that ensures we will play better with their clubs. Unfortunately, this feature is often a minor one that will at best only marginally aid a very few people.

All in all, the process of purchasing factory-assembled clubs comes down to little more than trial and error. We play with a demo club or hit a selection of irons from a fitting bin in the blind hope that something there will feel good and work for us. Or, we choose a specific brand because our favorite pro is paid to endorse them and sometimes actually plays with a reasonable facsimile of this design. In the end we spend our money and pin our hopes for improvement on the advertising promises we have heard.

* Are you ever shown what specifications these clubs have that are specifically designed to help you play better?

* Have you ever been shown how various club specifications affect your play?

* Do you know what club specifications will help you play better?

* Do you know the specifications of your current clubs?

* Do you know if your current clubs are a good fit for you?

If you don't know the answers to these questions you will always be subject to the

advertising seduction of the newest and latest in golf club offerings. Blind faith is not a good way to purchase anything and this is especially so with a personal item such as golf clubs. Good golf equipment is expensive and in order to become an informed purchaser you need to know what club specifications will actually assist you in playing better and enjoying golf more.

We can provide that information!!

There are actually five playing factors that can be affected by golf clubs. Distance. Accuracy. Trajectory. Backspin. Feel. Some twenty club design specifications can affect these factors to varying degrees. Usually the specifications are inter related and have an effect on more than one playing factor. The key to acquiring well-fitted equipment lies in knowing what specifications will benefit you and your individual swing.

Finding this information can be difficult if we rely only upon the information provided by golf club manufactures. It is very rare for pre-assembled clubs to come with details of their individual

details of their individual specifications!

Think about it... When you purchased your last golf clubs were you provided with details about each club's length, loft, lie, face angle, balance point, shaft frequency, bend point, torque, weight, grip size, etc. Probably not... Most companies seem to consider this to be some sort of "trade secret" that should not be provided to their paying customers. In fact... Why not ask your usual equipment supplier for this information. You may find the reaction quite interesting.

Of course knowing the specification details of your clubs does not mean too much unless you can compare this information to the ideal club design specifications that will best serve your individual swing and playing style. That typically means custom fitting.

Most major golf club manufacturers have some form of a custom fitting system, but typically they rely upon your hitting sample clubs from a test bin or they use some sort of fitting questionnaire that hopefully will allow them to run

your clubs down their assembly line with option A, B, C, etc. applied to the standard stock designs. The common denominator is that all of these systems are dumbed down to the point that any store clerk can now do a so-called "custom fitting".

Will this exercise help you achieve your playing goals? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Who knows? Certainly you will not really know until you purchase and use your clubs. If you then have difficulty it can be a problem because repairs and adjustments are often difficult to obtain and now your "used" clubs are not worth too much.

Of course, there is more to playing good golf than just having the best of equipment.

Good golf also requires a good repeating swing and just like equipment, there is a multitude of swing improvement methods and products available to us.

I am sure that you have worked at improving your golf game by investing in various forms of swing instruction. There is an endless array of books, tapes, videos, and training aids, etc. that are always prominently marketed. Like me, I am sure

you have purchased your share of this information and it may have actually helped a little, but usually not very much. Our real swing and playing improvement can only come when we take personal instruction from a qualified and competent teaching professional. There is no doubt about it! When attempting to improve your golf swing your best value will always come from personally consulting a golf swing professional.

There is also no doubt about the fact that your best equipment value will accrue to you when you consult a qualified golf equipment professional before making your next club purchase. If you do this you will learn what club specifications and designs will suit your personal swing and you will also learn how well your current clubs match your ideal equipment designs. With this information in hand you will be able to make a very informed decision about all of your golf equipment needs.

Purchasing golf equipment is not smoke and mirrors magic. Understand what equipment specifications will benefit you. Acquire clubs with these specifications and you will play better.

*"Never bet with anyone who has a deep tan, squinty eyes and a one iron in his bag."
Dave Marr*

The Correct Clubs for your short game.

There is no doubt that hitting the fairway off the tee and hitting greens in regulation is a key to better scoring. Realistically though, most golfers who rely on this traditional method of game improvement would have to double the number of fairways and greens hit in order to reduce their handicap by five or six strokes. It is unlikely that this goal could be achieved simply

by acquiring well-designed and well-fit woods and irons. If better scoring is the primary focus of your game you will have a much better chance of saving strokes by sharpening your short game rather than hoping to hit longer more accurate shots from tee to green.

Suppose that you could, double the number of times you get up and down in two from missed

greens, get sand shots on the green all the time, avoid adding three puts to a missed green. These improvements can realistically be achieved with practice and the use of wedges that are properly designed and fit to suit your playing style. Do this and you can be seven to ten shots better without even taking a full swing.

Chipping stiff is fun!
Sandies are fun!
All one puts are fun!

One of the main reasons that paying special attention to your wedges has become so important is due to the change in iron loft and length specifications that have taken place in recent years. The current "standard" specifications for loft and length have strengthened and lengthened so drastically over the last 10 – 20 years that problems have been created within the short game clubs.

The traditional iron set makeup of #3 – PW & SW is

essentially the same as it has been for years, however the loft angle of the sand wedge has not changed as much as it has for the other irons. In the 1970's the average PW was 52*, in the 1980's it was 48*, now it is 46* or less. The other irons have been similarly strengthened. Meanwhile, typical sand wedges continue to be lofted in the 55* - 56* range. This has left a huge, often frustrating yardage gap between the PW and SW.

There are lots of opportunities to buy individual approach wedges, sand wedges, lob wedges, etc. and seeing these clubs displayed often tempts us to try fixing our yardage gap

problem by making a purchase. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to make a well informed purchase unless we know exactly what specifications will complement our current iron set and thus allow us to improve our short game play.

In our shop we have the tools and equipment needed to accurately measure the specifications of your current clubs. With this information and a review of the shot making problems you have we are able to show you what club specifications will actually benefit your game. There is no point in making a wedge purchase until you know what you need. we can provide that info.

Playing Tips.

Jack Lumkin says, - Focus on the Basics:

A proper setup is vital to the rest of your game!

The key to mastering the fundamentals and making them work for you lies in incorporating them into your pre-shot routine. How you hold the club, where you aim the club-face, and the way you stand determine to a great extent where you'll hit the ball. A fundamentally sound setup won't guarantee a perfect swing, but weak fundamentals will guarantee that you'll never improve.

Grip: Grip the club with the fingers, not the palm, making sure the V's formed by the thumb and forefinger point in the same direction. Control the club. Don't squeeze it. You want strong fingers, but your arms should remain relaxed so that your wrists can cock freely. Your hands must act as a unit, remain

flexible, and be placed on the grip in a position that allows the club to be square to the target at impact. This makes for a powerful, accurate swing.

Posture: Slightly flex your knees and bend at the waist while ensuring that you remain well balanced with your weight centered. Let your arms hang naturally from your shoulders. Don't reach and over balance to your toes. Don't crowd the ball and over balance to your heels. Power and control come from the same place – a balanced setup.

Ball position: The term ball position is actually a bit of a misnomer. The ball doesn't change position; what changes is the width of your stance and the relationship of your feet to the ball. The key body parts in ball position are the front heel and the back foot. First, except for the driver, always play the ball about two inches inside your front heel. With the driver move the ball

one inch closer to your heel. Second, you should move the back foot progressively farther from the front foot as the club gets longer. The shorter swing produced by shorter clubs requires a narrower stance. Your widest stance will come when you're hitting a driver but you should always make sure it is no wider – from heel to heel – than your shoulders.

Aim and alignment: For every shot you should go through the same pre-shot routine. A consistent routine will help settle you down mentally and also eliminate the problems in your swing that are caused by a misaligned setup. Proper alignment is imperative. From behind the ball, pick your ultimate target line, then, select an intermediate target that is close to you and on this line. Line up your club and your body with respect to this intermediate target and be precise. A swing with no sense of direction is of no value at all.

"Nothing can add more power to your life than concentrating all of your energies on a limited set of targets."

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- Get details on our service guarantee.
- Learn about our qualifications.
- Discover the true meaning of custom clubs.
- Find out what a real custom fitting session involves.
- Review the repair services we provide.
- Obtain answers to your questions.
- Look at the items in our bargain corner.
- Register to receive our regular newsletter.
- Enter our free trip contest.
- Contact us with your questions.

Special!! - Club Specification Measuring

Do you know what the key playing specifications of your golf clubs are?

If you are playing factory assembled clubs, probably not!

Many times our hard to solve ball striking and scoring problems are caused by club specifications that do not suit our playing style. Very often a detailed measurement of our clubs will reveal the reasons why certain playing problems keep cropping up.

*Are your clubs the correct length for your height and swing style?

*Are the loft changes between your clubs consistent?

*Do the lie angles match your swing plain?

*Do the face angles of your woods aid you in avoiding slices or hooks?

*Are your clubs suitably balanced to provide the best possible swinging feel?

*Does the stiffness of your shafts match your swing speed and tempo?

*Are your grips properly sized to fit your hand size and gripping position?

*Is your club set makeup suitable for your personal game?

- *A special to the end of September 2001 -*

Call us to arrange an appointment for the measurement of all of your clubs key playing specifications and we will perform this service *for free!*

Our usual fee for this service is \$25.00, but until the end of September 2001 we will do this for you for free!!

With the detailed written data you receive you will be able to determine if your game has any equipment related problems. If there are problems they can usually be fixed with economical adjustments. Adjustments that we can make for you!