



Golf International Magazine
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Come the Revolution

25 Great Equipment Landmarks

A CHRONOLOGICAL JOURNEY THROUGH A SELECTION OF THE MOST ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT DEVELOPMENTS DOWN THE AGES.

By Dominic Pedler
 Golf International Equipment Editor

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|-----------------------------|---|
| c. 16 th Century | The Feathery Flies High |
| 1848 | The Gutta Percha Comes Out of its Box |
| 1889 | Sitting Pretty: The Tee Peg |
| 1898 | The Wound Ball Wraps Up the Market |
| 1902 | Clubfaces Get Into the Groove |
| 1904 | Centre-Shafted Putter |
| 1908 | The Dimple Gets a Lift |
| 1929 | The Steel Shaft Kicks Hickory Into Touch |
| 1931 | Sarazen Shapes the Sand Wedge |
| 1953 | The Rubber Grip Slips On |
| 1966 | Ping Anser Sets the Heel-'n'-Toe Standard |
| 1969 | Cavity Back Irons Carve Up the Market |
| 1970 | Spalding Launches the Two-Piece Ball |
| 1972 | The Graphite Shaft Flexes Its Muscle |
| 1979 | The Metal Wood is TaylorMade |
| 1991 | Oversize Metal – Big Bertha's Big Body |
| 1992 | Insert Putter Embark on Their Odyssey |
| 1995 | "Wide-Butt" Technology and the Great Swingweight Debate |
| 1998 | Titanium and the "Trampoline" Effect |
| 1999 | The USGA Yields to the Shaft PUREing Lobby |
| 2000 | Multi-Layer Ball Takes to the Skies |
| 2001 | Mallet Putter Line Up in Style |
| 2003 | Graphite Gives Multi-Material Drivers a Head Start |
| 2004 | Hybrid Clubs Capture the Pro Tours |
| 2005 | Tuning in to Adjustable Technology |

THE USGA YIELDS TO THE SHAFT 'PURING' LOBBY

If swingweight was a rather exotic concept for the average golfer, it was nothing compared to shaft 'puring', the most invisible of technological developments and yet, some argue, among the most important.

Back in 1999, few noticed the David & Goliath duel that saw the mighty USGA yield to American clubmaker Dick Weiss over the formal rule preventing shafts to be orientated in a clubhead so as to compensate for their often dramatic manufacturing (and, hence, performance) inconsistencies.

With just a handful of off-the-shelf shafts from some leading manufacturers, Weiss demonstrated how some dodgy ones could perform with a flex implying anything from 'Extra Stiff' to 'Ladies' simply depending on the position of the shaft when inserted at the factory.

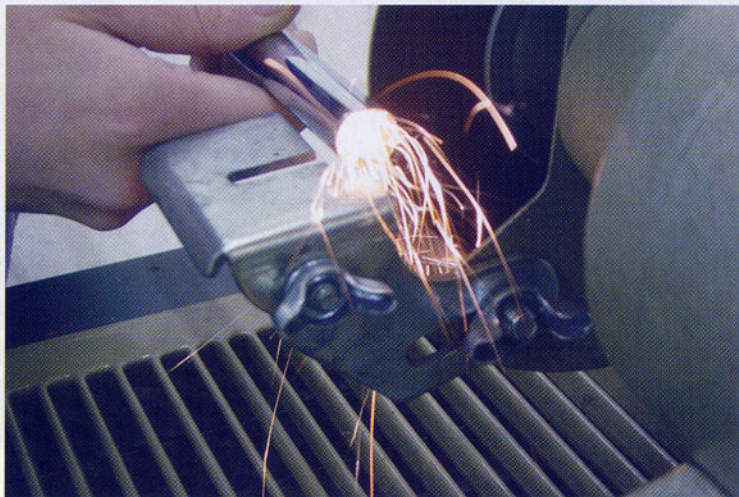
To their credit, the USGA finally acknowledged the conundrum of their own rules which, on the one hand, acknowledged that manufacturing vagaries ensure that in practice shafts are never truly symmetrical while, on the other, denied golfers the right to restore the very performance symmetry that the rules themselves required!

Five years on, the technology developed by Weiss' SST Pure company both to analyse and correctly assemble shafts has caught the imagination of some 200 leading tour professionals. With the perfectly symmetrical shaft still many years away, puring makes perfect sense. But with nothing to show except a discrete gold sicker stuck on by SST's approved custom fitters, it perhaps remains the best-kept secret in the history of golf equipment.

NON PURED



PURED



Essential reading from the best in the game

golf

INTERNATIONAL

GREG NORMAN AT 50

MONTY AT...ER, 41

CAPE KIDNAPPERS (See Page 16)

IAN WOOLDRIDGE & PETER ALLISS

500

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50th ISSUE

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COME THE REVOLUTION

25 GREAT EQUIPMENT LANDMARKS

A chronological journey through a selection of the most essential equipment

HARD TO BELIEVE that 100 years ago golfers were just getting to grips with ground-breaking technology like the wound ball, grooved-face irons and centre-shafted putters. It was the golden era for golf equipment, with inventions that genuinely changed the game with measurable improvements in distance and accuracy. A century on, golf equipment now embraces everything from radio-controlled trolleys to tee pegs, and even shoes, that promise extra distance. Oh, not forgetting Greg Norman's new polo shirts with 'anti-curl' collars...

To commemorate our 50th issue, we present a whirlwind tour of the major developments to have revolutionised the golf industry since the early days – even if the product performance didn't always match the marketing hype.